

OVERCOMING ORGANIZATIONAL, CULTURAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL **BARRIERS** IN A **CLUSTER** OF EUROPEAN RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES

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Supporting environmental research
with integrated solutions
- **the Earth is our lab**

“RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURES?”

“CLUSTER PROJECT”?

- Research Infrastructures (RIs) (in this context) are service providers for research
 - Large facilities providing data, services, access, etc.
 - ESFRI level requires European context (multinational) and openness
- There is a wide variety of environmental RIs in Europe. Differences in
 - Field of study
 - Methods
 - Organisational and technical maturity
 - Resources

Idea of a cluster:

- No need to every RI separately develop their own solutions
- Makes it also easier for users (similar products & services)
- Cost efficiency & integration

Joining 20+ RIs from the environmental research together



Find common technical solutions

Observation systems

Data systems

Build better expertise

Staff exchange

Knowledge transfer

Impact society

RI collaboration

Socio-economic impacts

Here we concentrate on “Data for Science” part of the project.

Covers about 5 M€ budget (1/3rd of the whole project!)

Infrastructures



[Pieter Lanser](#)

+

IT specialist



[Szakalová Edina](#)



Shared long term solutions

AGE OF RI IMPACTS AS WELL



Happy to get what they can
Does not necessarily know
what they want



Have they systems operational
Not sure they need anything
(even if they do)

CHALLENGE



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- Talk science
- Key priority is scientific or organisational – getting RI to work and produce science
- Want solutions to work for them
- Has *innovative* approach to time and resource use



[Alex Odarchuk](#)

- Has difficulties to understand scientists from other fields



<http://maxpixel.freecatpicture.com>

- Talk IT
- Key priority is to produce solutions in time and in budget
- Want to create generic solutions
- Has business oriented approach to time and resource use



- Has difficulties to understand IT people from other (sub) fields

SOME TOOLS TO HELP



ENGAGEMENT

- When planning the project – bring IT people and RIs together
- Try to get them do the work plan in sync
 - Some handholding is needed
- Give also resources to the users to participate in the development
 - PMs to users as well!



ENGAGEMENT FOLLOWUP



- You need to also make sure that the users USE their resources for this
- We have sometimes situations where the user communities do not have the time to engage
- IT people will then develop what they think they need
- Uptake is not ideal
- Re-engagement is crucial:
 - Workshops together
 - Take the tech people to the users

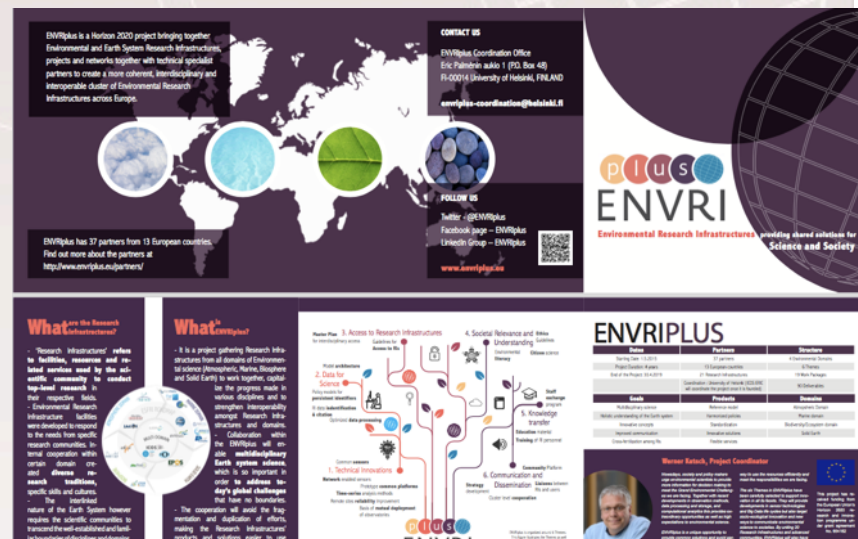


OUTREACH (INSIDE)

- In a large collaborative project, communication is usually the main challenge
- Let people know what is going on
 - What tasks are being done?
 - Are there tools developed which could be of use?
 - Are the challenges / adjustments?
- Pay a lot of attention on the passive methods
 - Newsletters, Website, brochures
 - Well monitored email lists
 - Have a strong strategy for outreach – all participate



H2020 Project



ENVIplus Newsletter #2 (May 2016)

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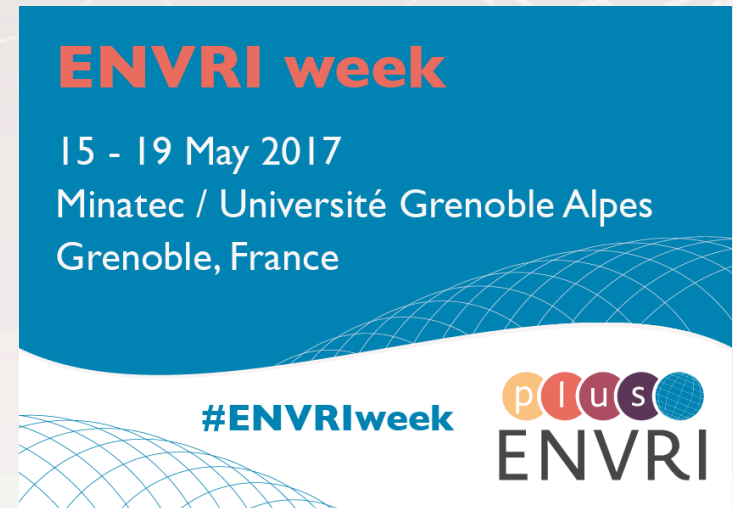


2nd ENVIplus Newsletter

CONCENTRATE PHYSICAL MEETINGS



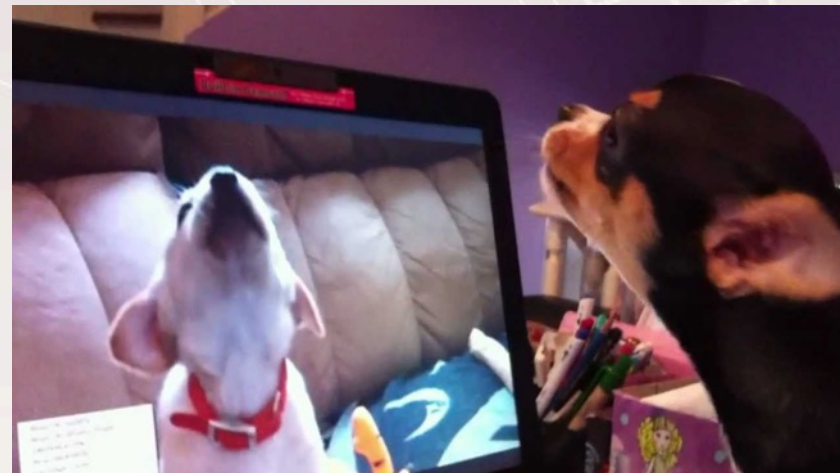
- Having meetings is usually good
 - Different places – different people leads to tribes and does not help with communications
 - Bring (all!) people to one place !
 - Have time for meeting – not just presentations
 - Coffee & Beer time are important!



REGULAR VIRTUAL MEETINGS



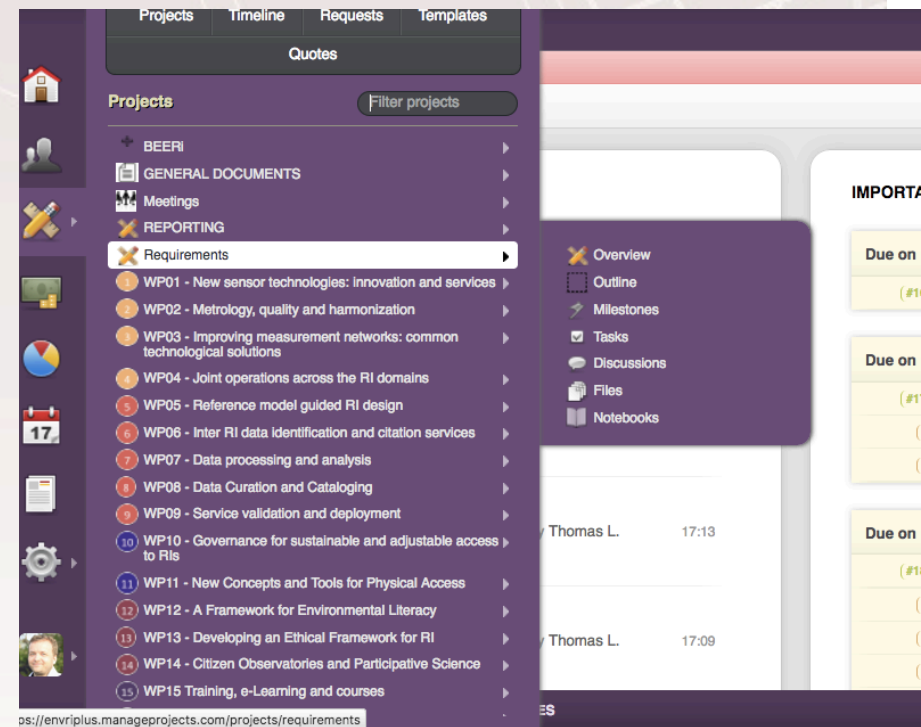
- Particularly in the development phase, a more direct and regular communication is needed
- Use virtual platforms – make sure they are timed and regular
- From management perspective:
 - Do not always take a part in the meetings (avoid micromanagement)
 - But come some weeks and make sure that partners know it



DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT



- Keep **all** documentation available to **all** partners if possible
- Time spent on organising the virtual folders is well spent
 - But do not try to reorganise afterwards – at least without consulting the partners first!
- Find a platform which is easy to use over features – esp. important for science partners
- Turn off regular email alerts by default



OUTREACH OUTSIDE OF THE CONSORTIUM

- Find new users to your products
- Important way to find general applicability
- Have a policy for inclusion
 - Taking new requirements mid-way can be too challenging
- However a global acceptance to your products can be a huge benefit
- This benefits all partners – RIs AND IT partners



BUILD A COMMUNITY, NOT A PROJECT



- Community actions are stronger than any project action
- Build a community platform with a realistic sustainability
- For a community you need
 - People willing to do things together
 - Common aims
 - Trust on the community and that the results will be sustained
 - Sustainability



TAKE HOME MESSAGES

- Working in a large project is hard
- Most problems are communication issues
- Be aware of cultural changes
- Be a facilitator to get people together

