eLTER RI

INTEGRATED EUROPEAN
LONG-TERM ECOSYSTEM, CRITICAL ZONE AND SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL
RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE

eLTER STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS AND CATEGORIES

eLTER relies on the involvement of a wide range of users (stakeholders) during the development of the eLTER Research Infrastructure (RI). They co-design the RI and its services to garner wide acceptance and maximise its relevance. Therefore, the first step towards stakeholder engagement was the identification of important stakeholder groups and categories based on their interests, roles and needs in the eLTER RI development process.

In the eLTER RI development process we identified 31 relevant stakeholder groups and their expectations in terms of information requirements, desired level of consultation, modes of participation and anticipated roles, both in the construction process and, later, in the operational RI.

These 31 stakeholder groups were clustered into 7 main stakeholder categories:

i Science and researchers

ii Peers in research and observation

iii Decision and policymakers

iv Funders of research and RIs

v Business and industry

vi Civil society and public

vii Internal stakeholders

Researchers and science stakeholders are direct users of the eLTER RI services (e.g., sites, data, training) and include individual scientists, research organisations and research networks involved in science initiatives at international levels. They are expected to engage with eLTER activities regularly and are mainly interested in related research topics, research opportunities, the chance to broaden their scientific and political visibility, as well as new funding opportunities.

Peers in research and observation like related research infrastructures in the environmental domain, in-situ and remote monitoring and observation networks and organisations such as JRC and ESA/Copernicus. This group includes other European Research Infrastructures such as LifeWatch, EOSC, DiSSCo, AnaEE, EMBRC, DANUBIUS, ICOS and CLRTAP UNECE-WGE. They are mainly interested in scientific advancement, data sharing, interdisciplinary research, access to specialised equipment and resources and knowledge exchange. Although the eLTER RI development focuses on the European context, eLTER RI will make efforts to provide in-situ infrastructure and services of global relevance together with global best examples and peers (WMO, GEO, ILTER, NEON).

Decision and policymakers range from global to regional levels, and comprise of i) Global Agencies (e.g., UNDP) and Intergovernmental Organisations (e.g., IPCC) at the global level; ii) Legislative bodies such as European Parliament

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and the European Council; iii) European Union policymakers, and EU Agencies in the realm of eLTER (e.g., EEA) at the European level; iv) Policymakers at the national level; and, v) Regional and local authorities at the local level. An effective dialogue between eLTER and Decision and policymakers at different geopolitical scales is important for eLTER to provide relevant scientific information in support of evidence-based decision-making .

Research and Research Infrastructure funders are national, European, and international funding organisations important in the financing and sustainability of eLTER research infrastructure. This category provides financial support for the cost-effective operation of eLTER sites and helps promote eLTER and its services by placing special requirements in research calls. Good communication of the implementation and impacts of eLTER services and design support their interest that funding obligations of e.g. open access to data and sites are fulfilled by eLTER.

Business and industry includes, e.g., primary and secondary users of natural resources, along with planners of natural resource use and services of environmental observation and measurement. The category also involves specific developers and producers of scientific equipment with whom eLTER RI cooperates in innovation and observation (e.g., sensor development and intercomparison experiments), information management, including visualisation at different levels, and data integration and environmental consulting and management. Interest in eLTER stems from

finding added value in collaboration or if eLTER can be seen as a market, as collaborators and providers in R&D, and as strategic allies in marketing instruments.

Civil society organisations and public stakeholders range from environmental NGOs, Citizen Science organisations (including citizens participating in activities), and organisations of users and managers of natural resources such as land and forest owners, to associations promoting science and education. This category is interested in research topics, data and/or services provided by eLTER, and their significance for the management of natural resources. In addition, they support eLTER in the collection of essential data through citizen science. The motivation of this category is strongly connected to opportunities for engagement with scientists or science education, the personal interest in the relevant topics or relevant techniques/research, the willingness to do something good and to optimise the management of natural resources.

Internal stakeholders, such as the Site and Platform Coordinators (SPC), the Site and Platform operating institutions, or the LTER networks' National Coordinators (NC), are eLTER RI's backbone. They operate more than 550 Sites and more than 50 Platforms in 26 countries and provide access to sites, data and many fundamental services. eLTER improves the site operations, the availability of standardised FAIR data, increases their user base by e.g. the access scheme and creates new collaboration and funding opportunities.
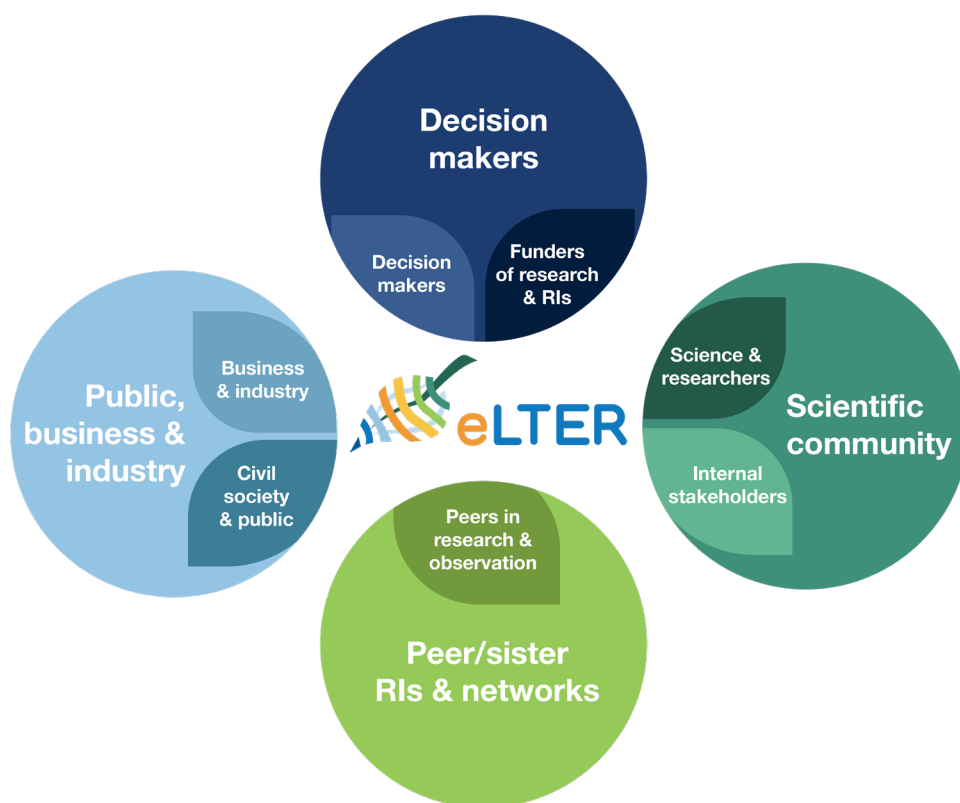

Fig. 1: The key stakeholder categories.

LEAD AUTHORS: Uta Koedel, Boris Barov **CONTACT:** ✉ office@elter-ri.eu