



*Regenerating soils for climate and farmers*

**20th December 2021**

## **D2.4 ENGAGE year 1 report**



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## Executive summary

This document takes stock of the work and achievements of Work Package 2 ENGAGE in the first year of the AgriCaptureCO<sub>2</sub> project. It reviews key activities delivered under the four tasks of Work Package 2, and measures success against key performance indicators established in the Engagement Strategy drawn up for this Work Package. Overall, the work and impact achieved in year one is very satisfactory, especially given the difficulties experienced due to the Covid-19 pandemic. All deliverables were submitted on time, and strong progress has been made against key performance indicators.

Yet, some areas for improvement remain, and those are identified in the last chapter of this document, where four recommendations are made for year 2:

1. Ensure better coordination between WP2 ENGAGE and WP5 PILOT.
2. Increase outreach outside the UK.
3. Boost the ERAC by engaging multipliers.
4. Build capacity on the work of WP3 DEVELOP among WP2 project partners.

For each of these four areas, specific solutions are proposed.



## List of abbreviations

CEJA	Council of European Young Farmers
CC	Cross-cutting
EEB	European Environmental Bureau
ELO	European Landowners Organisation
ERAC	European Regenerative Agriculture Community
EU	European Union
GILab	Geographic Information LABORatory
GWCT	Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust
KPIs	Key Performing Indicators
LEAF	Linking Environment and Farming
SCARF	Soil Carbon Farming
WP	Work package

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## 1 Achievements in year 1

### 1.1. Aims of Work Package 2

The overall objective is to engage end-users and key stakeholders to generate and coordinate a European Regenerative Agriculture Network, as a major channel for promoting uptake of project results. Specific objectives outlined in the Grant Agreement include:

- To map a European-level Network multipliers and potential users, and establish and implement a detailed engagement strategy to reach and involve them.
- To gain understanding of market potential through characterising potential user interest and motivations.
- To understand Reg Agri complementarity with CAP and national agricultural/environmental legislation.
- To actively engage farmers and support knowledge-exchange activities within and across the case studies.
- To build a potential base of multipliers and users that can be drawn on to convert to customers

To guide the activities and track the progress of Work Package (WP) 2, the Engagement Strategy (D2.3) built on the list of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) included in the Grant Agreement (Table 1).

**Table 1: Key Performance Indicators from the Engagement Strategy**

	KPI	Final target	Mid-term target
CC	Number of external events at which AgriCaptureCO <sub>2</sub> is promoted	50	25
T2.3	Number of farmer-oriented external events at which AgriCaptureCO <sub>2</sub> is promoted	30	15
CC	Number of launch and demo day events	5	n/a
T2.3	Number of farmers attending demo days	250	n/a
CC	Number of attendees of the launch event	100	n/a
T2.4	Number of end-users responding to user need surveys	200	n/a



T2.4	Number of end-users engaged in focus groups and open-ended interviews	60	n/a
T2.3 & 2.4	Number of European Regenerative Agriculture Community members	50	n/a
T2.3	Number of AgriCaptureCO <sub>2</sub> demo farms	14	n/a
T2.3	Number of farmers visiting AgriCaptureCO <sub>2</sub> demo farms	500	200
T2.3	Number of farmer climate panels held	8	n/a
CC	Number of webinars held	12	n/a
CC	Number of multipliers engaged to promote AgriCaptureCO <sub>2</sub>	10	n/a
T2.3	Number of farmers directly involved in testing AgriCaptureCO <sub>2</sub>	500	n/a
T2.4	Number of AZCEEs involved in testing AgriCaptureCO <sub>2</sub>	5	n/a

Discussions between project partners in year 1 led to a distinction between the AgriCaptureCO<sub>2</sub> network, and the European Regenerative Agriculture Community (ERAC). The network refers to all audiences reached through project communication, dissemination, and engagement activities, and includes social media followers, subscribers to the mailing list, and the networks of project partners. The Community refers to a specific group of stakeholders engaged in more depth through specific activities which could be considered as a potential base of multipliers for the project and end-users for its commercial services. The terminology therefore deviates from the Grant Agreement, which referred to a European Reg Agri Network for what the project is now calling the ERAC.

## 1.2. Overall state of play of Work Package 2

Overall, WP2 has delivered all key deliverables and milestones due in the first year of the project (Table 1Table 2).

**Table 2: WP2 milestones and deliverables due in year 1**

Milestone / deliverable	Due date	Partner responsible	Status
MS1 Project kick-off	Month 1	GILab	Done



MS4 First live-streamed European Reg Agri Network conference is held, officially establishing the Network	Month 12	EEB	Done
D2.1 EU policy context for Reg Agri	Month 9	EEB	Done
D2.2 Regenerative Agriculture in the EU: White paper	Month 9	EEB	Done
D2.3 Engagement Strategy	Month 7	LEAF	Done
D2.4 ENGAGE Year 1 report	Month 12	EEB	Done

The sanitary rules in place throughout the year, forcing all coordination to be held online, significantly complicated the early phases of the project, leading to a slower start than could have been achieved in normal times. WP2 met for 1h30-long meetings on a monthly basis, with good attendance by project partners and reasonably good participation. Strong links with WP6 (especially T6.1) were identified and synergies were sought, however, cross-linkages with other WPs were limited in the context of WP2 meetings. Yet, the project gathered speed throughout the year, and WP2 is in a very good position at month 12. Table 3 presents the progress to date on “cross-cutting” (CC) KPIs. KPIs linked to specific tasks are reviewed in the next sections.

Very limited “physical” engagement activities were possible in this first year, so the engagement activities were primarily held online.

**Table 3: Cross-cutting KPIs**

	KPI	Final target	Achievement at M12
CC	Number of external events at which AgriCaptureCO <sub>2</sub> is promoted	50	22
CC	Number of webinars held	12	5
CC	Number of multipliers engaged to promote AgriCaptureCO <sub>2</sub>	10	7
CC	Number of launch and demo day events	5	n/a (planned for year 3)
CC	Number of attendees of the launch event	100	n/a (planned for year 3)

The list of external events at which the project has been promoted is included in Annex I.





The project webinars included in the KPI are listed below. The first four are estimated to have reached around 660 people (cumulatively – this may include some double counting), while the last one reached around 20,000 people through a joint communications campaign.

- AgriCaptureCO<sub>2</sub> launch event for farmers (May 2021)
- EU Green Week partner event, presentation of Earth Observation aspects of AgriCaptureCO<sub>2</sub> by GILab and Planet (June 2021)
- Regenerative farming in the EU and UK: policies to help farmers transition (September 2021)
- Launch of the European Regenerative Agriculture Community (November 2021)
- COP26 Blue Zone event showcasing One Carbon World's work with AgriCaptureCO<sub>2</sub> towards regenerative agriculture (November 2021)

**Potential multipliers to 'activate' in order to promote AgriCaptureCO<sub>2</sub> were listed in the Engagement Strategy. From that list, the following organisations and networks have been actively engaged:**

- European Landowners Organisation (ELO): EEB and GILab met with the ELO in the early days of the project and events invitations were shared with the ELO secretariat. The ELO suggested to formalise a collaboration agreement, and an offer was made by AgriCaptureCO<sub>2</sub> partners, but the terms of reference remain to be agreed.
- European Council of Young Farmers (CEJA): the EEB held a bilateral meeting with CEJA and attended one of their working groups (meeting with CEJA members). Event invitations were shared with CEJA and CEJA staff attended the ERAC launch. No formal collaboration has been agreed, but a positive informal exchange is in place and a member of CEJA's secretariat is signed up to the ERAC.
- Copa Cogeca: the EEB presented AgriCaptureCO<sub>2</sub> to one of their policy officers in January 2021 and event invitations have been shared with them, but this organisation has not confirmed their interest in contributing to the project or joining the ERAC. Copa Cogeca rarely engage in collaborations with external actors, so a formal collaboration is unlikely.
- IFOAM Organics Europe: the EEB exchanged with IFOAM, but the organisation is sceptical of the term "regenerative agriculture", preferring to focus on organic or agroecological farming. A formal collaboration is therefore unlikely, however, a staff member of IFOAM attended the ERAC launch and is signed up to the ERAC.



- Soil Carbon Farming (SCARF) network: AgriCaptureCO<sub>2</sub> formally joined this network of 'carbon farming' projects coordinated by the French agronomic research institute INRAE. This is an emerging platform for exchange between projects developing and piloting methodologies for soil carbon credits. So far it has proven an important space for information exchange.
- Lighthouse Farms Network: this is a network of pioneering farms across the world is coordinated by Wageningen University. The network coordinator attended the ERAC launch and is signed up to the ERAC.

### **1.3. Task 2.1: Assess EU policy context for Reg Agri**

In year 1, this task was focused on mapping the policy context for regenerative agriculture in the European Union (EU) and United Kingdom (UK) and elaborating policy recommendations to promote regenerative agriculture. This was done in deliverables D2.1 and D2.2, delivered as per the Grant Agreement in September 2021 (cf Table 2). This mapping exercise involved meeting with policy-makers (in particular officials in the UK Government and European Commission), assessing policy documents and legislative texts (e.g. the so called "Fit for 55" climate package), and discussing policy recommendations with policy stakeholders (e.g. civil society organisations working on agricultural policy).

The EEB, GWCT, and LEAF held calls in March, May and July 2021 to discuss the EU and UK policy contexts and identify areas of alignment with regards to policy recommendations. The draft policy recommendations were then discussed among the AgriCaptureCO<sub>2</sub> consortium and in an external policy workshop with farmers, civil society organisations, and scientists in September.

Following the submission of the policy deliverables, the focus has been on dissemination and monitoring of further policy developments, notably (but not only) re. carbon farming, climate legislation, and agricultural policy in the EU and Environmental Land Management Schemes in the UK. This dual focus will continue into year 2.

### **1.4. Task 2.2: Engagement strategy**

This task began with identifying and mapping the project's audience(s) for targeted and effective engagement. This included examining existing networks within consortium partners and identifying organisations relevant to and interested in regenerative agricultural practices. Additionally, the task, and subsequent deliverable (D2.3) set out to define the project's engagement processes and activities to plan the work of WP2



strategically. This included defining the vision and scope for the European Regenerative Agriculture Community alongside developing an action plan of engagement activities, developing a framework for the effective engagement of potential customers of the AgriCaptureCO<sub>2</sub> platform, and creating a methodology for engaging policy-makers to achieve a supportive policy framework.

We also established a methodology for tracking progress, defining key performance indicators (see Table 1). The task was completed within the period stated and the deliverable was submitted in time.

## 1.5. Tasks 2.3 and 2.4: Engage farmers, businesses and other stakeholders

We have merged reporting for tasks 2.3 and 2.4 as they overlap significantly, and during the first year our efforts have focused on top level engagement, rather than at an individual stakeholder level. Engagement has included numerous mentions of the project at agricultural events, as well as discussions between project partners (mainly EEB, GILab, and LEAF) and key stakeholders/multipliers.

To kick off, the project hosted an online project launch, utilizing LEAFs existing bi-weekly “surgeries” to present the project and hold a Q&A with the partners and audience members. In November, we also held an online launch for the European Regenerative Agriculture Community. This has given us a mailing list to share future events with and direct our engagement efforts at a more detailed level, such as the individual role and interest in regenerative agriculture.

Moving forwards, we shall be looking back to D2.3 to ensure we are maximizing our engagement efforts, and delivering quality activities.

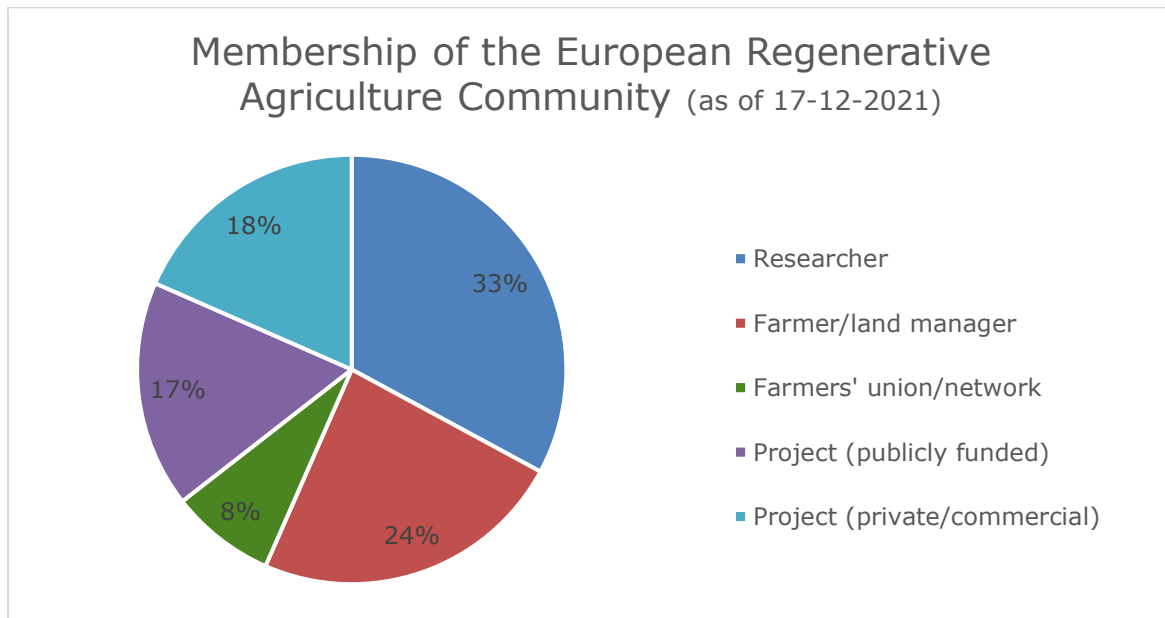
	KPI	Final target	Achievement at M12
T2.3	Number of farmer-oriented external events at which AgriCaptureCO <sub>2</sub> is promoted	30	11
T2.3	Number of farmer climate panels held	8	0
T2.3	Number of AgriCaptureCO <sub>2</sub> demo farms	14	5
T2.3	Number of farmers visiting AgriCaptureCO <sub>2</sub> demo farms	500	180



T2.3 & 2.4	Number of European Regenerative Agriculture Community members	50	89
T2.3	Number of farmers attending demo days	250	n/a (planned for year 3)
T2.3	Number of farmers directly involved in testing AgriCaptureCO <sub>2</sub>	500	n/a (planned for year 2 and 3)
T2.4	Number of AZCEEs involved in testing AgriCaptureCO <sub>2</sub>	5	n/a (planned for year 3)
T2.4	Number of end-users responding to user need surveys	200	n/a (planned for year 3)
T2.4	Number of end-users engaged in focus groups and open-ended interviews	60	n/a (planned for year 3)

In November 2021, the European Regenerative Agriculture Community was launched formally through an online webinar. Attendees who gave their consent and met the conditions set for the ERAC (identifying as one of the categories listed in Figure 1) when registering for the event were added to a new ERAC mailing list, with the option to opt out (however none did). This brought the membership of the ERAC to 89 farmers, researchers, and/or members of relevant projects. A form was created and distributed to all event participants to allow stakeholders to register their interest in the ERAC.

**Figure 1: Breakdown of ERAC members by category of stakeholder**





## 2 Recommendations for year 2

Learning from the successes and weaknesses of year 1, the following key areas for improvement are identified for year 2:

- 1. Ensure better coordination between WP2 ENGAGE and WP5 PILOT.** In year 1, some case-study partners participated in WP2, others not. The WP5 lead generally attended WP2 meetings but this did not suffice to the coordination between the two WPs.
  - To ensure WP2 delivers targeted engagement activities in all case-study countries, and builds on the outcomes of WP5, at least two joint WP2 and WP5 meetings will be organised, and an agenda point will be dedicated to case-study updates in monthly WP2 meetings.
- 2. Increase outreach outside the UK.** Given the active participation of several British partners in WP2, many engagement activities have been delivered in the UK and AgriCaptureCO<sub>2</sub> has achieved very strong outreach among British stakeholders. While this is very positive, it highlights an imbalance in the project's efforts and impacts among case-study countries (which may be partly due to a lack of information sharing from partners in other case-study countries).
  - In year 2, efforts will therefore be made to improve the outreach of the project in Poland, Serbia and Greece (as well as the rest of Europe). This will be achieved by improving the coordination with non-UK case-studies (cf recommendation number 1), as well as by providing translations for written outputs and interpretation for online events where deemed relevant.
- 3. Boost the ERAC by engaging multipliers.** Some progress was made already in year 1 in mapping and establishing relationships with multipliers (i.e. other relevant projects, existing networks, and farmers' associations). In discussions among WP2 partners, there was a strong agreement that strong engagement with multipliers will be the best way to achieve large-scale outreach and ensure long-term sustainability for the ERAC.
  - It will therefore be a priority for WP2 in year 2 to strengthen the collaborations started with several multipliers and to develop new links. In particular, we will scope whether there is interest in developing a "steering group" for the ERAC made up of key multipliers.
- 4. Build capacity on the work of WP3 DEVELOP among WP2 project partners.** In order to prepare the ground for a successful commercial launch at the end of the project, it is key for WP2 partners to be able to communicate to external



stakeholders about the digital services being developed by technical project partners. However, several partners expressed reservations about their ability to do so.

- Potential solutions which have been identified and will be explored in year 2 include: the preparation of a standard powerpoint presentation alongside “speaking points” or a short factsheet presenting the services and progress of WP3 to date; and/or the organisation of a “demo” and capacity building session by the technical team.



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## End of document



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