



T7.2: Internal Quality Control Methodology (MS7.5) (CTFC)

<https://sinteticproject.eu/>

Project Acronym: SINTETIC

Project name: Single item identification for forest production, protection and management Europe

Call ID: HORIZON-CL6-2022-CIRCBIO-02-06-two-stage (Harnessing the digital revolution in the forest-based sector)

Work Package: WP7

Task Number: T7.2

Lead beneficiary: Forest Science and Technology Centre of Catalonia

Contributing beneficiary(ies): All Partners



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1. DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

For a correct implementation of the SINTETIC project, there is the need to set a clear and operative internal quality control methodology. This will contribute to achieve the quality required for all outputs of the project, including the reports to the EC. For this purpose, a wide range of revisions and applied methodologies are foreseen. This responds to **Task 7.2. Project quality control and reporting (D&MS: MS7.5) (M1-48) (CTFC, All partners)**. As stated at this task, it will ensure the quality of the proposed deliverables, methodology and approaches undertaken along the SINTETIC project. The PCU and the PMT will ensure the timely completion from all partners to keep track on the development activities. This will include the timely elaboration of the deliverables, milestones accomplishment and periodic reports, with its internal quality control (peer-review across partners) for all major publications and products. The feedback from the EC will be used by the PMT to improve the practices and procedures, avoid further deviations from partners and keep the quality of results as established in the Grant Agreement. The quality control and reporting guidelines and protocols will be added at the project management plan. In this regard, this document will include all the quality control strategies required to run the project, most of them already included at the Project Management Plan and at both legal Consortium Agreement and Grant Agreement documents.

2. PROJECT MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Project Management Plan (PMP) (D7.1) (CTFC) is the document with all the management rules and duties of the consortium for a smooth operational management. It is revised by all partners and continuously updated according to the latest changes on the project implementation. This document acts as the main guideline for the daily operative processes, including all the required information to achieve the project results. Thus, for a further detailed search, please see the Project Management Plan document. Among others, it includes the Project Organisational Structure, the peer-review process, and the reporting procedures, all of them are a crucial part when establishing the quality control methodology. It has a detailed description of all tasks, with the responsibilities of each partner regarding the works to be done and the outputs to be delivered. This document is key to ensure the overall quality of the internal follow-up processes and, in consequences, the optimal quality of the outputs.

3. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE SINTETIC PROJECT

The project is structured in terms of different operative teams organised through a pyramid structure where on the top there is the funding organism of the European Commission. After this and in decrescent level, there are the following teams: Project Coordination Unit (PCU – Coordinator), the General Assembly, and on the base there is the Project Management Team (PMT), the Advisory Board (AB) and the Demo site leaders.



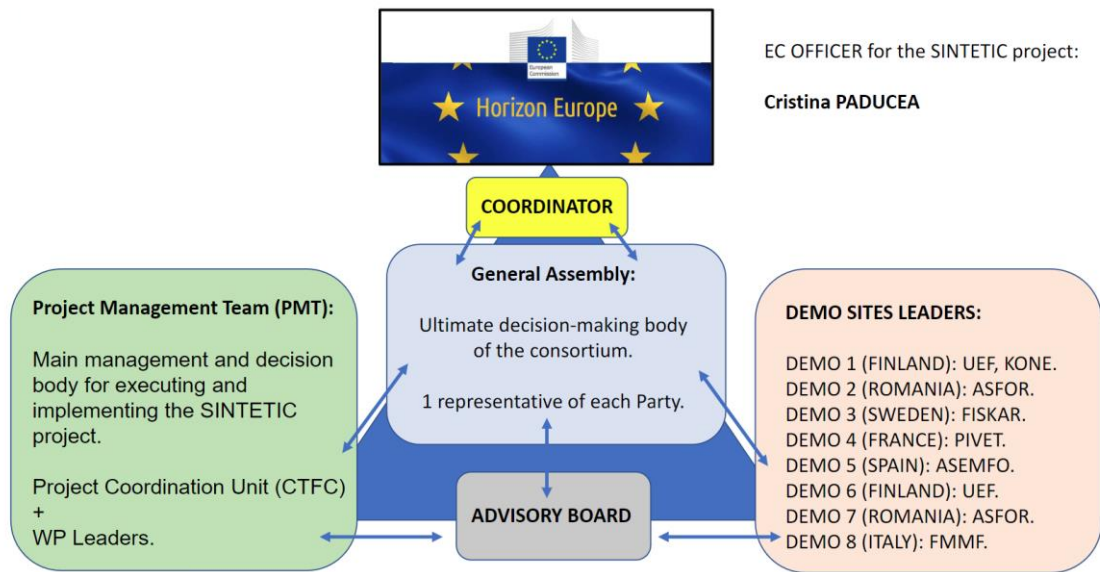


Figure 1. Governance structure of the SINTETIC project.

The different teams are in charge of specific aspects of the project implementation. This will ensure a good workload balance among all involved members.

1. **Project Coordination Unit (PCU):** in charge of the creation of the Project Management Plan and of the Interim Reports processes. Also their related templates and to provide all kind of support to partners on financial and administrative issues. It is the responsible to submit the information required during the Periodic Report (both technical and financial), and to maintain a close follow-up of the overall project progress through the data compilation from the rest of the partners, filtered mostly by the Work Package Leaders conforming the Project Management Team. The PCU gathers via online once per week.
2. **General Assembly:** the ultimate decision-making body of the consortium, with 1 representative of each Party. Crucial decisions will be handled through this when needed. It is foreseen to held one physical encounter of the General Assembly each year of the project implementation period.
3. **Project Management team (PMT):** main management and decision body for executing and implementing the SINTETIC project. It is made up of the PCU and the WP Leaders (WPLs). The WPLs are the responsible to ensure the correct development of their respective work package. That means coordinating the overall technical activities and to provide the correct follow-up to all partners involved, basis for the Interim Reports to the PCU. The PMT meets via online at least once a month together with the PCU. This meeting is part of the quality control follow-up since allows to keep a monthly track on the project progress, provide measures for deviations, review and assess the content developed as well as planning the upcoming activities using approved criteria by all PMT members.
4. **Advisory board (AB):** is an external committee of experts able to provide feedback on highly specialized technical aspects of the project. The AB will provide an external overview of the project progress and ensure the quality and impact of the outcomes through yearly revisions. At least the AB will be gathered 2 times during the project implementation period but can be reached whenever will be needed.

5. **Demonstration Site Leaders (DSLs):** in charge of the overall coordination of the demonstration activities since they are considered a whole project on itself due to their logistical and technical complexity. Relevant impact is foreseen under these demos so the DSLs will lead the organisation of the event, plan the resources needed and duly report this. Demonstration Sites Leader will be assisted by the PMT to ensure the quality of the demonstrations during the preparation phase and during the completion of the different reporting.
6. **Partners:** despite all partners are responsible for specific key aspects of the project, SINTETIC has been designed to bring outputs to light in a cooperative way, so partners will be continuously working with other partners generating iterative feedback for their activities, all of them coordinated by their WPL and the PMT at last term, ensuring the required timeline implementation and the quality needed.

4. PEER-REVIEW ACROSS PARTNERS

Regarding the deliverables quality, the SINTETIC has proposed a peer-review methodology, with 2 different reviewers for each deliverable:

- 1st reviewer: the WPL or someone with right expertise to provide content-wise evaluation.
- 2nd reviewer: project coordinator.

Due to de complexity of some of the deliverables an additional reviewer might be needed to ensure a high quality. It will be appointed later.

The following table shows the reviewers assigned to the different deliverables:

Deliverable	Lead	Reviewer 1	Due date
D1.1. System Requirements of the overall system and the specific users (data and interfaces)	UEF	LAMMA	30/11/2023
D1.2. Data Management Plan (1st version)	CNR	TREE	30/11/2023
D1.3. Data Management Plan (2nd version)	CNR	BLUEB	30/09/2025
D1.4. Data Management Plan (final version)	CNR	TREE	30/11/2026
D1.5. Geospatial and platform data model, conceptual scheme	LAMMA	TREE	31/03/2024
D2.1. Prototypes development report detailing the technical characteristics and pre-test results of the prototypes (hardware and software)	INNO	UEF	31/05/2025
D2.2. Report detailing the operative feedback from demos and the upgrades done accordingly on the prototypes	INNO	UNITBV	31/05/2026
D2.3. Marking and tracking system for trees and timber products	OTME	CNR	30/09/2024
D2.4. Smartphone-APP for timber measuring, grading and tracking	TREE	INNO	30/11/2024
D2.5. Prototype of forest harvester with tracking functions and quality sensors	OTME	CNR	30/11/2024

Deliverable	Lead	Reviewer 1	Due date
D2.6. Quality assessment and traceability systems in sawmill	MICRO	INNO	31/05/2025
D3.1. Geodatabase of all data and metadata provided by sensors and forest machinery	CNR	TREE	30/11/2024
D3.2. Data procedures and algorithms to services, source code	CNR	UEF	31/05/2025
D3.3. Web APP to process and report forest inventory information (Forest HQ)	TREE	BLUEB	31/05/2025
D3.4. The SINTETIC Forest APP centre for interaction with multiple software tools	TREE	BLUEB	31/05/2026
D4.1. Demonstration plan of all the planned demos	CNR	UNITBV	31/07/2025
D4.2. Integrated web platforms and portable digital tools to enhance forest management of fragmented forests	BLUEB	TREE	31/05/2026
D4.3. Testing and evaluating the developed prototypes and technologies (harvester, smartphone app, sawmill sensors, etc.)	UNITBV	CNR	31/05/2026
D4.4. Final report of all demos listing scientific and dissemination results	UNITBV	CNR	28/02/2027
D5.1. Wood quality models relating timber properties with stand and process data	UEF	MICRO	31/05/2026
D5.2. Terrestrial laser scanning inventory of standing trees for stand health assessment and for tree optimal bucking	UEF	UNITBV	31/05/2026
D5.3. Satellite alert system against illegal logging	CNR	UNITBV	31/05/2026
D5.4. Economic and technical assessment of the implementation of SINTETIC technologies developed (harvester, smartphone APP, portable sensors)	UNITBV	CNR	30/09/2026
D5.5. Terrestrial laser scanning inventory of standing trees for stand health assessment and for tree optimal bucking (Final version)	UEF	UNITBV	31/05/2027
D5.6. Satellite alert system against illegal logging (Final version)	CNR	UNITBV	31/05/2027
D6.1. Communication and dissemination plan (update 1st Interim Report)	CTFC	EOS	30/11/2023
D6.2. Communication and dissemination plan (update 2nd Interim Report)	CTFC	EOS	31/05/2026
D6.3. Practice abstract - batch 1	CNR	UNITBV	30/04/2025
D6.4. Practice abstract - batch 2	CNR	UEF	31/03/2027
D6.5. Training to digitalization of forest operators	CTFC	FMMF	31/12/2026
D6.6. White Paper on SINTETIC contribution addressing the EUDR 16298/22 EU legislation requirements	EOS	INNO	30/11/2024
D6.7. Business uptake and exploitation plan (Initial phase)	CNR	EOS	30/11/2023
D6.8. IPR and Knowledge management strategies (1st version)	CTFC	UEF	30/11/2023
D6.9. IPR and Knowledge management strategies (update Final version)	CTFC	UEF	31/05/2026
D6.10. Policy brief 1 - Privacy issues with digital data	KONE	ASEMFO	31/01/2025

Deliverable	Lead	Reviewer 1	Due date
D6.11. Policy brief 2 - Early quality assessment of timber products	CNR	UNITBV	30/04/2025
D6.12. Policy brief 3 - Digitalized wood value chains addressing EUDR 16298/22	EOS	ASFOR	30/09/2026
D6.13. Communication and dissemination plan (update Final Report)	CTFC	EOS	31/05/2027
D6.14. Business uptake and exploitation plan (Mid phase)	CNR	INNO	30/11/2024
D6.15. Business uptake and exploitation plan (Final phase)	CNR	EOS	31/05/2026
D7.1. Project management plan	CTFC	CNR	31/10/2023
D7.2. Protocol for impact assessment of the economic, social and environmental outcomes of the project	CTFC	UNITBV	30/09/2024

Figure 2. Peer-reviewed table for the SINTETIC project.

An updated table with all reviewers and deadlines can be found in the SINTETIC Teams workspace.

In order to facilitate this process, the SINTETIC consortium will proceed with the following steps (see figure below):

- **Completion of the first draft of the deliverable and start review:** By this date (45 days before the submission date) the first draft of the deliverable needs to be completed by the Lead Beneficiary, who will upload the document to SINTETIC shared folder (in the intranet) and will inform via email the 2 reviewers (Reviewer + CTFC) that the file is available online. For the deliverables decided to be in need of 3 reviewers.
- **End of the first review for the first draft of the deliverable:** By this date (30 days before the submission date) Reviewer 1 and Reviewer 2 will upload on SINTETIC shared folder a new version of the document including comments and proposal of editing (in track changes). Reviewers will inform the Lead Beneficiary as soon as its reviewed document is available online.
- **Completion of the second draft and start of the second review:** By this date (25 days before the submission date) the second draft of the deliverable needs to be completed by the Lead Beneficiary, who will upload the document to SINTETIC shared folder and will inform CTFC via email that the file is available online.
- **End of the second review for the second draft of the deliverable:** By this date (15 days before the submission date) CTFC will upload on SINTETIC shared folder a new version of the document including comments and proposal of editing (in track changes). CTFC will inform the Lead Beneficiary as soon as its reviewed document is available online.
- **End of the review for the second draft of the deliverable:** By this date (5 days before the submission date) the Lead Beneficiary will have completed the final version of the document considering the feedback received by the three reviewers. By this date the final version will be uploaded to the SINTETIC folder and CTFC will be informed by the Lead Beneficiary. The remaining days will be used by CTFC for the final reading, the editing of the document, the conversion into pdf, and the submission to the EC Portal.

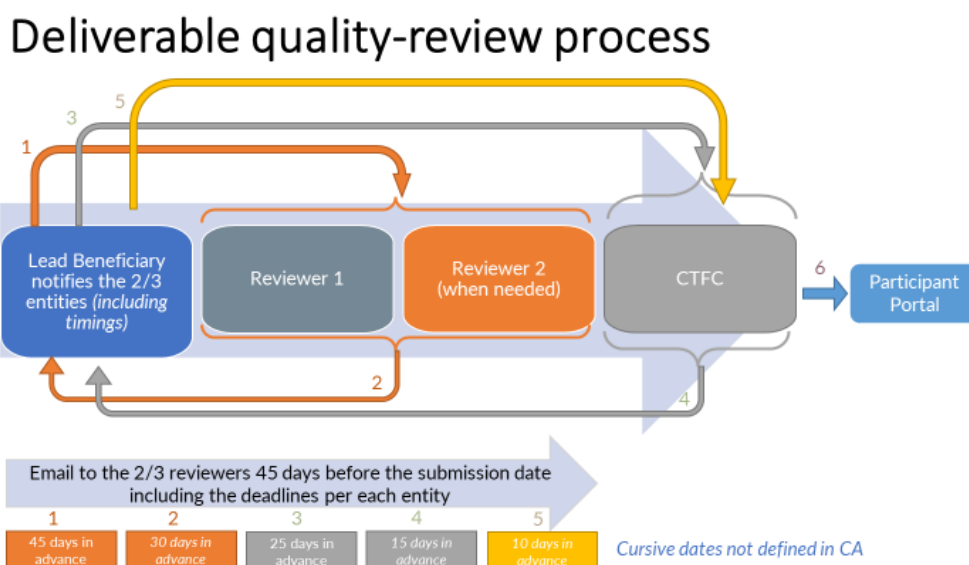


Figure 3. Peer-review process for the SINTETIC project.

5. INTERIM REPORTING

The SINTETIC projects need to report the technical and financial progress to the funding organism of the European Commission during the Periodic Reports. Since these reports are requested for a period of 18 months, the Consortium has agreed on doing an internal reporting process to ensure the continuous follow-up of the project progress. The interim reports will comprise a length of 6 months between each, presenting the following schedule:

1st interim report: M1 – M6 (Nov 2023)

2nd interim report: M7 – M12 (May 2024)

3rd interim report: M13 – M18 (Nov 2024)

4th interim report: M19 – M24 (May 2025)

5th interim report: M25 – M30 (Nov 2025)

6th interim report: M31 – M36 (May 2026)

The reports will consist of claiming both technical and financial progress explanations via filling the templates prepared by the Coordinator. For the technical quality, the WPLs will keep a close follow-up to all partners on the daily basis of working together for the deliverables development. Regarding the Financial quality, the template includes all category expenses which need to be reported according to each Interim report. This will allow to have an overview of the project expenses every 6 months. Feedback will be provided accordingly to fix possible errors and deviations. In case of unexpected issues, the coordinator will contact the project officer from EC to reach an agreement on how to proceed and, if needed, to include such changes through an amendment into the Grant Agreement. Additionally, the WPLs will provide updates during the monthly follow-up meetings and this will ensure an extra quality control on the project

implementation regarding both technical and financial aspects. All this information, once correct and approved by WPLs, will be used to fill the Continuous and the Periodic Reporting.

6. FEEDBACK FROM EC

After each Periodic Reporting, the EC it is expected to elaborate an evaluation letter including all good and not so good aspects of the project. Bad aspects need to be addressed, usually for the next report. This issued will be automatically shared from the Coordinator to the involved partners, presenting mitigation and correction measures as a support and as a path on how to proceed, leaving the less time as possible for recovering the expected quality level of the project.

7. DAILY SUPPORT ON QUALITY MECHANISMS

Additional mechanisms are foreseen such as:

1. Daily direct contact by mail, TEAMS, and phone to the PCU and to WPLs.
2. TEAMS workspace ensuring working documents are available at any moment for everybody involved in the project actions.

