

## DA2.1 Public Participation Plan

# LIFE Ebro Resilience P1 Project

**EBRO  
RESILIENCE** P1

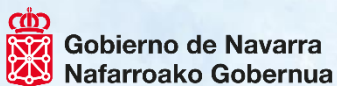


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## 1. Background

Floods are the natural risk with the greatest socio-economic effect globally <sup>1</sup>.

The increase in flood damage has highlighted the fact that traditional risk mitigation measures based exclusively on hydraulic solutions are insufficient, costlier, more environmentally aggressive and do not solve the problem. It has thus been necessary to change the approach to flood risk management, where the riverbed has a dual hydraulic and environmental role, and where the river system's adaptive capacity or resilience and the associated socio-economic system are stressed. This shift in focus is especially significant in light of the ongoing climate change and its effects. Forecasts suggest an increase in extreme weather events, including above-average precipitation anomalies because of intense and persistent rainfall, which could increase flood damage in the future<sup>2</sup>.

To respond to this need, Directive 2007/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the assessment and management of flood risks was adopted in 2007. It aims to reduce the effect of floods on human health, the environment, cultural heritage and economic activity. It also promotes the implementation of resilience-enhancing strategies. This Directive was transposed into Spanish law by means of Royal Decree 903/2010, of 9 July, on flood risk assessment and management. Within this framework, the central planning instrument is the Flood Risk Management Plans (PGRI), which are drafted at the river basin district level.

### 1.1. The LIFE Ebro Resilience P1 project

#### 1.1.1. Background to the project: the Ebro Resilience Strategy

The PGRI for the River Ebro basin district was approved by the Spanish Government at the meeting of the Council of Ministers on 15 January 2016.

Following the major floods of 2015 in the middle section of the River Ebro, the then Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Food and Environment (today the Ministry for Ecological Transition and the Demographic Challenge), the Confederation Hidrográfica del Ebro (Ebro Hydrographic Confederation) and the Regions of La Rioja, Aragon and Navarre agreed to implement a plan of measures whose purpose was to increase the resilience of the system, which culminated in the approval of the Ebro Resilience Strategy (<https://www.ebroresilience.com/>).

The Ebro Resilience Strategy, as part of the Ebro basin PGRI, seeks to reduce the impact of floods by contributing to improving the condition of bodies of water and riverside habitats in a territory that covers 325 km of the River Ebro and runs through 62 municipalities in La Rioja, Navarre and Aragon. To do so, it set out for measures for preventing, protecting against, preparing for and recovering from floods; as well as

<sup>1</sup> Disaster Year in Review Report 2021. Centre for research on the epidemiology of disasters CRED. April 2022.

<sup>2</sup> Sixth Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2021 and State of the Climate in 2021 by the World Meteorological Organization.

measures to improve river ecosystems and residents' ability to respond to such events.

The Ebro Resilience Strategy seeks to be a framework for collaboration between the various Authorities, as well as other actors, to work in solidarity, to coordinate and collaborate in managing flood risk in the middle section of the River Ebro.

The Strategy's future vision is to achieve a middle section of the River Ebro in which economic activities and population centres coexist with a well-conserved River Ebro, without the inevitable floods causing significant damage.

The Strategy's scope is divided into 18 sections, with flood risk reduction measures being considered for each section. Achieving this objective usually involves implementing a combination of measures, which combine to reduce the risk of flooding. These combinations of measures<sup>3</sup> have been implemented since 2015 and have proven effective in subsequent extraordinary floods (2018 and 2021), preventing the displacement of populations in flood events with similar flow rates. These solutions, which have already proven effective, and other nature-based solutions<sup>4</sup> that may be developed, are those that shall be implemented as part of developing the Ebro Resilience Strategy.

Within the framework of the Strategy, co-financing has been sought and granted from the European Union's LIFE programme to implement new actions, through the LIFE Ebro Resilience P1 project.

### 1.1.2. The LIFE Ebro Resilience P1 project

The LIFE Ebro Resilience P1 project seeks to improve flood resilience by implementing nature-based measures and adaptation measures; to improve the ecological condition of the intervention areas and their biodiversity; to involve local communities in designing, implementing, assessing and following up on the interventions and flood risk management in general; and to provide a starting point for the replication of similar actions at basin level and in other basins; and it shall be a starting point for replicating similar actions at basin level and in other Spanish and European basins.

To achieve these objectives, on the one hand, two interventions shall be performed to reduce the risk of flooding and improve river ecosystems in two differentiated areas: area 1, located between the villages of Alfaro (La Rioja) and Castejón (Navarre); and area 2, between the villages of Fuentes de Ebro and Osea de Ebro (both in the province of Zaragoza, Aragon). On the other hand, a process of dialogue with the territory and to improve social resilience will be opened. Finally, actions shall be taken to replicate the results achieved in other sections of the river, or other rivers with similar problems.

<sup>3</sup> Some of the solutions implemented in the middle section of the Ebro since 2015 consist of creating high water or relief channels, temporary flood areas, permeabilization of infrastructures, relocation of defences, recovery of lost arms of the river, permeabilization of densely-vegetated sediment masses, among others.

<sup>4</sup> Nature-based solutions are solutions to challenges faced by society that are inspired by how nature works; they are cost-effective and provide environmental, social and economic benefits; and they help to enhance resilience.



The LIFE Ebro Resilience P1 project is implemented by means of various types of actions. The content of these actions is briefly set out below:

- **A Actions - Preparation:**

Type A actions include preliminary works necessary to implement the main actions. They include drafting participation and capacity-building plans, drafting construction projects, as well as managing authorisations, permits, licences and other preliminary steps.

- **B Actions - Implementation:**

Type B actions are the most important actions in the project since they implement the target policies of the LIFE Programme. They comprise the two interventions of reducing flood risk and improving the river ecosystem and replicating the results obtained.

- **C Actions - Monitoring:**

They include the follow-up, monitoring and assessment of the project's objectives.

- **D Actions - Communication and participation:**

They channel the communication of the work performed, participation by stakeholders and the general public and capacity-building, by implementing their respective Plans.

- **E Actions - Project Management:**

They encompass the tasks for internal management and coordination of the project.

### 1.1.3. Participation in the LIFE Ebro Resilience P1 project

The LIFE Ebro Resilience P1 project believes public participation to be an inseparable part of flood risk management, it includes it as an indispensable factor for its effectiveness and promotes it within the framework of the recommendations of the Aarhus Convention (1998) and of the legal obligations of the European Water Framework Directive(2000/60/EC) and the Floods Directive (2007/60/EC).

Through participation , the intention is to achieve more solid results derived from exchanging and improving knowledge among the parties involved, and to formulate more environmentally, socially and economically sustainable alternatives. To achieve this, we promote participation being cross-cutting to all the project's actions, the content of which shall define the purpose of the various participatory actions.

## 1.2. Legal framework of public participation in flood risk management

The legal framework for public participation in managing flood risk at Europe is summarised and embodied in the obligations set out in the EU Directive on Floods (2007/60/EC). These guidelines have been transposed into Spanish domestic law by means of Royal Decree 903/2010 on flood risk assessment and management. The general participation and coordination obligations applicable to flood risk management, the Ebro basin PGRI and thus to the LIFE Ebro Resilience P1 project are set out below.

According to Floods Directive 2007/60/EC:

- *"The active involvement of all stakeholders set out in article 10 of this Directive shall be coordinated, as appropriate, with the active involvement of the stakeholders referred to in article 14 of Directive 2000/60/EC" (Art. 9.3 D2007/60).*
- *"Pursuant to current Community legislation, Member States shall make available to the public the preliminary flood risk assessment, flood hazard maps, flood risk maps and flood risk management plans" (Art. 10.1, D2007/60).*
- *"Member States shall promote active participation by stakeholders in preparing, reviewing and updating flood risk management plans..." (Art. 10.2, D2007/60).*

These obligations have been transposed into Spanish law by means of article 16 of RD 903/2010:

- *"The relevant authorities shall promote the active participation of stakeholders in the process of developing, reviewing and updating flood risk management plans and programmes of measures. The process of drafting programmes of measures and flood risk management plans will include the requirements set out in Law 27/2006 of 18 July 2006, regulating the rights of access to information, public participation and access to justice in environmental matters, in particular those concerning the active provision of substantive information for the planning process. This information must be accessible on the websites of the relevant authorities and, at least, on the websites of the Ministry of the Environment, Rural and Marine Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior"(Art. 16 RD 903/2010).*

This legal basis sets out specific obligations for coordinating, consulting the public and promoting active participation applicable to the LIFE Ebro Resilience P1 project, as summarised below:

- **Coordination of the public participation:** Coordination with the water planning cycle imposed by the Water Framework Directive is required, which allows flood risk management plans to be integrated into reviews of river basin management plans. It also specifically requires that the active participation of all stakeholders as provided for in the Floods Directive be coordinated, as appropriate, with the active participation of stakeholders set out in the Water Framework Directive.
  - During the course of the project, the coordination of existing participatory spaces connected with water management in the middle section of the River Ebro shall be sought.
- **Making publicly available information relevant to flood risk management:** A public consultation lasting no less than three months (Art. 7.4, 10.2 and 13.3 RD 903/2010) is mandatory for flood risk planning instruments (preliminary flood risk assessment, flood hazard maps, flood risk maps and flood risk management plans and their programmes of measures).



- As part of the project, information about the Ebro basin PGRI shall be disseminated, as shall detailed information about the project's actions.
- **Promoting active participation:** It mandates the promotion of active participation by all stakeholders in water policy and, in particular, in the water planning cycle, to which the objective of reducing flood risk and planning instruments such as preliminary flood risk assessment, flood hazard maps, flood risk maps and flood risk management plans have now been added. The parties subject to this obligation are the Member States of the European Union. In the transposition into domestic law, the competence lies with the bodies that have been classified as "Competent Authorities," which is taken to mean river basin and regional bodies and civil protection authorities. The scope of participation is specific in the planning, and general in the application of the Water Framework Directive. The obligation to promote active participation also applies to stakeholders, that is, those who are or who may be affected by, or have an interest in, decisions taken on environmental matters.
  - These obligations have been included in the project objectives, as well as via specific actions to promote active participation.

## 2. Objectives

The general aim of the LIFE Ebro Resilience P1 project Participation Plan is to set out the participation system to be implemented during the project. The intention of doing this is to guide any participatory action that may be organised, while encouraging and guaranteeing social involvement in developing the project.

The specific objectives of the Public Participation Plan are:

- To inform stakeholders and the general public about the project and its actions.
- To involve stakeholders in developing and monitoring the various types of actions to be implemented, and in flood risk management in general.
- To create a specific conflict transformation space associated with flood risk management.

## 3. Methodology

The methodology for preparing and approving the Public Participation Plan of the LIFE Ebro Resilience P1 project consists of the following phases:

- **Review of information:** Review of the obligations to participate in flood risk management and analysis of the experience acquired in the Ebro Resilience Strategy, on the basis of the reports on the information days and thematic deliberative workshops held in various sections of the Ebro Resilience area ([www.ebroresilience.com](http://www.ebroresilience.com));



- **Inventory, diagnosis and updating of data:** Analysis of the context of the participation in the context of the project, which has consisted of:
  - Updating the stakeholder database.
  - Creation of a database of existing participation spaces and processes.
  - Preparation of a diagnostic report about existing participation spaces and processes.
  - Preparation of a media analysis regarding floods.
  - Interviews with stakeholders to gather their views on participation and the interests at stake.
  - Drafting of a report analysing potential conflicts in implementing the project.
- Identification of opportunities to participate.
  - **Drafting of the Public participation plan.**
- **Internal and external consultation:** Internal review by the project's partners and external review by partners and stakeholders.
- **Review of the contributions:** Assessment of the contributions received with a view to integrating them and providing a reasoned response to them.
- **Approval of the Public Participation Plan.**

## 4. Target audience

The LIFE Ebro Resilience P1 project's target audience are the stakeholders (including people affected) and the general public, both in the project's action areas and in the middle section of the River Ebro. Depending on the action, it may focus on a specific sector or several sectors, and on greater or lesser number of people. The programme of participation actions (section 6 of this document) specifies the target audience in each case.

In all cases, it shall strive to include all voices and pay special attention to including vulnerable groups.

## 5. Principles of participation

The general principles that govern the LIFE Ebro Resilience P1 project's participation model are as follows:

- **Legality:** Compliance with public participation obligations regarding flood risk management shall be ensured by promoting active, real participation that guarantees transparent public involvement from the initial phase of the project.
- **Governance, leadership, coordination:** The solidity and social interest of the participatory process will largely depend on the support and involvement of the partners, as well as on the ability of the various authorities involved to coordinate. We shall work to ensure the effective involvement of all relevant authorities who are part of the project in the participatory action.
- **Scope and clarity of objectives:** Clearly to set the objectives of the various participatory actions, their scope and limitations.
- **Publicity, accessibility and quality of information:** The information provided during the process shall be publicised through various channels (website, posters, etc.),

social media, etc.) and scales (local, municipal, regional, national) and must meet the following quality criteria: accessible (enabling access to all audiences), complete (ensuring that all relevant information on the topic is conveyed), adapted to the target audience and traceable (identifying the sources of information).

- **Transparency:** During the participatory process, information must be provided about everything relevant to the decision-making process, which is why the documentation used, as well as the systems for assessing the various actions in the project, must be accessible.
- **Representativeness and diversity:** All interests must be represented in the participation, and strategies necessary to reach the widest possible audience shall be adopted. Diversity shall be guaranteed especially for actions aimed at the target audience, as shall breadth in actions aimed at the general public.
- **Inclusion and intersectionality:** Axes of inequality around flood risk management shall be factored in and specific strategies shall be put in place to engage and integrate groups that are often under-represented.
- **Adaptability:** A balance must be struck between the most appropriate working scale in terms of the content of the process (in this case area (section) with a significantly high risk of flooding) and the most feasible in terms of participants (possibly municipal). Both of these aspects rarely coincide and it will be necessary to work at different scales in an integrated fashion, adjusting to the needs or options in each case.
- **Integration:** Other spaces for participating in the project territory shall be identified to seek synergies, to avoid duplication or overlapping and to integrate participation efforts.
- **Accountability:** Participation in this project does not entail binding results. The person responsible for implementing the actions shall be responsible for the final decisions. In this case, different levels and spheres of responsibility have been identified: EU, national, regional and local. Although the results of participation are not binding, there is a commitment to respond reasonably to the contributions received through public participation, to follow up on the agreements reached and to report on the development and impact of the actions implemented.

## 6. Programme of actions

The main axis of this Participation Plan is the Action Programme, which sets out the proposed information, participation and conflict transformation actions.

- a) Basic types of information actions:
  - **Informative materials** (brochures, panels, posters, etc.).
  - **Local presentations** (information days, etc.).
  - **Informative visits** to the intervention areas.
  - **Small information meetings** (discussions over coffee, etc.).
- b) Basic types of participatory actions:
  - **Co-creation groups:** thematic, multi-sectoral groups for deliberating on and jointly creating the project's actions, which form part of the project's management structure.



- **Local and regional forums:** deliberative spaces open to the general public for debating various actions involved in the project.
- **Specific working groups:** local working groups covering flood risk management and monitoring of project actions.
- **Virtual deliberative platform:** a virtual platform for digital participation in various project actions, it complements the other participatory actions.
- **Monitoring platform:** a virtual platform for social monitoring of the progress of the project's actions.

c) Basic types of conflict transformation actions:

The conflict transformation action shall work with the tool of open forums and group processes, which are based on creating a **stable participation group**<sup>5</sup> that is representative of all interests of the middle section of the River Ebro.

Purpose	Degree of participation	Participatory action
Mitigation, adaptation and restoration actions	Information	Informative material about mitigation , adaptation and restoration actions. Discussions about floods. Visits to action areas. Final visits to action areas.
	Participation	Co-creation groups. Local forums.
Participation and capacity-building actions	Information	Informative material about the participation plan. Local presentations of the participation plan. Informative material about the deliberative platform.
	Participation	Co-creation groups. Local forums. Virtual deliberative platform.
Land bank	Information	Local public presentation.
	Participation	Local working group. Co-creation groups. School for mayors. Virtual deliberative platform.
Follow-up actions	Information	Informative material from the monitoring platform.
	Participation	Co-creation groups. Local Action Group. Monitoring platform.
Replication actions	Information	Information material about the replication process.
	Participation	Co-creation groups. Regional forums. Virtual deliberative platform.
Conflict transformation actions	Mediation	Stable participation group.

Table 1. Summary of the programme of participation actions.

The description of each programme action includes:

- Objective and description of the action.
- Mechanisms of participation used (spreading/dissemination, public meeting, deliberative workshops, volunteering, etc.).
- Target audience.

<sup>5</sup> Group whose components remain stable over time.

- Place held.
- Planned implementation timetable.

## 6.1. Information actions

The **objective** of information actions is to inform stakeholders and the general public about the various actions in the project, and to promote their involvement *a posteriori*.

They are adaptive and will be conducted at different times depending on the needs that may arise during the implementation of the project.

Below is a summary of the information actions to be performed (Table 2), followed by a more detailed description of these actions.

Purpose	Degree of participation	Participatory action
Mitigation, adaptation and restoration actions	Information	Informative material about mitigation , adaptation and restoration actions. Discussions about floods. Visits to action areas. Final visits to action areas.
Participation and capacity-building actions	Information	Information material about the Participation Plan. Local presentations of the participation plan. Informative material about the deliberative platform.
Land bank	Information	Local public presentation.
Follow-up actions	Information	Informative material from the monitoring platform.
Replication actions	Information	Information material about the replication process.

Table 2. Summary of the programme of information actions.

### 6.1.1. Information about mitigation, adaptation and restoration actions

- **Informative material:** Information material about mitigation, adaptation and restoration actions shall be produced for dissemination among the residents, and to be used as a starting point for discussion about future uses in the action areas.
  - **Participatory mechanism:** Spreading/dissemination.
  - **Target audience:** General public.
  - **Location:** Alfaro, Castejón and Osera de Ebro-Fuentes de Ebro.
  - **Calendar:** 2023-2024.
- **Discussions about floods:** The interviews established the need to hold meetings with small groups in informal contexts, at which information would be provided about the various actions proposed to be executed in the territory, as well as risk mitigation strategies in general. Coffee meetings shall be held with technicians involved.



in implementing the project's actions and stakeholders in the territory.

- **Participatory mechanism:** Public meeting.
  - **Target audience:** Stakeholders.
  - **Location:** Alfaro, Castejón and Osera de Ebro-Fuentes de Ebro.
  - **Calendar:** October 2022 to September 2027.
- **Visits to action areas:** To inform in the field, visits to the action areas are planned in small or large groups, according to what is possible in each area, with technical project staff and stakeholders from the territory.
    - **Participatory mechanism:** Excursions and field visits.
    - **Target audience:** Osera-Fuentes and Alfaro-Castejón stakeholders.
    - **Location:** Alfaro, Castejón and Osera de Ebro-Fuentes de Ebro.
    - **Calendar:** October 2022 to March 2026.
- **Final visits to action areas:** A final visit to the actions in each action area will be arranged for information and celebration purposes. The visits will be guided by project technicians, with the involvement of stakeholders.
    - **Participatory mechanism:** Excursions and field visits.
    - **Target audience:** General public.
    - **Location:** Alfaro, Castejón and Osera de Ebro-Fuentes de Ebro.
    - **Calendar:** March to June 2026.

### 6.1.2. Information about Participatory and Capacity-Building Actions

Three participation tools will be implemented during the project: the Participation Plan, the deliberative platform, and the monitoring platform. For each of them, the following information actions are to be performed.

#### 6.1.2.1. Information about the Participation Plan

- **Informative material:** To reach a wider audience, an information leaflet about the Participation Plan will be produced for dissemination on the project's website and social media.
  - **Participatory mechanism:** Spreading/dissemination.
  - **Target audience:** General public.
  - **Location:** Middle section of the River Ebro.
  - **Calendar:** Autumn 2022.
- **Local presentations:** In-person information sessions about the Participation Plan are envisaged. These presentation sessions may be connected to other deliberative spaces. These presentations are expected to take place in the co-creation groups and in the first actions to be arranged with the general public in the various municipalities. The

possibility of virtual presentation sessions is envisaged according to the needs identified at the time.

- **Participatory mechanism:** Public meeting.
- **Target audience:** General public.
- **Location:** Alfaro, Castejón and Osera de Ebro-Fuentes de Ebro.
- **Calendar:** Autumn 2022 to November 2022.

#### 6.1.2.2. Information about the deliberative platform

- **Informative material:** A brochure and an information video about the operation of the deliberative platform will be developed.
  - **Participatory mechanism:** Spreading/dissemination.
  - **Target audience:** General public.
  - **Location:** Middle section of the River Ebro.
  - **Calendar:** 2023.

#### 6.1.3. Information about the land bank

- **Local public presentation:** A presentation shall be made about the proposal and operation of a land bank pilot action in the municipality chosen to execute it.
  - **Participatory mechanism:** Public meeting.
  - **Target audience:** General public.
  - **Location:** To be determined.
  - **Calendar:** 2024.

#### 6.1.4. Information on monitoring actions

- **Informative material:** Information material about the operation of the monitoring platform and the monitoring points shall be produced for each action area.
  - **Participatory mechanism:** Spreading/dissemination.
  - **Target audience:** General public, with a special focus on stakeholders.
  - **Location:** Middle section of the River Ebro.
  - **Calendar:** 2023 a 2024.

#### 6.1.5. Information about the replication process

- **Informative material:** Explanatory material about the objectives, methodology and schedule of the deliberative process shall be created for replication as part of the project.
  - **Participatory mechanism:** Spreading/dissemination.
  - **Target audience:** General public.
  - **Location:** Middle section of the River Ebro.
  - **Calendar:** Variable according to the progress of the work.



## 6.2. Actions for public participation

The **objective** of the public participation actions is to involve stakeholders and the general public in developing the project. This involvement will range from review, co-design, proposing actions to be implemented, as well as assessing and following up on them.

Below is a summary of the public participation actions to be executed (Table 3); it is followed by a more detailed description of them. These actions may be reviewed and adapted depending on the needs that may arise during the project's implementation.

Purpose	Degree of participation	Participatory action
Mitigation, adaptation and restoration actions	Participation	Co-creation groups. Local forums.
Participation and capacity-building actions	Participation	Co-creation groups. Local forums. Virtual deliberative platform.
Land bank	Participation	Local working group. Co-creation groups. School for mayors. Virtual deliberative platform.
Follow-up actions	Participation	Co-creation groups. Local Action Group. Monitoring platform.
Replication actions	Participation	Co-creation groups. Regional forums. Virtual deliberative platform.

Table 3. Participation actions as part of the LIFE Ebro Resilience P1 project.

### 6.2.1. Participation in mitigation, adaptation and restoration actions

The **aim** of participation in mitigation, adaptation and restoration actions lies chiefly in the involvement of stakeholders in specifying and proposing improvements to project actions, as appropriate.

After the technical diagnosis and feasibility study of possible actions to be implemented in the La Rioja and Navarre section, including the legal aspects, it is concluded that, with regard to the morphological adaptation of the riverbed, there are no other technically- and legally-viable alternatives to the proposals set out that meet the objectives of the project. Therefore, given that these actions are highly dependent upon technical and legal aspects, opening a process of participation regarding defining the morphological solution to be adopted could lead to receiving proposals that contradict these conditioning factors and even lead to forming positions that are contrary to the necessary restoration of legality. Therefore, in these areas, participation in the restoration phase will be promoted.

- **Mitigation and adaptation co-creation groups:** Participation associated with mitigation and adaptation actions will be conducted with stakeholders, and will focus on:
  1. Collaboration in specifying the actions set in the project and proposals for improving them and other conservation and protection actions.
  2. Review of proposed future land uses.
  3. Review and compatibility analysis of flood communication protocols in the action areas.
  4. Follow-up of work and fulfilment of objectives.
  - **Participatory mechanism:** Deliberative workshop.
  - **Target audience:** Stakeholders.
  - **Location:** Alfaro, Castejón and Osera de Ebro-Fuentes de Ebro.
  - **Calendar:**
    - Design of morphological actions in the Aguilar meander (Osera de Ebro and Fuentes de Ebro): October-December 2022.
    - Design of actions in lateral flow areas in the Aguilar meander (Osera de Ebro and Fuentes de Ebro): January-March 2022.
    - Proposed future land uses: To be specified according to the progress of the actions.
    - Compatibility of communication protocols: To be set according to the group's progress and the needs of the project.
  
- **Nature and biodiversity co-creation groups:** These groups will focus on:
  1. Specification of the characteristics of environmental restoration projects.
  2. Proposing and specifying the action in the El Soto de Alfaro meander.
  3. Review of the proposal for future land use performed by the participation and capacity group.
  4. Follow-up of work and fulfilment of objectives.
  - **Participatory mechanism:** Deliberative workshop.
  - **Target audience:** Stakeholders.
  - **Location:** Alfaro, Castejón and Osera de Ebro-Fuentes de Ebro.
  - **Calendar:** October 2022 to August 2027
  
- **Local forums:** It is possible that, once the various themes have been explored in the co-creation groups, it may be deemed appropriate to open up the content of the discussions to broader local forums, in which case they will be convened.
  - **Participatory mechanism:** Deliberative workshop.
  - **Target audience:** General public and/or stakeholders (to be specified according to needs).
  - **Location:** Alfaro, Castejón and Osera de Ebro-Fuentes de Ebro.
  - **Calendar:** The local forums have no assigned calendar since they are actions that depend upon the operation of other spaces for participation.



### 6.2.2. Participation in participation and capacity-building actions

The **objective** of participating in information, participation and capacity-building actions is to involve stakeholders to improve access to the project, jointly to establish participatory and dissemination actions, and to identify needs and proposals for actions to be implemented in these areas.

- Participation and capacity **co-creation groups**: they will work on:
  1. Proposals for better communication and access to information about the LIFE project.
  2. Design of proposals for participation (for example, river contract).
  3. Design of proposals for dissemination materials, capacity building and environmental education.
  4. Proposal for future land uses (both in the action areas and adjacent areas that fall into disuse).
  - **Participatory mechanism**: Deliberative workshop.
  - **Target audience**: Stakeholders.
  - **Location**: Middle section of the River Ebro.
  - **Calendar**: October 2022 to August 2027.
  
- **Local forums**: The proposal for future uses shall be explored in local forums with a broad audience.
  - **Participatory mechanism**: Deliberative workshop.
  - **Target audience**: General public.
  - **Location**: Alfaro, Castejón and Osera de Ebro-Fuentes de Ebro.
  - **Calendar**: The proposal for future uses must be associated with the implementation of restoration projects. Expected before December 2022 in Castejón, March 2023 in Alfaro and before April 2023 in Fuentes de Ebro and Osera de Ebro.
  
- **Virtual deliberative platform**: Space for the proposal for improving the participation or capacity-building actions during the project or for future capacity-building actions to be implemented in the entire middle section of the River Ebro.
  - **Participatory mechanism**: Deliberative platform.
  - **Target audience**: General public.
  - **Location**: Alfaro, Castejón and Osera de Ebro-Fuentes de Ebro, and the middle section of the Ebro.
  - **Calendar**: To be set according to the needs of the project.

### 6.2.3. Participation in the land bank

The **purpose** of the land bank is to facilitate reclamation of river space for flood risk mitigation; this aim will be combined with residents' land disposal needs. It is a pilot test developed as part of the project and it will initially be implemented on a small scale, perhaps in one village subject to prioritisation of the municipality where it will most likely be implemented.

- **Local working group:** Creation of a local working group to diagnose the status and availability of land (for example, identification of land types in flood-prone area, identification of potential conflict, identification of the degree of openness to swaps or modifications, etc.), and designing joint solutions (for example, swaps, compensation, land-use planning instruments, etc.).
  - **Participatory mechanism:** Deliberative workshop.
  - **Target audience:** General public and stakeholders.
  - **Location:** Location of pilot experience to be set.
  - **Calendar:** 2023-2025.
  
- **Co-creation groups:** The LIFE thematic co-creation groups shall review the proposal concerning the land bank. Joint sessions of all the co-creation groups may be arranged.
  - **Participatory mechanism:** Deliberative workshop.
  - **Target audience:** Stakeholders.
  - **Location:** Alfaro, Castejón and Osera de Ebro-Fuentes de Ebro.
  - **Calendar:** 2023-2025.
  
- **School for mayors:** Specific sessions covering land banking will be run through the School of Mayors (for example, initial brainstorming, preliminary diagnosis, prioritisation of cases, etc.).
  - **Participatory mechanism:** Deliberative workshop / Public meeting.
  - **Target audience:** Stakeholders (participants in the School of Mayors).
  - **Location:** Middle section of the River Ebro.
  - **Calendar:** 2023-2025.
  
- **Virtual deliberative platform:** A virtual platform shall be created to diagnose and propose a land bank (for example, for setting criteria, conditions, operation, etc.).
  - **Participatory mechanism:** Virtual deliberative workshop.
  - **Target audience:** General public.
  - **Location:** Middle section of the River Ebro.
  - **Calendar:** 2023-2025

#### 6.2.4. Participation in follow-up actions

The **objective** of participating in the follow-up is focused on co-designing a system for following up and monitoring the progress of the interventions performed in the field.

- **Co-creation groups:** The co-creation groups will be responsible for collaborating in designing a platform for follow-up actions, as well as proposing the location of posts for collecting information in the action areas and their maintenance.



- **Participatory mechanism:** Deliberative workshop.
  - **Target audience:** Stakeholders.
  - **Location:** Alfaro, Castejón and Osera de Ebro-Fuentes de Ebro.
  - **Calendar:** October 2022 to April 2023.
- **Local action group:** A local action group involving stakeholders and the general public shall be piloted in one or more LIFE area, making it possible to monitor both the project's own actions and flood risk management in general (for example, by exchanging information, identifying needs, demands and proposals after the actions are complete, etc.). The structure, organisation, actions and content of the group shall be set out along with its components (for example, it may contain support, training, etc., sub-groups).
    - **Participatory mechanism:** Deliberative workshop / Volunteering.
    - **Target audience:** Stakeholders.
    - **Location:** Alfaro, Castejón and Osera de Ebro-Fuentes de Ebro.
    - **Calendar:** 2023-2027.
  - **Monitoring platform:** A virtual platform will be developed that will make it possible to upload data and images concerning the monitoring of the project's actions. It will be associated with the installation of a network of posts for collecting information in the action areas.
    - **Participatory mechanism:** Deliberative platform / Citizen science.
    - **Target audience:** Stakeholders and the general public.
    - **Location:** Middle section of the River Ebro.
    - **Calendar:** October 2022 - 2027.

### 6.2.5. Participation in replication actions

The **objective** of participating in the replication actions is to involve stakeholders in the Ebro Resilience area in to identify possible flood risk mitigation alternatives to be developed elsewhere in the middle section of the River Ebro.

- **Co-creation groups:** The co-creation groups shall be involved in proposing replication actions and in assessing the results of the replication forums and the deliberative platform.
  - **Participatory mechanism:** Deliberative workshop.
  - **Target audience:** General public and stakeholders.
  - **Location:** Alfaro, Castejón and Osera de Ebro-Fuentes de Ebro.
  - **Calendar:** 2023 to 2027.
- **Regional forums:** Regional replication forums shall be created (Aragon, Navarre, La Rioja) to identify possible locations of sections of the river that have similar problems that might be subject to replication of the project's actions.
  - **Participatory mechanism:** Deliberative workshop.
  - **Target audience:** General public.

- **Location:** Middle section of the River Ebro.
- **Calendar:** 2023 to 2027.
- **Virtual deliberative platform:** Besides the regional forums, an online deliberative process will be opened to replicate locations and replication actions.
  - **Participatory mechanism:** Virtual deliberative workshop.
  - **Target audience:** General public.
  - **Location:** Middle section of the River Ebro.
  - **Calendar:** 2023 to 2027.

### 6.3. Conflict transformation actions

Following the assessment of the experience of the section workshops arranged as part of the Ebro Resilience Strategy, it is considered desirable and necessary to open a specific space for conflict transformation in flood risk management in the middle section of the Ebro river flow line. For this purpose, the aim is to create an exchange space with a stable stakeholder group that will meet regularly and explore the various key issues regarding flood risk management in the Ebro Resilience area. The contentious issues where major polarities have been identified include:

- What is the best alternative for flood risk mitigation? Are dredging and removal of vegetation the most effective and feasible measures?
- Is the restoration, protection and conservation of river ecosystems compatible with current socio-economic activities?
- Is it feasible to conceive of a different socio-economic model on the banks of the Ebro?
- Is it feasible to relocate farms to areas that are not flood-prone.
- To what extent must land requirements for river space be compensated?
- Does the flood risk affect the depopulation of the banks of the River Ebro?
- Is the current management approach moving us closer to the river or taking us further away?
- Is public participation necessary or is it useless?

Among the various approaches to mediation or conflict facilitation, we shall work with open forums and group processes, under the process work facilitation approach.

This experimental space will bring together around 20 key people, who will represent the various interests at stake in flood risk management in the middle section of the Ebro. A minimum of 12 in-person working sessions are expected.

These actions will be executed as part of action D2.2 of the project, including the detailed design of this forum, its methodology and operation. This action will run between September 2022 and April 2026.



## 7. Timeline

Scope	Information and participation actions	2022			2023				2024				2025				2026				2027			
		2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	
Mitigation, adaptation and restoration actions	Informative material about actions																							
	Discussions about floods																							
	Visits to action areas																							
	Final site visits																							
	Co-creation groups																							
	Local forums																							
Participation and capacity-building actions	Participation plan information material																							
	Local presentations																							
	Information material about the deliberative platform																							
	Co-creation groups																							
	Local forums																							
	Virtual deliberative platform																							
Land bank actions	Local public presentation																							
	Local working group																							
	Co-creation groups																							
	School for mayors																							
	Virtual deliberative platform																							
Follow-up actions	Information material about the monitoring platform																							
	Co-creation groups																							
	Local action group																							
	Monitoring platform																							
Replication actions	Information material about the replication process																							
	Co-creation groups																							
	Regional forums																							
	Virtual deliberative platform																							
Conflict transformation actions	Open forums																							
	Group processes																							

## 8. Relationship with the Communication plan

All the actions set out in this Plan are included in the LIFE Ebro Resilience P1 project communication plan. Thus, for each phase and action in the Participation Plan, the most appropriate communication mechanisms, the content to be communicated, the target audiences, the aims and messages to be conveyed, the timeline, the necessary and available means and tools, and the people responsible for preparing it are set out.

## 9. Relationship to the Capacity-Building plan

Improving social capacities (for example, knowledge, organisation, motivation, etc.) regarding the content of participation is often identified as a need and an outstanding challenge for achieving more transformative participatory processes. The LIFE Ebro Resilience P1 project is developing a social capacity-building plan that will be implemented complementarily and interactively with the Participation Plan.

The participation actions and a list of participants' optimal capacities for conducting participatory discussions are shown below. According to the capacity diagnosis produced by the project's social capacity-building plan, this list of capacities shall be updated and actions that it is essential to undertake during the entire participation process shall be prioritised.



Purpose	Participatory action	Optimal capacities of the people involved
Participation in mitigation, adaptation and restoration actions	Adaptation and mitigation co-creation group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to understand the natural phenomenon , the causes of the related risks and the features of the existing flood risk management system.</li> <li>Ability to exchange knowledge between different stakeholders.</li> <li>Ability to research and develop flood risk management measures and policies.</li> <li>Attitude of proactive group protection.</li> <li>Proactive attitude to protect the environmental values of rivers.</li> <li>Ability to access information about flood risk management projects and public policies.</li> <li>Capacity for proactive participation in actions and policies.</li> </ul>
	Local forums	
Participation in participation and capacity-building actions	Co-creation group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to understand the natural phenomenon, the causes of related risks and the features of the existing flood risk management system.</li> <li>Ability to disseminate knowledge about flood risk management.</li> <li>Ability to exchange knowledge between different stakeholders.</li> <li>Ability to research and develop flood risk management measures and policies.</li> <li>Proactive attitude to protect the environmental values of rivers.</li> <li>Ability to generate social commitment to flood risk management.</li> <li>Ability to use social media for flood risk management.</li> <li>Ability to create specific social media for flood risk management.</li> <li>Capacity for proactive participation in actions and policies.</li> </ul>
	Local forums	
	Virtual deliberative platform	
Participation in the land bank pilot project	Local working group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to operate within the administrative structure of local flood risk management.</li> <li>Ability to access information about flood risk management projects and public policies.</li> <li>Ability to access general financial resources to fulfil the aims.</li> </ul>
	Co-creation group	
	School for mayors	
	Virtual deliberative platform	
Participation in follow-up actions	Co-creation group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to access information about flood risk management projects and public policies.</li> </ul>
	Local action group	
	Monitoring platform	
Participation in replication actions	Co-creation group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ability to understand the natural phenomenon , the causes of related risks and the features of the existing flood risk management system.</li> <li>Ability to research and develop flood risk management measures and policies.</li> <li>Attitude of proactive group protection.</li> <li>Proactive attitude to protect the environmental values of rivers.</li> <li>Ability to offer one's own opinions and proposals.</li> <li>Capacity for proactive participation in actions and policies.</li> <li>Ability to access general financial resources to fulfil the aims.</li> </ul>
	Regional forums	
	Virtual deliberative platform	

Table 4: Optimal capacities for participation

## 10. Results feedback system

Feedback is among the weak points of most participatory processes , and quality feedback is one of the main things participants seek.

The LIFE Ebro Resilience P1 project's feedback system shall consist of a traceability report which will set out the origin and development of the proposals derived from the various participation spaces, and a synthesis of the results including the rationale behind the final decision.

The traceability document shall include the following fields:

- 0) Related project action.
- 1) Subject.
- 2) Origin of the proposal.
- 3) Description of the proposal.
- 4) Synthesis of the exchange produced (polarities and supports).
- 5) Decision.
- 6) Reasoned response to the decision.
- 7) Expected implementation timetable.
- 8) Designated tracking system.

To be able to draft the traceability report, minutes shall be taken of all the participation spaces that make it possible to identify all the elements included in the traceability report.

As mentioned in the monitoring actions, besides the results of the process itself, a feedback system shall be run beyond the end of the LIFE Ebro Resilience P1 project to keep stakeholders and the general public informed and involved.

## 11. Assessment and review of the Plan

Any public participation process requires a final assessment to measure the quality of the process, the main impacts and results, and to identify barriers and difficulties.

The assessment indicators shall be specified jointly in the participation and capacity co-creation group; however, a list of basic performance factors to be borne in mind is included here (Niето, B. et. al. 2020):

### Coordination

- There has been institutional coordination.
- The rules of the game have been respected.
- The means/resources have been adequate/sufficient.
- The means required to develop the participatory process have been adjusted to what was envisaged in terms of time and/or financial cost.



#### Information

- Quality information has been provided to promote discussion and/or deliberation (sufficient, rigorous, clear, plural, useful and accessible and using language adapted to the profiles of the participants).

#### Participation

- Sufficient people and organisations have been involved to achieve the objectives sought.
- Participation was equitable in gender terms.
- Participation in the various actions and sessions was diverse, according to the mapping of actors executed and with the social reality.
- Individuals' and organisations' degree of satisfaction during the participatory process is high.
- The relationships between the people and organisations involved have been improved.
- A certain improvement in participatory culture has been achieved.
- The participants have been able to make proposals.

#### Ability to influence decision-making

- The inputs from participation are in line with the aims of the process.
- The contributions have been borne in mind with rigour and a real influence on decision-making.
- Participating people and organisations have received reasoned and transparent information about how these results are or are not included.

#### Results

- The expected results of the process have been achieved.
- New ideas or solutions to problems have been contributed.
- Decisions accepted by all the social actors have been taken and implemented.
- Socio-environmental conflicts have been managed/transformed.
- There has been some change to policies and/or legislation.

A joint meeting of all the project's partners shall be required to assess the Plan. Biannual mid-term shall also be performed with the participation and capacity co-creation groups in the two project areas.

The information collected shall be used to prepare biannual status reports that will allow appropriate revisions to the Plan to be performed. The changes that occur shall be added to the appendix every time they occur and shall be published on the LIFE Ebro Resilience P1 project website.