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Report on project management

Deliverable D1.1

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SUMMARY

This deliverable aims to report the coordination and management of the consortium work, as well as the monitoring of the overall project progress, reporting and liaison with the European Commission. Major activities concerning administrative/technological management of the project includes Work Package management, Information and communication management, Reporting management, Project meetings, Quality assurance, and risk management. This deliverable involves T1.1 Project management and Ethical issues and T1.2 Quality assurance and risks management.

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Acronyms and abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
BSFL	Black Soldier Fly Larvae
EC	European Commission
EASME	Executive Agency for Small and Medium Enterprises
CA	Consortium Agreement
DoA	Description of Action
GA	Grant Agreement
OWA	One Welfare Approach
PO	Project Officer
PPILOW	Poultry and Pig Low-input and Organic production systems' Welfare

1 OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT

1.1 Project management strategy

SUSTAvianFEED project started on the 1st of April 2021, with its Kick-off meeting held online, the 28th of April 2021, from 9:00 am- 4:00pm in Zoom.

A Consortium Agreement (CA) has been established and signed by all consortium partners, which provides the basis for all project related administrative and management tasks, responsibilities, roles, rules, methods, and means to run the project.

In addition, a Quality Procedures Manual (QPM) has been established, which sets out the internal quality assurance procedures for the project. It aims to ensure that the results and deliverables of the project are of high quality and meet the specifications set in the GA.

The Project Coordinator (PC), Mr Juan Carlos Segura (ALIA) is leading the project management and acting as the Quality Manager (QM) of SUSTAvianFEED project. ALIA has continuously conducted administrative actions for the project and monitored the steps of documentation and reviewing of partners deliverables to make sure high-quality deliverables were produced respecting deadlines.

In line with D1.2 Data Management Plan v2, WP leaders remained responsible to coordinate actions for the completion of deliverables, ensuring they are compliant with the process requirements while Task leaders held accountable to respect documentation and review processes, to submit deliverables of high cognitive value addressing all appropriate objectives as defined by SUSTAvianFEED DoA.

1.2 Management of the project activities

Following the management strategy, the SUSTAvianFEED consortium successfully implemented the project activities. The SUSTAvianFEED project is conducted in two phases: the first phase covers the first 24 months, i.e. from 1st of April 2021 to 31st March 2023, devoted to the development of alternative sustainable diets for poultry feeds (which includes 5 tasks such as the design of sustainable feeding program (task 2.1); the second phase last for another 24 months, until the end of March 2025, focused on the evaluation of using that sustainable diet in different contexts by means of pilots in different locations.

Results of the two phases. A formulation with alternative feed ingredients to improve the feed formulation and sustainability, and the inclusion of insects in the diet of slow-growing breeds meat chickens, broiler and laying hens was developed. Also, different production schemes were put in place for the insects with varying levels of technology. Five pilots were conducted between the first and the second phase of the project, with a wide range of external participants. Evaluation and comparisons among the pilots were conducted in the second phase of the project.

The dissemination and interaction with stakeholders via living labs, showcases and participation in different events, have been conducted through both the first and second phases.

1.3 Mid-term project review

The SUSTAvianFEED consortium submitted the 1st Period Report on 30th of May 2023, and the consortium representatives participated in the mid-term project review meeting organised by the PRIMA Secretariat on 20th July 2023.

The review results issued by the EU with a conclusion that the overall assessment of the mid-term review was positive. Most of the planned tasks for this period had been fulfilled and were on schedule. An exception is task 2.3 for which the planned chemical and microbiological analyses have not been provided (D2.3). One major observation concerns the dissemination and communication plan that significantly lacks accuracy. The beneficiaries carried out many important dissemination activities but apparently, without being well-planned. Also, several workshops were planned but not implemented.

The following follow-up actions in line with the review results:

1. In response to the challenges associated with the use of larvae in Tunisia, the beneficiaries actively engaged with stakeholders to assess the feasibility of using insect-based feed. ISA-CM highlighted a recent university-led survey indicating a growing interest in insect-based feed among Tunisian consumers, suggesting that a reflection process on this topic has begun.
To further advance discussions, ISA-CM engaged with policy makers and industry representatives, including TECHNA (a private feed company), a private poultry farm company, the Regional Office of Pastures and Livestock in Sousse, the Technical Centre of Organic Agriculture, and the Regional Commission for Agri-Farming Development (Veterinarian Service). These stakeholders were invited to participate in the LL A16 Market Validation and Eco-Label Co-Creation Workshop, where 8 policymakers attended, ensuring broad representation from relevant organisations.
2. To address delays in Task 3.2 related to the Tunisian pilots, a strategic approach was adopted. A calendar of meetings was established between ENTOMO and ISA-CM to monitor and adjust the execution plan. The initial plan involved ENTOMO delivering containers, but due to delays, an alternative solution was explored: first, sending larvae from Spain, and later, in a time-saving decision, purchasing larvae directly from a Tunisian provider. As the larvae arrived at ISA-CM in June, 2023, ISA-CM pilot was constrained to make some deviations and to change the breeds in order to carry out all its activities of WP3 on both meat then egg chickens during the last period of the project (from October, 2023 to June 2024) while avoiding summer heat stress risk which could damage chicken trials. These deviations and scheduled activities were discussed in these meetings, involving technical partners such as ALIA, who provided technical expertise and analysis to support the pilot activities. The PO was also consulted to make the decisions. Additionally, an extension of the deliverable deadlines was requested to ensure that the tasks could be completed without compromising quality, thus avoiding the need for a project extension while meeting project objectives.
3. The consortium also made progress in improving the sustainability of feed ingredients. One of the key achievements was the complete removal of soybean meal from the final diet by UNITO. The revised diets incorporated alternative plant-based and insect-based ingredients, significantly reducing the environmental impact of poultry production. These improvements not only lowered the carbon footprint between 17% (the most conservative one) and 50% (the most ambitious one) in respect to standard diet but also had a positive impact on overall production efficiency, measured in terms of kilograms of live weight or egg production per unit of feed.
4. Further efforts were made to enhance collaboration with EU-funded projects, strengthening the project's potential for knowledge exchange and exploitation. Through SLOWFOOD, the consortium established contact with PPILOW, a Horizon 2020 project focusing on low-input and organic poultry and pig welfare. As a result, ALIA engaged in an online meeting with PPILOW on May 17, 2024, aiming to explore synergies and best practices. During the discussion, special attention was given to the OWA assessment framework, which evaluates sustainability in poultry and pig farming, ensuring that species-specific welfare considerations were properly integrated. Additionally, UNITO connected SUSTAvianFEED with its EU twin projects, POULTRYNSECT: The use of live insect larvae

to improve sustainability and animal welfare of organic chickens' production and ADVAGRONED: Advanced AGROecological approaches based on the integration of insect breeding with local field practices in Mediterranean countries and associations located in Mediterranean countries. There was extensive communication and engagement with the POULTRYNSECT project. A trial that included a group of birds fed live larvae whereas SUSTAvianFEED focused only on dehydrated larvae was conducted and both projects contributed data for publication. The collaboration with ADVAGROMED in which UNITO is the coordinator, allowed an exchange of experience that supported the experimental design in ADVAGROMED (also planned on autochthonous poultry breed). UNITO further exploited the experience and results of the SUSTAvianFEED project to secure a new prima project, *Agroforestry Practices for Agroecological Transition towards Sustainable Sheep and Poultry Farming in the Mediterranean Region (ASPmed)* where they will have the role of coordinator.

2 Information and Communication Management

The project partners use for daily communication with the consortium email. For the storing of files and internal communication the following tools are used:

- The Zoom conferencing tool (zoom.us) or other appropriate tools such as Skype are used for online meetings.
- The Doodle online scheduling tool (<http://doodle.com>) is used for scheduling meetings.
- SUSTAvianFEED Google Drive is used as our document repository. Files may be circulated also as attachments to emails, but they should also always be uploaded to the project Google Drive.

Figure1. Screen capture of the SUSTAvianFEED Google Drive

Mi unidad > SUSTAvianFEED

Tipo Personas Modificado Fuente

Nombre	Propietario	Última modifica...	Tamaño de s
WP3	yo	3 may 2021 yo	—
WP4	yo	3 may 2021 yo	—
WP2	yo	3 may 2021 yo	—
Deliverables	yo	4 may 2021 yo	—
WORKING DRAFT	annalisa.slowfood	1 jul 2021 annalisa.slowfood	—
Official documents	yo	7 oct 2021 yo	—
Templates	yo	14 ene 2022 yo	—
Photos and logos	yo	9 may 2022 yo	—
WP1	yo	24 may 2022 yo	—
WP5	yo	17 may 2024 yo	—
Consortium Meetings	yo	2 jul 2024 yo	—
SUSTAvianFEED_WP3.Task 3.4_Updates_9thCM_ISA-CM_23.09.24.pptx	chalghoumi.r@gmail.com	23 sept 2024 chalghoumi.r...	2,7 MB
Project contact list	yo	21 ene 2025 yo	2 kB

3 Reporting Management

WP leaders were responsible to initiate tasks in their WP after its planned start date, and to coordinate task leaders work in an online meeting. WP team members were responsible to contribute to carry out their work.

Tasks leaders organised a schedule and delegated responsibilities within their Task.

Each partner will complete the yearly report using the template provided. The reports will be stored in the project SUSTAvianFEED Google Drive.

4 Project meetings

4.1 Project consortium meetings

The project consortium meetings were called by the project coordinator. SUSTAvianFEED planned to carry at least 8 consortium meetings, due to the pandemic of COVID-19, the first three meetings were held online, but from the 25th of September, only physical meetings were conducted. A total of 10 consortium meetings were held, about two meetings a year, which compensated for the initial meetings online. The location of the consortium meetings was chosen at the pilot areas. Furthermore, when possible, dissemination events were scheduled together with consortium meetings to use travel resources in an optimal way. This was the case for consortium meetings in Turin (Italy) which were planned together with the international Terra Madre event, a bi-annual global meeting of food communities launched by SLOWFOOD in 2004 in Turin. During the 2022 edition a specific event in the Terra Madre framework was held to disseminate project activities.

The purpose of meetings is to maintain the coherence and focus of the consortium, to monitor project progress, to decide on plans, to synchronise activities, to discuss technical, administrative, and other issues. There were additional focused technical, dissemination or training meetings not necessarily requiring the participation of the entire consortium. The Zoom conferencing tool has been successfully used for online meetings.

Meeting minutes and presentations of physical and online meetings have been shared with the consortium in the SUSTAvianFEED google drive repository. All information resources are accessed through a secure endpoint in the project website.

The following project consortium meetings with a wider participation of consortium members have been held during the whole project period.

- SUSTAvianFEED Kick-off Meeting, 28th April 2021, online, Zoom
- SUSTAvianFEED 2nd consortium meeting, 23rd September 2021, online, Zoom
- SUSTAvianFEED 3rd consortium meeting, 23rd February 2022, online, Zoom
- SUSTAvianFEED 4th consortium meeting in Turin, Italy 25th-27th September 2022
- SUSTAvianFEED 5th consortium meeting in Murcia, Italy 18th- 19th January 2023
- SUSTAvianFEED 6th consortium meeting in Murcia, Spain 7th June 2023
- SUSTAvianFEED 7th consortium meeting in Tabarka, Tunisia 14th November 2023
- SUSTAvianFEED 8th consortium meeting in Izmir, Turkey the 23rd February 2024
- SUSTAvianFEED 9th consortium meeting in Turin, Italy the 24th-26th September 2024
- SUSTAvianFEED 10th consortium meeting in Lorca and Murcia, Spain 25th- 26th February 2025
- SUSTAvianFEED 10th consortium meeting online, 11th March 2025

4.2 Bilateral meetings

As outlined in the Living Labs Implementation Plan, ALIA, the partner responsible for Living Lab activities, conducted bilateral meetings every six months to ensure the project and partners' needs and requirements were met effectively.

ALIA played a key role in guiding the consortium on proper reporting of technical, financial, and administrative aspects of the project, addressing doubts, and organizing meetings to support partners throughout the process.

Bilateral meetings were held between partners to plan and execute their respective activities. Frequent discussions took place between ISA-CM and ENTOMO due to delays in the shipment of ENTOMO's Black Soldier Fly Larvae (BSFL) container

4.3 Executive Management Team meetings

An Executive Management Team meeting was carried out the 2nd of December 2021 to address the relevant preparation points of the pilots:

1. Approach to insects in each territory.
2. Preparation of the pilots.
3. Update on WP1, WP4, WP5.
4. Project Management

No further Executive Management Team meetings were for consortium issues. Updates on WPs were discussed during the consortium meetings.

4.4 Coordinators meetings

ALIA attended a PHEMAC Coordinators Meeting the 13th of December 2023. The objective of the meeting was to provide guidance and tactics to enhance project success. The meeting focused on:

- Crafting Winning Proposals & Ensuring Project Sustainability
- Innovation, Capitalization & Opportunities for 2024

5 Liaison with the European Commission

5.1 Deliverables

Deliverables play a crucial role in reporting project progress to the Commission. In line with the Quality Management Plan, this consortium has made every effort to ensure the quality of deliverable reporting while adhering to the scheduled submission timeline.

This project consists of a total of 24 deliverables. However, the submission of five deliverables was postponed due to delays in conducting the pilot activities. Despite this, no project extension was required only the submission dates of these specific deliverables were adjusted. The new due date for these deliverables is the 31st of March, 2025.

Postponed Deliverables due the 31st of March 2025:

- D3.3 – Evaluation of welfare and health indicators of chickens (UNITO)
- D3.4 – Product quality and performance traits of chickens fed sustainable diets (ISA-CM)
- D3.7 – Evaluation of the social aspects of the project (RAYHANA)
- D4.1 – Implementation of Living Labs activities (ALIA)
- D4.3 – Guidelines for Circular Economy Business Models (ENTOMO)

The consortium has strictly followed the quality assurance procedure for the preparation and submission of deliverable reports. Each deliverable undergoes a thorough review by two project partners, selected based on their expertise in the related task, ensuring a fair distribution of reviewing responsibilities across all partners. The Project Coordinator (PC) is informed of each deliverable's contents and retains the right to review and reject submissions if necessary.

Following the peer review process, the deliverable owner shares the document with the General Assembly, allowing all partners the opportunity to review the content.

The five delayed deliverables will follow the quality assurance revision on March 10, 2025. This delay will therefore not compromise the quality of the results.

5.2 Project amendments

Following the EU procedure for project amendments and the advice given by the Project Advisor, we completed the following amendment:

- The replacement of partner Slow Food (PP8, Italy) to Slow Food Foundation ETS due to a change in the legal structure.

5.3 Communication with the Project Advisor to manage concerned issues

We have communicated with our Project Advisor to inform about issues related to the project management throughout the project duration. We followed the guidelines and advice given to conduct the project when concerned issues arose, which ensured the project progress. For example:

- The project partner Slow Food (PP8, Italy) underwent a change into its legal structure. We communicated this change to the Project Advisor and followed instructions to start the process for an amendment. We provided justification and related documents to request a replacement of partner Slow Food (PP8, Italy) to Slow Food Foundation ETS which was successfully approved.

- The project partner, Rahyana experienced some difficulties in the contracting of personnel. After several communications via email with the Project advisor the procedures to follow were understood and undertaken.
- The project partner, Entomo experienced some delays for the delivery of containers from Spain to the pilot of ISA-CM Tunisia, the Project Adviser was informed about the issue and a solution was discussed. In this way, it was decided to directly buy the dry larvae from Tunisia and poultry breeds changed

6 Participation at international events.

Over the past years, partners attended and organised numerous conferences, workshops, and seminars for the communication and dissemination of the SUSTAvianFEED project activities to foster innovation and collaboration in sustainable feed production.

Partners participated in the following international events:

1. **7th Mediterranean Poultry Summit conference**, 23 March 2022, Córdoba (Spain). Organized by the Asociación Española de Ciencia Avícola, this conference brought together experts and professionals in the poultry industry, with the collaboration of UMU and EGE
2. **4th International Conference on Organic Agriculture in Mediterranean Climates: Threats and Solutions conference**, 27-29 May 2022, Izmir (Turkey) Organized by IFOAM Organics Europe and supported by EGE, the conference attracted experts from various fields related to organic farming.
3. **7th EAAP International Symposium on Energy and Protein Metabolism and Nutrition conference**, 12 September 2022, Granada (Spain). Organized by the European Federation of Animal Science and supported by UMU, this conference focused on energy and protein metabolism and nutrition in animals, attracting members of the scientific community in higher education and research.
4. **TERRA MADRE conference**, 22-26 September 2022, Turin (Italy). Organized by Tunisia, this event gathered experts and professionals from across the globe to discuss sustainable food systems, with a diverse audience including researchers, policymakers, and advocates for environmental sustainability.
5. **6th International Poultry Meat Congress**, 1-5 March 2023, Antalya (Turkey). Organized by the Association of Poultry Meat Producers and Breeders and supported by EGE, the congress attracted both researchers from the scientific community and industry professionals, focusing on poultry meat production.
6. **European Symposium on Poultry Nutrition congress**, 21-24 June 2023, Rimini (Italy). Organized by the World Poultry Science Association and supported by UNITO, the congress brought together experts in poultry nutrition from the scientific community to discuss the latest research and innovations.
7. **XI European Symposium on Poultry Welfare conference**, 26-29 June 2023, Prague (Czech Republic). Organized by the World Poultry Science Association and supported by EGE, this conference focused on poultry welfare practices and attracted both researchers and industry professionals from the scientific community.
8. **XIX European Symposium on the Quality of Eggs and Egg Products & XXV European Symposium on the Quality of Poultry Meat conference**, 6-9 September 2023, Krakow (Poland). Organized by the World Poultry Science Association and supported by EGE and UMU, this event addressed various aspects of poultry meat and egg quality, with participation from the scientific community and industry.
9. **27th Congress of the European Society of Veterinary and Comparative Nutrition (ESVCN) conference**, 7-9 September 2023, Vila Real (Portugal). Organized by the European Society of Veterinary and Comparative Nutrition and supported by UMU, this congress brought together veterinary nutrition experts from higher education and research institutions.
10. **Satellite Seminar in Conjunction with the 4th International Animal Nutrition Congress seminar**, 29 February 2024, Antalya (Turkey). Organized by EGE and the Animal Nutrition Science Association with the collaboration of all partners, this seminar focused on animal nutrition and attracted participants from academia, NGOs, researchers, and industry.

11. **4th International Animal Nutrition Congress**, 29 February – 3 March 2024, Antalya (Turkey). Organized by the Animal Nutrition Science Association and supported by UMU, UNITO, ISA-CM&EGE, this congress explored advancements in animal nutrition, attracting experts from the scientific community in higher education and research.
12. **International Workshop on Measurements and Applications in Veterinary and Animal Sciences (MeAVeAS)** congress, 22-24 April 2024, Turin (Italy). Organized by UNITO and supported by UMU, this workshop focused on innovative measurements and applications in veterinary and animal sciences, drawing participants from both the scientific community and industry.
13. **International Poultry Congress 2024 – Strategic Approaches for Sustainable Poultry Meat and Egg Production** conference, 8-11 May 2024, Bursa (Turkey). Organized by the WPSA Turkish Branch and supported by EGE, this conference discussed sustainable practices in poultry meat and egg production, attracting experts from the scientific community and industry professionals.
14. **VII APICOSE International Congress on Animal Feed 2024** congress, 23-24 May 2024, Murcia (Spain). Organized by the Asociación de Fabricantes de Piensos Compuestos del Sureste de España (APICOSE) and supported by UMU, this congress focused on animal feed, attracting experts in nutrition, livestock associations, animal feed producers, researchers, and industry representatives.
15. **VIII International Animal Feedstuffs Congress of Spain** conference, 23-24 May 2024, Murcia (Spain). Organized by the Association of Compound Feed Manufacturers of Southeast Spain (APICOSE) and supported by ALIA and UMU, this conference addressed advancements in animal feedstuffs, with a focus on scientific research and industry applications.
16. **European Poultry Congress**, 23-28 June 2024, Valencia (Spain). Organized by the World Poultry Science Association and supported by UNITO and UMU, this congress brought together experts to discuss the latest research in poultry science, attracting participants from the scientific community in higher education and research.
17. **Congress of the European Federation of Animal Science** congress, 1-5 September 2024, Florence (Italy). Organized by the European Federation of Animal Science and supported by UNITO, this congress focused on advances in animal science research, attracting members of the scientific community from higher education and research institutions.
18. **European Symposium on Veterinary Comparative Nutrition** congress, 11-13 September 2024, Belfast (Ireland). Organized by the European Society of Veterinary Comparative Nutrition and supported by UNITO and UMU, this congress brought together veterinary nutritionists, researchers, and nutritionists to discuss the latest trends in veterinary and comparative nutrition.

Additionally, workshops on Circular Economy and Sustainable Practices have been integral in exploring sustainable agricultural models. Notably, the workshops, **Circular Economy Business Model with Farmers** (October 2024) and a **Circular Economy** (June 2024) in Tunisia brought together local farmers, professionals, and academics to develop sustainable economic strategies.

In the sphere of poultry farming, the **Alternative Sustainable Feed Ingredients in Poultry Farming** workshop in Izmir (January 2025) addressed feed innovation, while the **African Workshop on Alternative Sustainable Poultry Feeds** (January 2025) organised by ISA-CM, involved experts from Africa (Uganda, Cameroon, Kenya, Togo and Tunisia with the participation of UMU team), and beyond to discuss feed sustainability.

ISA-CM organized a **conference for Agri-Engineering** students, academia, farmers and feed manufacturers on the benefits and importance of using insects in poultry feeds.

Aside from conferences, training sessions and capacity-building initiatives have played a crucial role. Workshops such as the **Veterinary Training with Farmers** in Tunisia (February 2025) and **Marketing Product Training** (February 2024) focused on empowering local farmers. The **Conference for Veterinarian**



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Students in Spain (April 2024) emphasised sustainable poultry practices. ISA-CM with Entomo carried out a training workshop on insect farming after the implementation of insect farm with Animal production engineering students.

Digital platforms have also played a key role, with **EGE organizing two online meetings** in May 2024 on topics like insect use in broiler production and alternative feed ingredients. Lastly, public forums and exhibitions, like the **Forum for Rural Productive Women** (December 2023) and the **National Handcraft Exposition** (August 2024), showcased sustainable agricultural practices and engaged communities across Tunisia.

7 Quality Assurance and Risk Management

This comprises the following activities:

- Quality assurance for all project deliverables where a clear process of quality control by means of internal review(s) and approval(s) are established and implemented;
- Continuous risk management and coordination of contingency measures, including the maintenance of a regularly updated risk register;

Out of the 13 foreseen risks, 4 risks occurring. The following tasks have been conducted to ensure all the deliverables and objectives are accomplished as specified, within timescales, to budget and agreed quality standards:

- Covid-19 pandemic: The first three consortium meetings were held online. The project planification of activities was carefully selected and adapted to this format.
- Delay in meeting deadlines. Delays in the delivery of the produced containers in Spain for the ISA-CM Tunisian pilot. Dry larvae were bought in Tunisia, instead of waiting for the container from Spain.
- Lack of representatives/ diversity of consumer responses in the online survey: In January not enough responses were received to the questionnaire produced by the University of Turin partner. Correction factors were applied.
- Only KPI 4 was not fully achieved, cost savings were not achieved with by-products introduction: The company from which BSFL was purchased for the the ISA-CM Tunisian pilot had a high price since their production is exported. Findings of D3.6 indicate that adopting local protein sources and BSFL could provide sustainable cost benefits particularly for small-scale producers. The absence of established markets for by-products and the regulation limits the results, high production costs remain an issue due to the lack of economies of scale.

8 Conclusion

The SUSTAvianFEED project has demonstrated effective coordination and management practices that have ensured the execution of project activities achieving its objectives.

Despite facing challenges such as logistical delays, pilot adjustments, and external risks like the COVID-19 pandemic, the proactive risk management approach, strong collaboration across partners, as well as a continuous engagement with the European Commission allowed for timely mitigation measures and ensured project continuity.

The outcomes of the project provide valuable knowledge and innovative solutions that can support the transition towards more sustainable and circular poultry farming systems in the Mediterranean region and beyond. The stakeholder engagement, and international dissemination activities highlight the consortium commitment to promoting sustainable poultry feed alternatives in the Mediterranean region. Moreover, the synergies built with other European projects and the capacity-building efforts at local and international levels further strengthen the project's future impact.