Recommendations on public engagement

Pieter Valkering – VITO

All WP4 partners

March 16th, 2021

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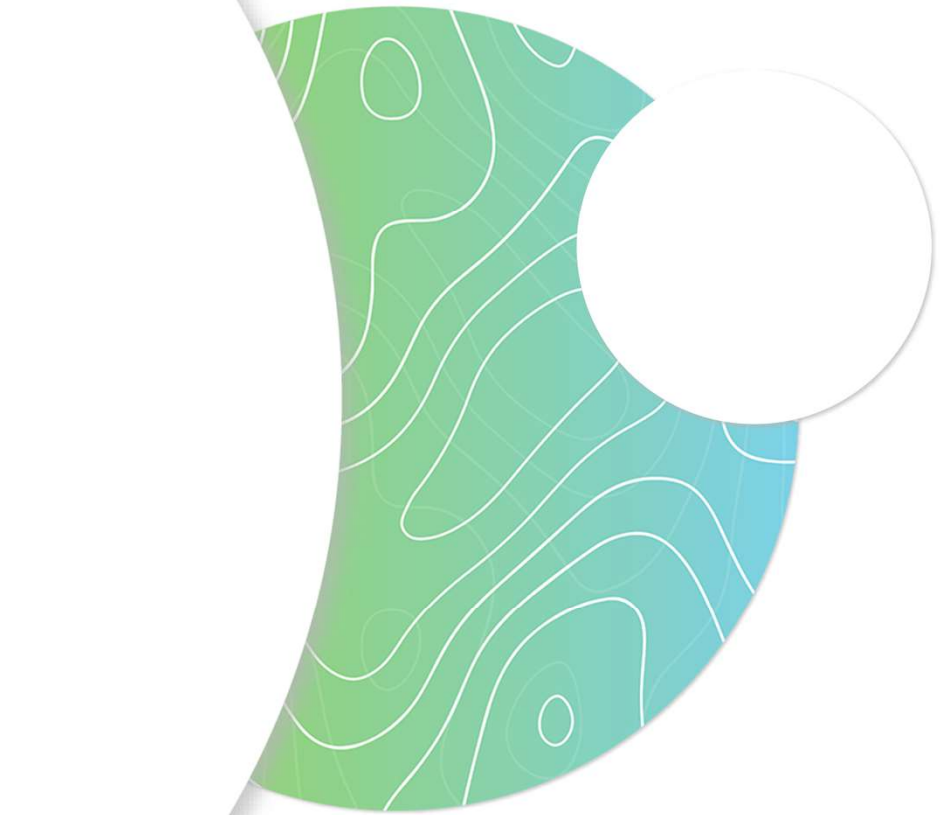

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AGENDA

- Welcome – Philippe Dumas, Secretary General of EGEC and GEOENVI project coordinator

Session 1: GEOENVI Recommendations and reactions

Moderated by Pieter Valkering, VITO

Presenting GEOENVI recommendations:

- Introducing the GEOENVI recommendations – Pieter Valkering, VITO
- Public participation, insight from France – Fanny Branchu, BRGM
- Local benefits, good practices from Italy – Loredana Torsello, COSVIG

Discussed by panellists:

- Ben Laenen, VITO, Belgium
- Agnes Allansdottir, University of Siena, Italy
- Julie Purdue, AMORCE, France
- Tamás Megyes, Szeged District Heating, Hungary
- Hólmfríður Sigurðardóttir, OR, Iceland
- Mehmet Kaygusuz, Sanko Holding, Turkey

Session 2: Complementary perspectives on public participation and crowdfunding

Moderated by Fanny Branchu, BRGM

Presenting complementary perspectives:

- Public engagement for geothermal energy: From social acceptance to locally embedded projects – Olivier Ejderyan, ETH Zurich, Switzerland
- Crowdfunding and public engagement, by Jan Hildebrand, IZES, Georgie Friederichs, CrowdfundingHub and Amel Barich, GEORG from the CROWDTHERMAL project

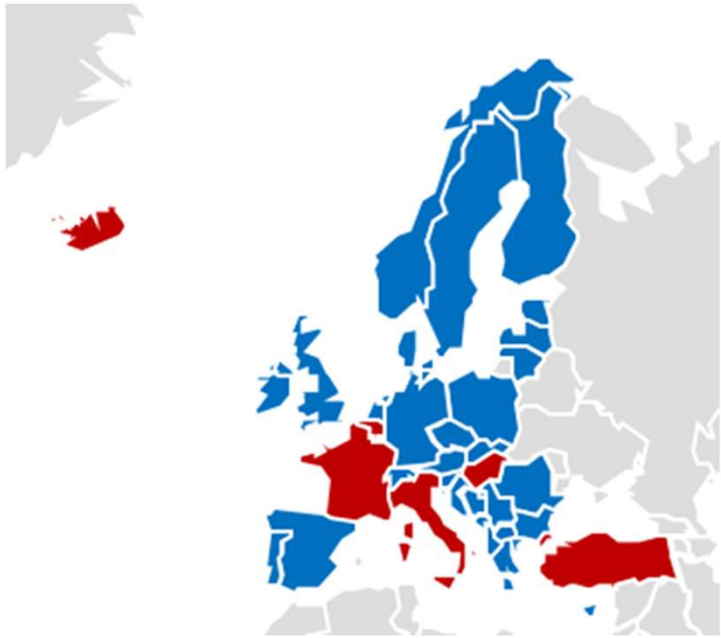
Questions from the audience

Closing discussion by panellists

Ambition

GEOENVI Work Package 4

- Map and analyze the current status of environmental regulations and practices for deep geothermal energy development
- Develop recommendations for improved regulatory practice
- Engage with and decision-makers and other stakeholders in developing recommendations



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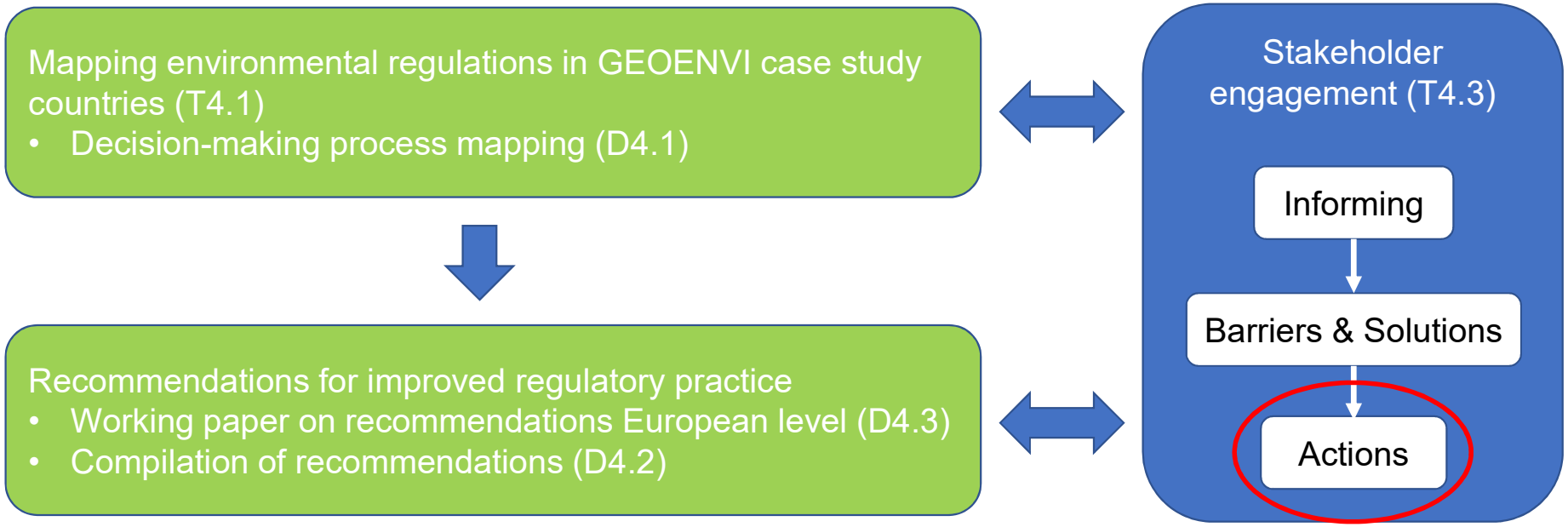
Work package structure



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Recommendations on environmental regulations

Deliverable 4.2 / Deliverable 4.3

Technical topics:

- Seismicity → **March 9th**
- Aeriform emissions → **March 2nd**
- Aquifers' interferences and physical disturbances
- Discharge of geothermal fluids

March 18th

Process topics:

- Complex licensing and delays
- Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

Feb. 23rd

- Information sharing
- Local Benefits
- Public participation

March 16th

+

- Life Cycle Assessment and finance → **April 13th**

Policy briefs to be published on the GEOENVI website

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- **Process topics**

INFORMATION SHARING

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Challenges

Information availability:

- Official and industry statistics often inoperable and fragmented
- Confidentiality issues, in particular for exploration data
- Different data collection methods and data availability across countries

Information sharing:

- Various statistics difficult to access → can be interpreted as a lack of transparency
- Variety of data sharing tools: reports, databases, interactive portals
- Limited public data awareness

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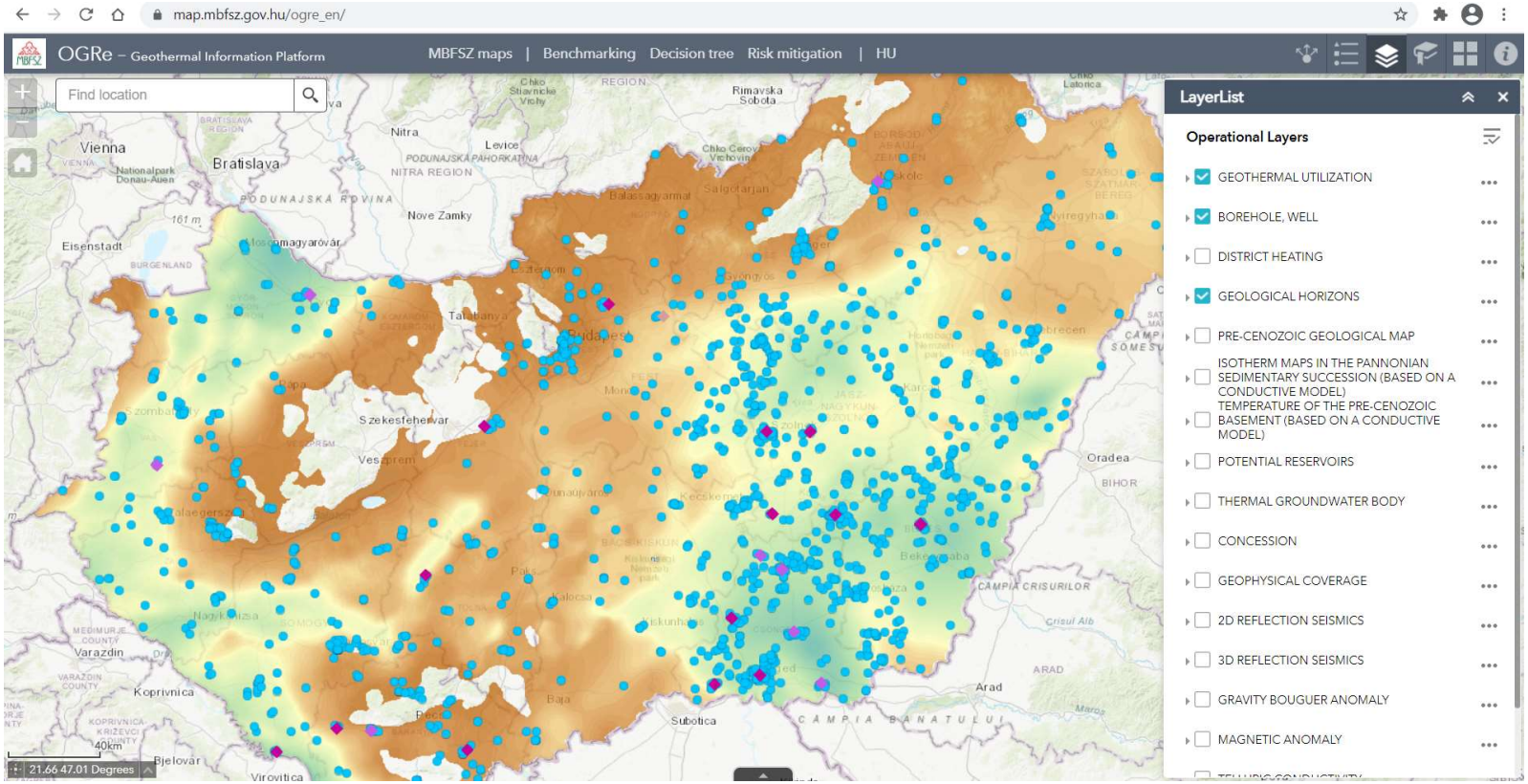
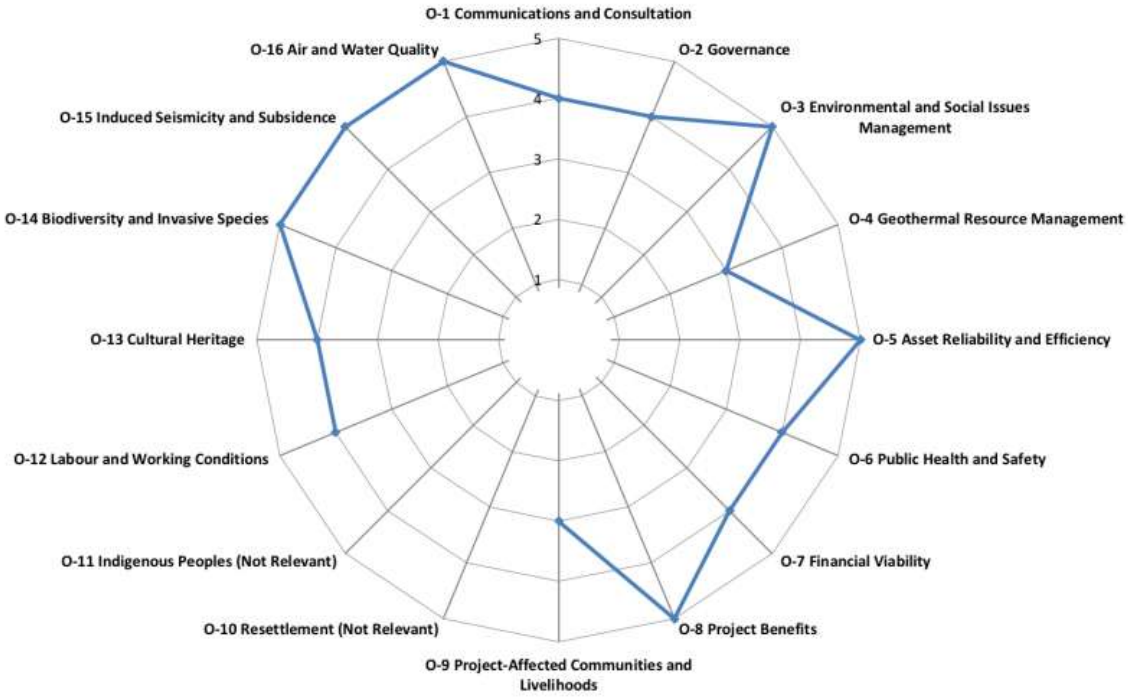
Good practices - Interactive web portals

https://map.mbfsz.gov.hu/ogre_en/



Good practices - GSAP



Geothermal Sustainability Assessment Protocol

ORKA NÁTTÚRUNNAR

Hellisheidi Geothermal Project

Iceland

Project Stage: Operation

Assessment Date: 26/01/2018 to 02/02/2018

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Recommendations

1. Define a European standard on information sharing
    - Minimum requirements applied consistently
    - GSAP can be starting point
2. Choose and collect the relevant information
    - Confidentiality, environmental concerns and positive impacts, comparative to other RES
3. Adapt the communication to the target
    - Distinguish ‘the public’ from ‘the expert’ for choosing dissemination channels, terminology.
4. Improve data accessibility and awareness of accessible information
    - FAIR data principles, independent appeal committee for confidentiality issues
5. Share reliable information and data
    - Pro-active data sharing to inform the public

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- **Process topics**

LOCAL BENEFITS

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Challenges

- Various positive impacts on global, national and local levels
  - Climate, energy independence, revenues, district heating, regional economies, tourism, jobs, …
- Positive impacts receive relatively little attention
  - Often a lack of information
- Connecting local benefits to those directly involved
- Connecting to grassroots energy innovation
- Capitalize on good practices:
  - Support schemes for district heating
  - Valorize royalties locally
  - Crowdfunding

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Recommendations

1. Establish a fund derived from taxes/royalties to support the local communities and regions
    - Promote regional development
    - Focus: renewable energy applications, environmental and water management
2. Support the local utilization of geothermal heat
    - Cascade heat and dedicated smaller applications
    - Involve local SMEs
3. Establish a plan for valorising local benefits
    - Registry of social, economic, environmental benefits
    - Communication of those benefits
    - Training activities to foster local applications

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- **Process topics**

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

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Challenges

Quality of the communication between the public and the operators trough public inquiry?

- Public inquiry does not necessarily reflect the population's position on a project
  - Fulfilling legal obligations and conflict avoidance as a main aim
- Low or variable participation of the population
- Communication challenges
  - Technical and sub-surface related issues
  - (low) Risk communication
- Difficulty to take into account expressed opinions
- Too narrow focus
  - Little attention for its broader role in the energy transition, societal and local issues

Recommendations

1. Deepen the process: aiming at a good quality dialogue
    - Beyond legal minimum requirements
    - Open, informed, two-way communication about all aspects of a geothermal project
2. Expand the perimeter
    - Geographically: neighboring cities
    - Governance: local authorities, associations representing the general public
3. Adapt the timing
    - Pro-active, early and continuous communication
4. Adapt the process to the territory
    - Tailored communication, information, and participation processes

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Questions

- Most important **take-aways** from the recommendations on public participation, local benefits and information sharing?
- Main opportunities for **sharing and adopting good practices** across countries?
- Most important **next steps** to take to better target acceptability and co-ownership for deep geothermal projects?
  - directed to specific stakeholders (regulators, policy makers, operators, local authorities, associations, researchers…) ?
  - to a specific level (regional, national, European) ?

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