

SUMEX DELIVERABLE D5.1

SUMMARY OF KICK-OFF WORKSHOP “EUROPEANISING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES”

Summary:

This document summarises and contextualises the key output from the digital project launch event “Europeanising Sustainable Development in the Extractive Industries” on 17 November 2020.

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report summarises the outcomes of SUMEX project virtual launch event “Europeanising Sustainable Development in the Extractive Industries” that was organised on 17 November 2020. There were 70 participants and the main focus was to bring together the experts from various areas to discuss and conceptualise the term of sustainability in the European extractive industry arena.

2 INTRODUCTION

The launch event for the SUMEX project was organized to take place virtually on 17 November 2020, with 70 participants representing various stakeholder groups. The launch event aimed at providing an overview of the concepts driving the project and one of its key outputs: the SUMEX Digital Toolkit for good practice learning. The content focused on two key pillars: 1) examining sustainable development as a conceptual lens and 2) effective use of digital toolkits. The three-hour event provided the SUMEX team with ideas and concepts to explore in their next steps as well as established engagement with practitioners and eventual users of the SUMEX knowledge repository.

This report documents the main discussion points in the virtual launch event. Access to the recorded main event can be found [here](#). The presentations are available here (<https://www.sumexproject.eu/>)

3 SUMEX PROJECT INTRODUCTION



Michael Tost (Montanuniversität Leoben, Austria), coordinator of the SUMEX project, started the proceedings with a summary of the goals and aspirations for the project. The SUMEX project aims to establish a community of practice on sustainable management in the extractive industries, focusing on policies that underline and drive good practices, supplemented by the experiences of a diverse stakeholder group in developing and supporting such practices.

As a starting point, SUMEX aims to provide a conceptual lens of sustainable management by examining a number of existing sustainability frameworks, including generic frameworks (UN SDGs for example), and drilling down to a number of mining-specific frameworks (IRMA for example). The aim is to define how these concepts are relevant for a Europe working towards a European Green Deal and for Europe’s ambition for being the first carbon-neutral economy by 2050. In addition to existing frameworks, SUMEX will also be engaging with other relevant H2020 projects such as MinLand, MinGuide, MIREU, MINATURA and STRADE.

Using a meta-analysis, SUMEX intends to ‘funnel’ the findings from these frameworks and research projects to identify good practices and good practice principles. The findings will focus on the following key areas of sustainable practices:

- land use/ landscape planning
- environmental planning
- regional development
- socio-economic policy research

In addition to the analysis of conceptual frameworks, SUMEX will be examining social, environmental, economic and mineral policies, both at the EU and at the Member State level, that underline and drive good practice in the mineral extractive sector. These practices, which are spread across three main segments of the extractive value chain, will be examined: Exploration & Development, Operations and Closure & Post-Closure.

With its industry partners, SUMEX will support and supplement the policy analysis and identification of good practices by running two specific cases on two raw material classes that are highly relevant for the European stakeholders. With Boliden, the focus will be on battery materials; UPEG, through its extensive network, will look at construction materials.

Figure 1 illustrates how these various strands come together within the SUMEX project.

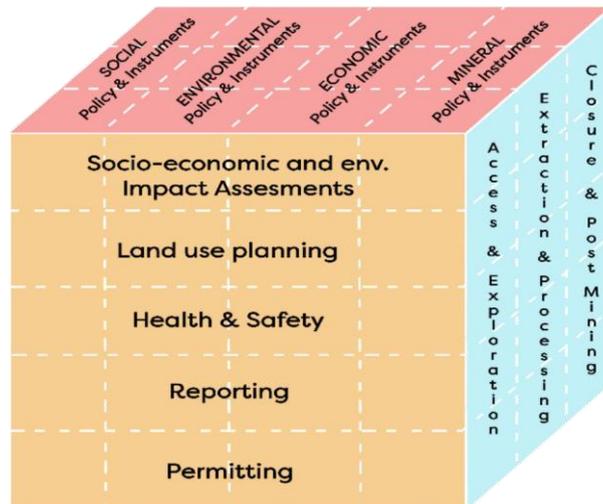


Figure 1: SUMEX Project Scope (Source: SUMEX Project)

Community of Practice (CoP): The planned analysis will be brought together to establish a portal of actionable knowledge – not another database. With a strong focus on engagement, both through digital means and where possible in-person events, SUMEX aims to create a community of practice to learn and exchange best practices. The portal would provide a ‘one-stop-shop’, allowing the community to not only learn about good practices that can be applied to their own work, but also showcase their good practices and share them with others.

Michael Tost concluded his presentation by outlining the benefits for participants in engaging with the SUMEX project, including engagement with a multi-stakeholder group with shared interests and coming together to shape what sustainable development means for the European extractive sector.

Michael’s presentation was followed by remarks from **Daniel Cios** from DG Grow (European Commission). Daniel focused on two aspects of raw materials for the EU: the shaping of the EU raw materials strategy by the European Commission and the research and innovation funding for raw materials being made available through the Horizon 2020 scheme.

Mr. Cios highlighted the salient features of the European Green Deal announced in December 2019, including the importance for accessing raw materials for the envisaged green transition. He also addressed the EU Critical Raw Materials Resilience communication in 2020, outlining the challenges and action plans. Finally, he spoke about the importance of the European Raw Material Alliance (ERMA) launched in the previous month

4 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AS A CONCEPTUAL LENS



Prof. Michael Hitch (Tallinn University of Technology, Estonia) then took the virtual floor to dive into one of the major pillars for the SUMEX project: Developing a Conceptual Lens for Sustainable Management in the Extractive Sector. The conceptual lens forms the backbone of the SUMEX project, as these concepts inform all aspects of the extractive sector, from policy and decision making to management strategies. As a first step, SUMEX focuses on the attributes that make up this conceptual lens and whether they represent weak or strong sustainability.

In dealing with a concept such as ‘sustainability’, Michael Hitch talked about how the concept is becoming quite ‘fuzzy’ and ceasing to be a term with a clear meaning. Sustainability has developed into a two-dimensional term, often used as an attribute for another term, such as economic sustainability. Michael understands sustainable development to be a multi-dimensional, systems-based lens of interrelationships (social well-being, biophysical integrity and economic sufficiency), which interact with one another. Sustainable Management is one level further, a much more complex lens which takes the concept of sustainable development and applies it to activities and processes to produce outcomes and provide guidance in order to achieve a larger goal (see Figure 1).

Sharing the project’s initial research findings by examining the language of sustainability from 25 different sustainability frameworks and structural approaches, the SUMEX team noted that the term ‘sustainability’ has evolved over time. The big picture ideas that made up common views of sustainability were interdependence, diversity, human rights, global equity and justice, rights of future generations, conservation, economic vitality, values and lifestyle choices, democracy and civil participation and the precautionary principle.

Often ‘sustainable development’ is spoken about in terms of goal-driven ideas and how we wish the world to be. However, process-driven attributes and actions are more useful in dealing with the current situation. ‘How we are going to get there?’ is as important as deciding what the future of society looks like. The operationalisation of the sustainability attributes is an important focus for the SUMEX project. Using the poll application Mentimeter (www.mentimeter.com) (see Figure 2), Michael invited the participants to provide attributes of sustainable development and management, as they see it, which illustrated the greater focus on goals and less on actionable processes and procedures.

4.1. EXPLORATION & DEVELOPMENT

Moderated by Gregory Poelzer (Lulea Technical University); facilitated by Katharina Gugerell (Montanuniversität Leoben, Austria)

The discussion largely focused on the environmental pillar of sustainable management, with most actions considered to have a high priority and urgency to address the current situation. These included considerations for use of low-impact exploration approaches and a clear mapping of protected areas and guidelines for operations in these areas. Future best practices included the drafting of an EU-wide good practice guideline and the development of new technologies to reduce environmental impacts.

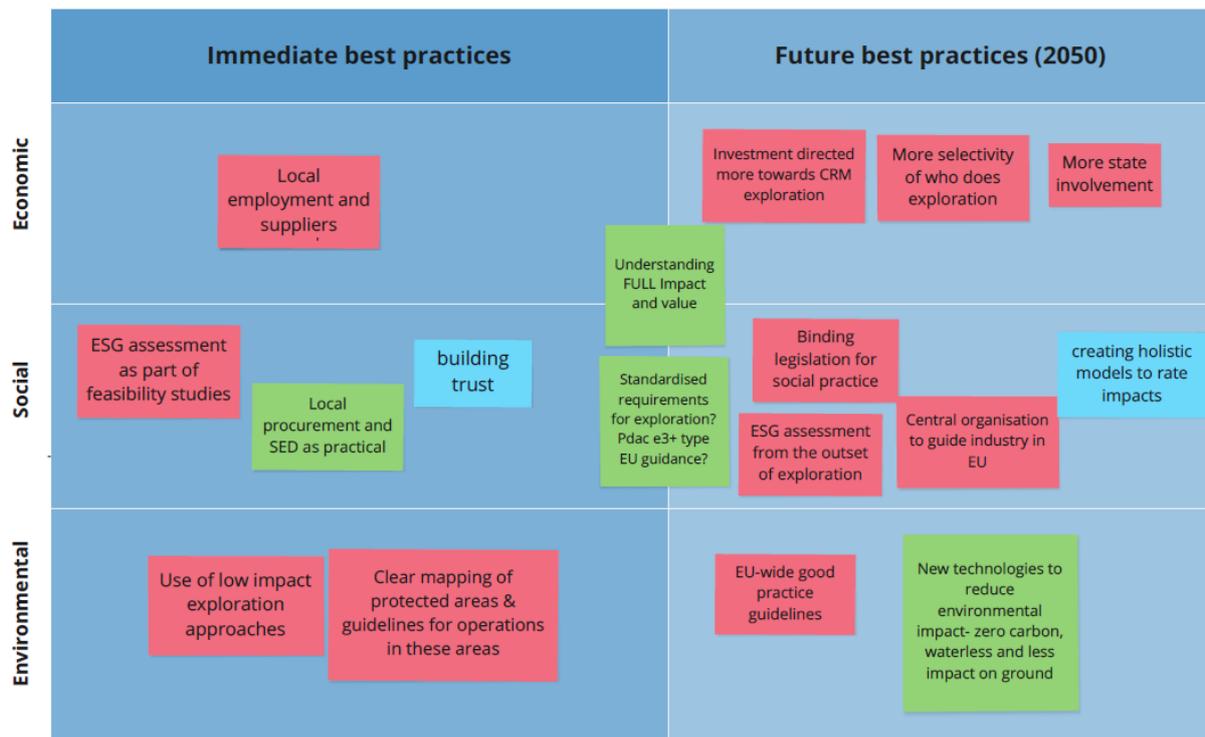


Figure 3: Attributes – Exploration and Development (Source: SUMEX Project)

The next set of attributes considered important referred to the social pillar, with a mixture of urgent actions and long-term actions. More immediate best practices included making ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) assessment part of feasibility studies and local procurement and SED (Socio-Economic Development) more practical.

Economic attributes were considered as the least urgent amongst the three pillars, with the more immediate best practices to focus on local employment and supplier opportunities while future best practices would consider more selectivity in companies that are allowed to conduct exploration activity and include more state involvement in at this stage. Overall, the economic pillar attributes were limited in their impact at the exploration stage.

The discussion acknowledged that some of the practices will take time to build capacity and to develop means for how to enact them (See Figure 3).

4.2. OPERATIONS

Moderated by Gavin Hilson (University of Surrey); facilitated by Stefanie Degreif (Oeko-Institut)

Most of the identified issues were considered immediate and urgent, with some falling into future best practice. The attributes were interlinked, with a holistic approach towards the economic, social and environmental pillars. These included EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) procedures, operational efficiencies, community engagement, employment training, community training, among other actionable attributes (See Figure 4).



Figure 4: Attributes – Operations (Source: SUMEX Project)

As with the exploration stage, environmental and social attributes were considered more urgent and immediate. At the operation stage, these impacts tend to become more visible. Also, the importance of connection actions in exploration, to be connected to and carried through to the operations stage, was pointed out.

4.3. CLOSURE & POST-CLOSURE

Moderated by Masuma Farooki (MineHutte); facilitated by Alexander Graf (Vienna University of Economics and Business)

The actional attributes included under the economic pillar were considered fairly important in this discussion, as the financial resources to address closure and post-closure plans need to be set aside from the very beginning of an extraction project. Another important message from the workshop was the importance to take action for social and environmental attributes earlier in the mining life cycle, with these actions integrated from the exploration and operations stage and not to be introduced at the end-of-life of the mine. As with the other two sessions, the discussion resulted in more attributes listed under urgent/immediate actions to be taken and fewer listed in the future category. The attributes grouped in the future category included minimum standards for biodiversity and rehabilitation, assessment of mine closure plans against SDGs and shared value planning from the outset, amongst many others (See Figure 5).



Figure 5: Attributes – Closure and Post-Closure (Source: SUMEX Project)

5 SUMEX DIGITAL TOOLKIT & LEARNING ACTIONS



The next main session of the virtual event turned towards another core pillar of the SUMEX Project: The Digital Toolkit and Learning Actions. The presentation from Andreas Endl (Institute for Managing Sustainability, Vienna University of Economics and Business, Austria) focused on concepts behind the toolkit and what would be beneficial for practitioners. The underlying principle is to provide guidance on the most effective way to lead practitioners from having access to the raw data and information to the “change management”, not only to know about good practices, but as well to assist the uptake of these practices within an organization (Figure 6).

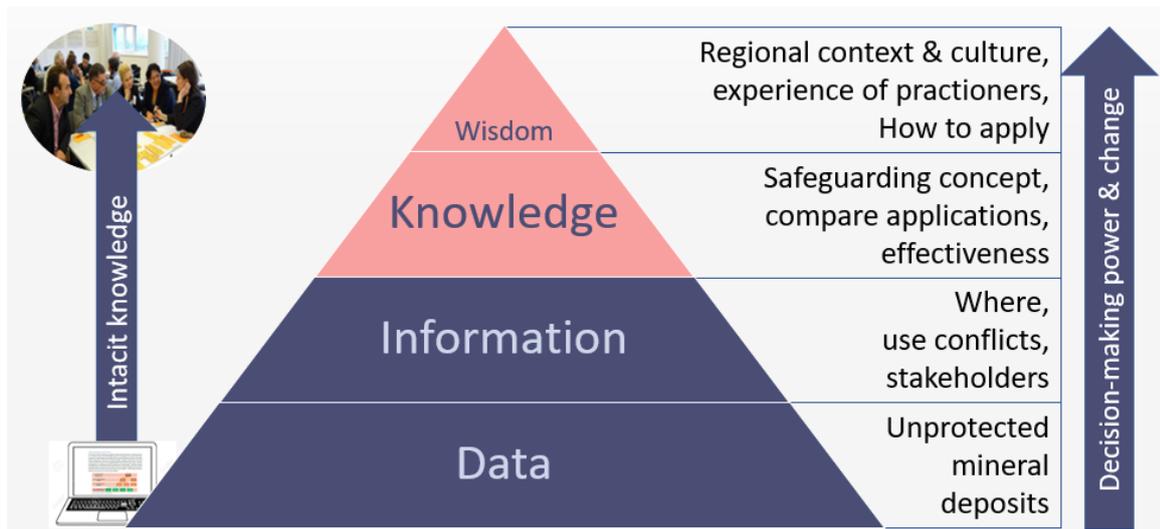


Figure 6: SUMEX Toolkit a tool for “How to get from data to change management” (Source: SUMEX Project)

A lot of information is available on sustainable management and practices; however, it is dispersed and partial, and consequentially rarely contextualized. Solutions are offered that address single issues (such as community engagement) without the interdependence of these practices with other practices or issues. Therefore, SUMEX aims to provide a holistic and integrated approach to knowledge and information on good practices, focusing on the needs of the practitioners. The process of change management therefore moves from providing raw data, to information followed by contextualizing these to create knowledge and wisdom which results from people’s experiences of practices.

Thus, the building blocks of the SUMEX digital toolkit focus on the stakeholders as the intended beneficiaries and users of this portal of actionable knowledge. At the same time, the active usage of the SUMEX portal would allow and enable reassessing the status-quo knowledge (Figure 7).



Figure 7: SUMEX Toolkit building blocks (Source: SUMEX Project)

The SUMEX Toolkit also seeks to serve as a digital meeting place. Against this background the information provided via the toolkit will be based on a process of knowledge management that collects, organises, internalises into learning processes, and contextualises the knowledge for other practitioners (see Figure 8).

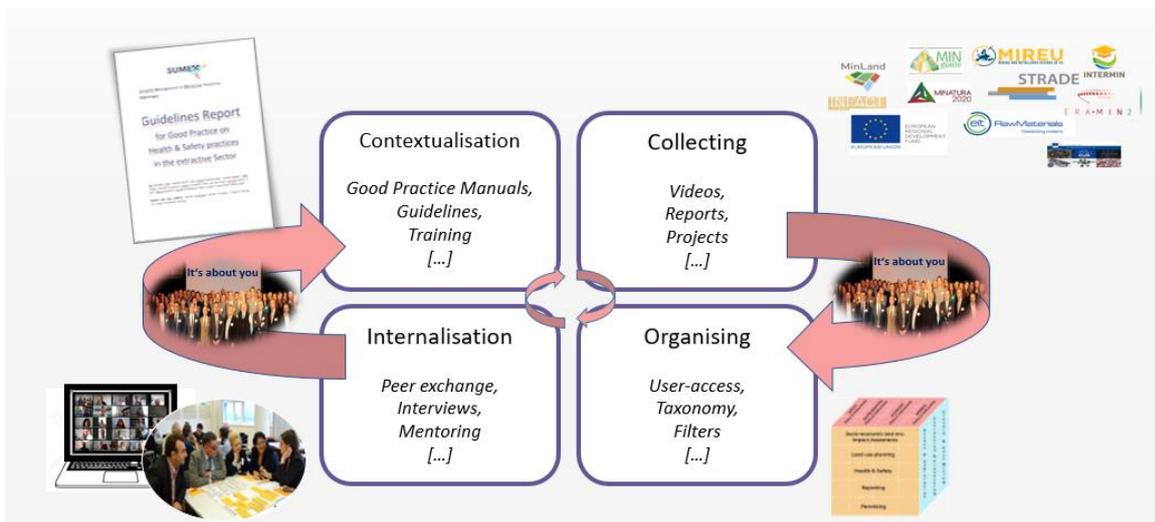


Figure 8: Concept of the SUMEX process for knowledge management via the Toolkit (Source: SUMEX Project)

Knowledge Repository: The first step is to collect the knowledge that already exists and find the best way of organizing this knowledge. Some ideas for such a knowledge repository include creating a one-stop-shop that offers a well-structured repository, with information access centred around user needs. Another focus is to design guidance materials by ‘making sense of good practice’ – a how-to guide rather than just presenting information about good practice. To further supplement these documents, webinars, storytelling, videos and graphics are a good way to communicate information.

Digital Learning: Focusing on people engaging with the platform and their needs, SUMEX considers the Learners and Leaders League (3L) as a digital learning tool. This allows for an open and reflexive dialogue

and contributes to the establishment of a community of practice, which provides the opportunity to exchange ideas and learn from each other. This also requires developing digital infrastructure that builds on delivering the 3L model over a longer time frame and not in a ‘one event’ approach such as a webinar or other virtual event.

Andreas then proceeded to poll the participants on various aspects of digital tools, with the results (Figure 9) indicating that more participants are interested in land-use planning policy and prefer personal communication (emails, phone calls) as the means for exchanging ideas with their peers particularly during the current COVID-19 pandemic. Participants favoured online workshops and other interactive events as the online format for learning about a new topic.

In the panel discussion, where practitioners were asked about their use of digital tools, there was a common thread around the importance of having access to reliable information such as that provided by the RMIS. Tamas Hamor (JRC) emphasized the importance of identifying the main target of users, rather than the industry focus. There is a significant difference between users from industry and the more generalist policy decisionmakers and public administrators. Those from industry require much more specific and contextual knowledge with regards to sustainable extractive management practices and operations with their own organisations relative to the public servants. Anders Forsgren (Boliden) agreed and suggested that a knowledge repository is useful for industrial actors where it provides site-specific information or from experts on a particular subject. He also commented that it would be useful to find an overview of where to find good cases and locate experts. Hakan Tarras-Whalberg (Georange) emphasized the need for having access to a ‘simpler is better’ approach to providing information. Hakan also pointed out that, while there is ‘wisdom’ widely available on the internet, actual data, particularly comparable across companies, is not so easily available but should be included in SUMEX’s Toolkit.



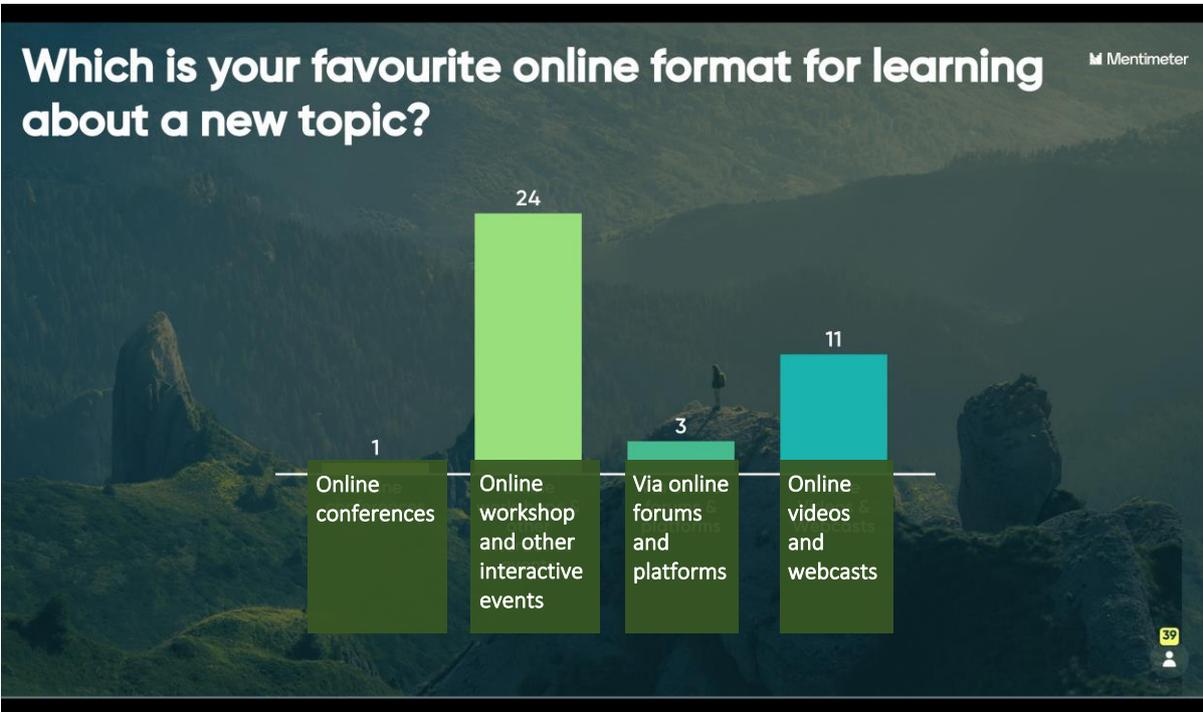
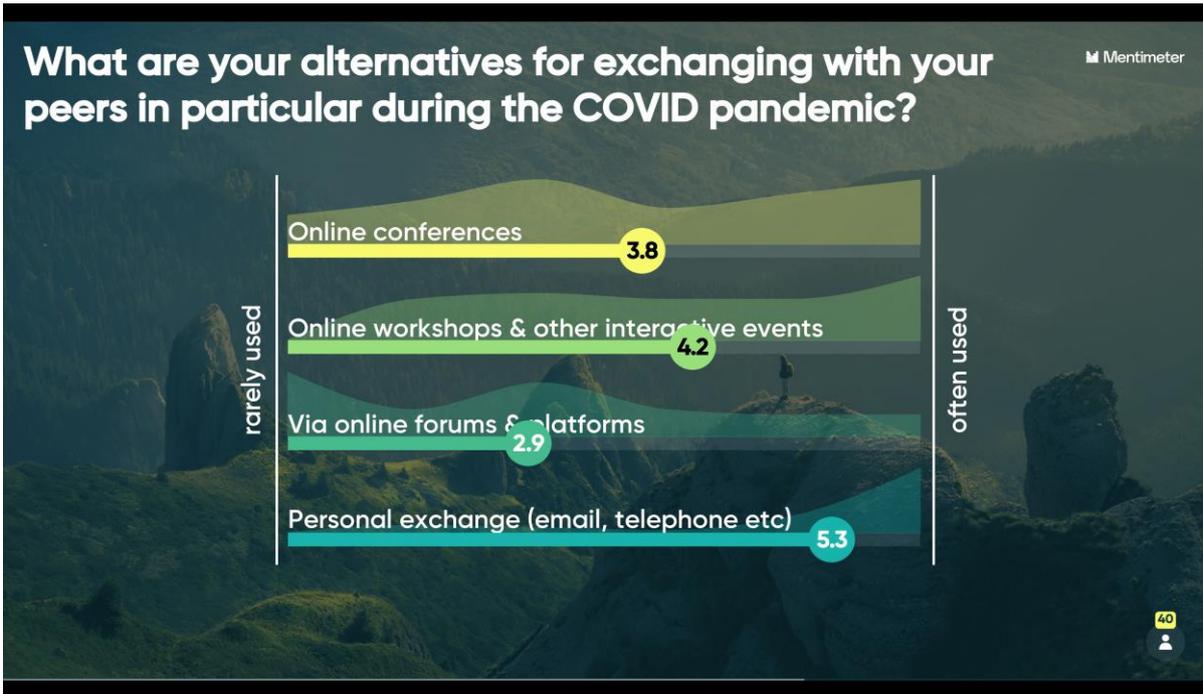


Figure 9: Preferred Tools for Digital Communications (Source: SUMEX Project)

Of the most important things for practitioners, the visualization of the tool, its ease of use (such as searchability) and the long-term stability of the platform were also noted as important. RMIS, EU-LEX, S&P Database were mentioned as good examples of digital tools.

Offering their advice to SUMEX, the panellists asked that the toolkit provide a good overview of the information it contains, be tailor-made tool for the public, be really useful for the industry and link to another institution so it may have a long lifetime beyond the duration of the project

6 KEY LESSONS

At the end of the virtual event, Michael Tost summed up the **key lessons**, remarking that at the start of the project there were naturally more questions than answers, as should be the case. SUMEX will continue to 'keep the lines open' and engage with the participants and other stakeholders over the next three years.

The Launch Event for the SUMEX project was held within 15 working days of the official start of the project. The levels of participation and engagement by stakeholders were notable, indicating high interest in the subject and clear focus of the project. Compared to the norm for project events, the dropout rate for those who registered was considerably low – less than 30%. A further 30 people watched the Facebook live-stream; the event recordings had 172 views of the first part and 88 views for the second part as of 24 November 2020.

The SUMEX project team intends to build on this level of interest. In the next months following the event, the team shall follow up with participants on a number of issues that were raised but were unable to be fully discussed during the launch event due to time limitations.

SUMEX PROJECT BACKGROUND

SUMEX is a 36-month project funded by the EC that started on 1 November 2020. The project supports the set-up of a European sustainability framework to improve the permitting procedure along the extractive value chain (prospecting, exploration, extraction, processing, closure, post closure activities), to guarantee timely decisions, a transparent governmental regulatory regime, appealing financial and administrative conditions and sustainable natural environmental and social conditions. The main mission of SUMEX is to assist policymakers and other stakeholders in seizing this opportunity.

To foster more, but sustainable mineral production in the EU, SUMEX (*SU*stainable *M*anagement in *E*xtractive industries) will establish a sustainability framework for the extractive industry in Europe. It does so by considering the Sustainable Development Goals, the European Green Deal, as well as EU Social License to Operate considerations and will involve stakeholders from industry, government, academia and civil society backgrounds from all across the EU.

This framework is then applied across the extractive value chain to analyse the mineral, as well as relevant economic, environmental and social policy frameworks of the EU, member states and selected regions along five focus areas – socio-economic and environmental impact assessments, land use planning, health and safety, reporting official statistics and permitting processes/policy integration-to find, or build, where needed, good practices or tools for an open access toolkit, which will be embedded in a broader Community of Practise (CoP) and which forms the basis for capacity building. This CoP will consider relevant stakeholder groups, with a focus on permitting authorities, across the EU, providing a digital platform and using a series of workshops and webinars. In SUMEX, the experience from other projects builds a powerful foundation for addressing the challenge of how best to implement sustainability considerations into the whole raw materials value chain.

Challenge: No common understanding of sustainable management in extractive industries

SUMEX supports the set-up of a European sustainability framework to improve the permitting procedure along the extractive value chain (prospecting, exploration, extraction, processing, closure, post closure activities), to guarantee timely decisions, a transparent governmental regulatory regime, appealing financial and administrative conditions and sustainable natural environmental and social conditions. The main mission of SUMEX is to assist policymakers and other stakeholders in seizing this opportunity.

Objectives of SUMEX

- Strengthen policy coordination and agenda setting along the mineral extraction value chain;
- Propose a uniform EU sustainable management in extractive industries context;
- Cluster with other projects to identify good practices and good practise principles;
- Identify good practises and principles for policy strategies and strategic approaches, coordination/integration and approaches and property rights regimes for different institutional systems;
- Build a toolkit with good practises, with a focus on access to land, permitting and policy coordination and integration;
- Identify stakeholder learning needs and requirements;
- Deploy an open access toolkit for capacity building across EU and with all stakeholders.

More info on <https://www.sumexproject.eu/>

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