



Impact Assessment

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EUROPEAN RESEARCH AREA ON SUSTAINABLE ANIMAL PRODUCTION



The ERA-net Cofund SusAn is funded by European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation programme under grant agreement n° 696231

Outline

SusAn's approach to facilitate impact

Theory of Change, Research Impact Pathway and indicators with a Research Uptake strategy

(Indicators on report template)

SusAn's approach to facilitate impact

Theory of Change, Research Impact Pathway and indicators with a Research Uptake strategy

1. SusAn projects must contribute to advanced understanding of emerging key issues in european sustainable animal production;
2. Each project was asked to explicate how the project works towards the realisation of the SusAn objectives;
3. Impact Pathway contributes to joint understanding within the consortium, and to Research Uptake. Information on the SusAn approach to facilitate impact.

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Theory of Change, Research Impact Pathway and indicators with a Research Uptake strategy

4. Progress and outcome of the project will be monitored by means of regular reporting;
5. Reporting will provide input for several goals: accountability, learning, adjustment and communication. Especially the Theory of Change and Impact Pathway are important tools for learning and research adjustment.

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The following questions are specifically designed for reporting on Research Uptake, Theory of Change, and Research Impact Pathway including indicators:

(Preliminary) results and progress towards outcomes

a. Describe what progress has been achieved:

- Provide a narrative elaboration on preliminary research findings, towards the specific objectives of your proposal and the – for your research relevant – foci of the call;
- Please report on progress on findings with regard to answering the central research question(s);
- Elaborate on and motivate adjustments to the original set-up of activities;
- Reflect on the most important successes, setbacks and lessons learned.

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b. Research Uptake & knowledge sharing

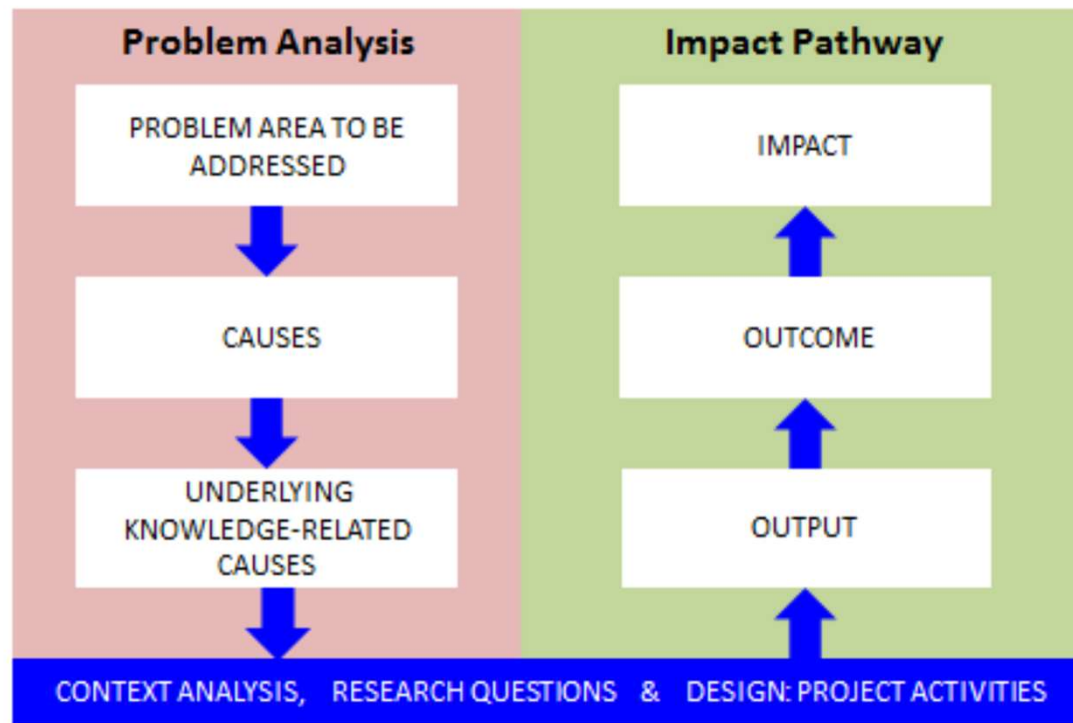
Request to present an updated Research Uptake Plan that effectively supports achieving the outcomes/impact of the project, in which each of the four focus areas of Research Uptake is taken into account:

- i. Stakeholder Engagement;**
- ii. Capacity Building;**
- iii. Communication;**
- iv. Monitoring & Evaluating of Uptake.** Formulate objectives for each of the focus areas and integrate the elements into a clear strategy with concrete outcomes, steps and timelines.

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Theory of Change, Research Impact Pathway and indicators with a Research Uptake strategy

Theory of Change



Elements of explanation

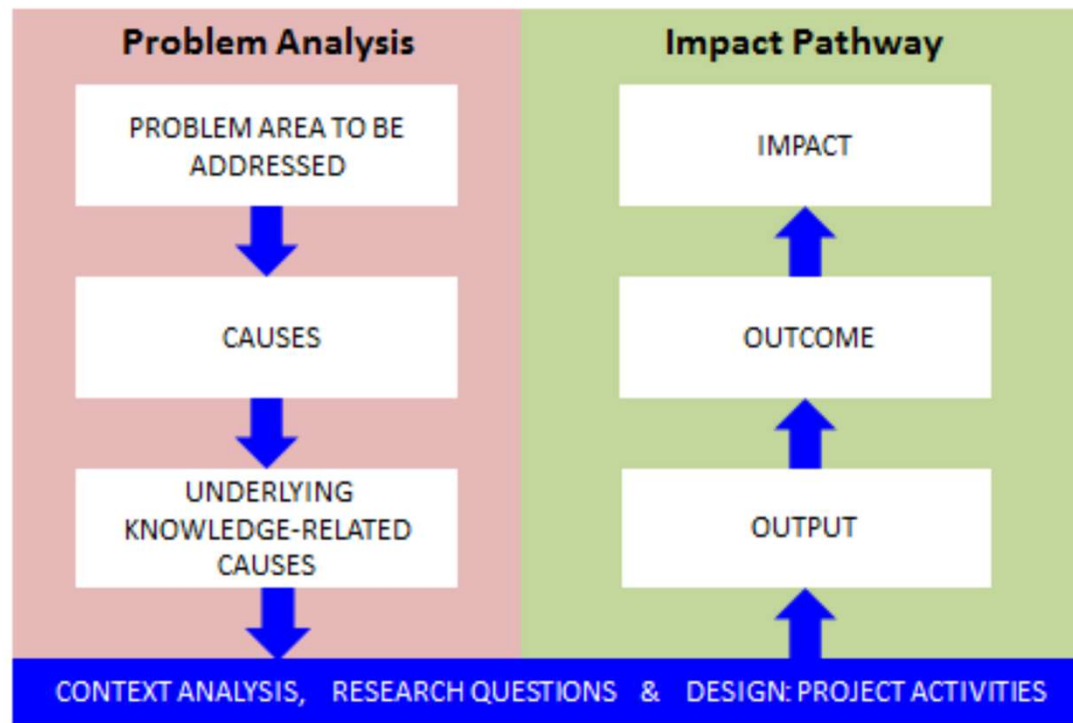
The Theory of Change serves four main purposes:

1. To understand the problems and root causes of a certain problem
2. To clarify the assumptions
3. To achieve a common understanding among project participants about the project objectives
4. To describe the expected process of change and explain it to others.

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Theory of Change



Elements of explanation

- The Research Impact Pathway especially defines building blocks required to bring about a process of change. The set of connected building blocks is a roadmap or pathway of change, a representation of the change process.
- As part of the Research Impact Pathway, it may be useful to indicate as well what activities and outputs are expected from other parties.

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Criteria for a good Theory of Change and Research Impact Pathway

- Is based on a thorough problem analysis, including analysis of the underlying causes (especially the knowledge related ones)
- Clarifies the main objectives of the project
- Includes both research and development results and shows the interrelations
- Captures the dynamics of a process of change with contributions by the project
- Is easy to understand and communicate
- Motivates readers, raises commitment

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How to do it:

Step 1: Problem analysis

There are several tools for doing a good problem or root cause analysis.

The following are some basic elements:

- Start out by defining the problem (to be solved). Make sure everyone agrees why it is a problem.
- Identify the causes of the problem, and the actors responsible for each cause.
- To develop a 'problem tree', keep asking yourself: what is the underlying cause of this cause?

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How to do it:

Step 2: Problem solution, project focus

By reformulating the causes, especially knowledge-related underlying causes, into results and objectives, one can come to a set of actions that together form a project plan.

The following needs to be taken into account:

- Which are the priority causes, which can generate leverage towards a sustainable solution?
- What are others already doing, or what will others do, so what is the greatest added value of your own contribution? And how can you collaborate?
- What is your own expertise (comparative value), so where can you have greatest impact?

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How to do it:

Step 3: Theory of Change with the Research Impact Pathway description

Most guidelines about Theory of Change emphasise the participatory approach, because:

- (1) it will capture useful insights from different stakeholders, and
- (2) it will stimulate exchange between participants, and
- (3) it will generate commitment among participants about the way to go.

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Theory of Change, Research Impact Pathway and indicators with a Research Uptake strategy

Defining of research outputs, outcomes and impact for society

Research outputs relate to the direct and immediate results obtained by a research project or programme.

Research outcomes relate to the changes in behaviour, relationships, actions and activities of stakeholders as a result of the sharing and uptake of research.

Research impact is defined as changes in whichever economic, environmental or social conditions a research project or programme aims to affect.

Change, and thus achieving impact, is a complex process that depends on many different actors and factors, of which research is only one. Where outputs fall under a research project or programme's direct sphere of control, outcomes & impact belong respectively to the sphere of influence and interest.

Indicators

- Report template

In calls that are co-funded by the EU framework programme, like ERA-NET Cofund, the P2P consortium must report from the funded projects to the European Commission (EC) after the end of the projects

<https://www.era-learn.eu/manuals-tools/call-implementation/after-the-call/monitoring-of-funded-projects>

In order to report to the Commission, the P2P consortium must have a system for monitoring the funded projects.

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Knowledge sharing and Research Uptake

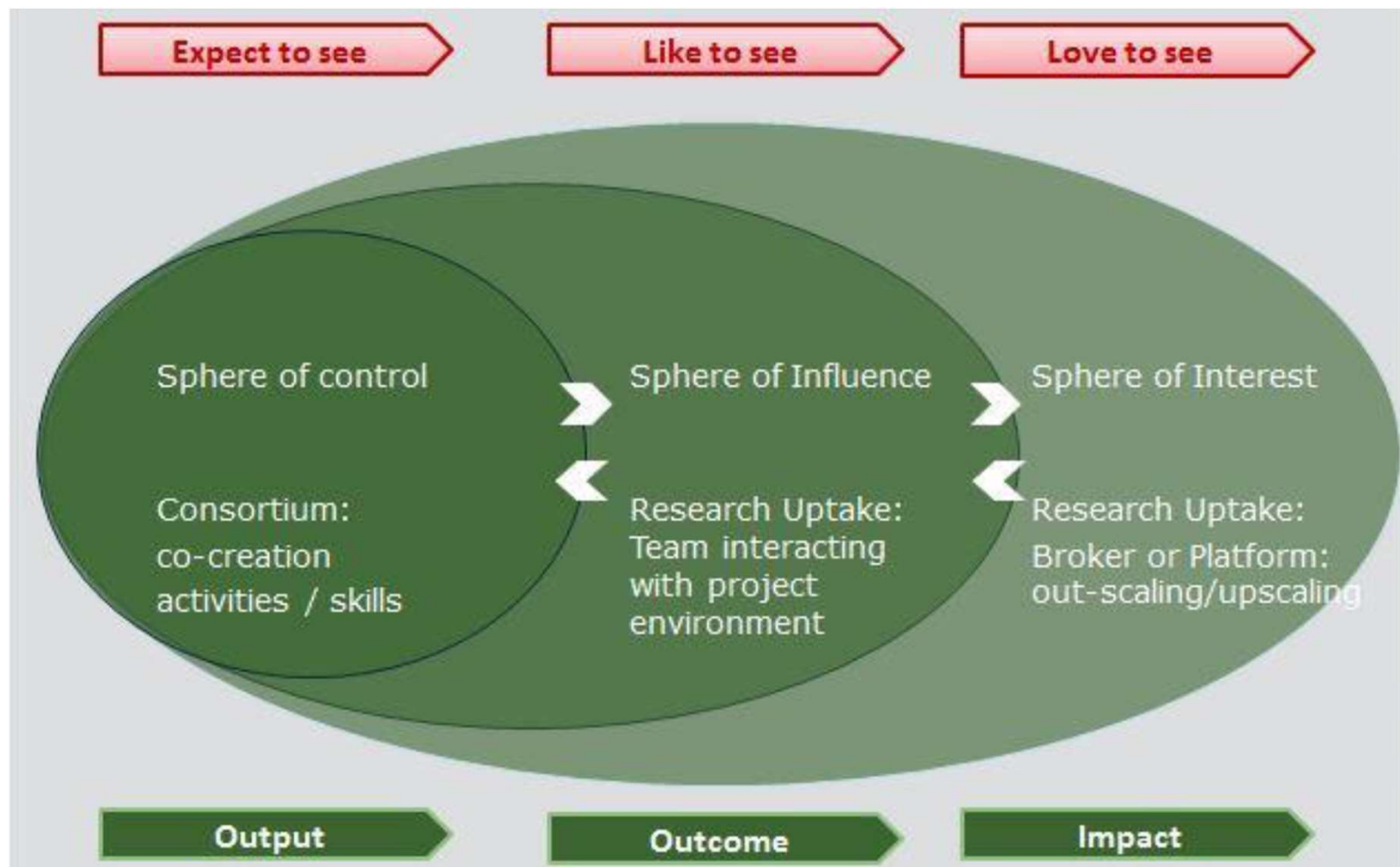
Developing a Theory of Change also helps to think through what kinds of communication and stakeholder engagement activities are needed in order to maximise the chances of the research process and research outputs contribute to expected and desired changes. We call these kind of supporting activities research uptake or knowledge brokering.

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SusAn would like to see already in early stages of project execution the implementation of a Research Uptake (RU) strategy referring to specific activities on:

- **Stakeholder engagement:** early engagement and investing in building relationships with relevant stakeholders before, during and after the lifetime of the project. Engagement includes seeking (further) alignment to stakeholder demands, mutually agreement on engagement strategies and jointly (re)defining desired social change processes.
- **Knowledge sharing and communication:** Knowledge sharing and communication enhance the availability, relevance and accessibility of research. Communication is a two-sided process. It asks to understand your audience, prioritise and target messages and use appropriate means which concern both internal capacities
- **Assessing and strengthening Research Uptake capacities (consortium/team) as well as the capacities of stakeholders.**

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Timeline

Draft document on SusAn approach to facilitate impacts - until the **end of November 2017**, for comments

Document on Impact approval until **20th december**

Implementation of Theory of Change, Research Impact Pathway and indicators for the starting point characterization **January 2018-February 2018**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

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