CLIMATE SMART ADVISORS

Project Website

Deliverable 8.6

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Disclaimer

Please note that the review of this document is still in progress, and the deliverable is subject to final approval. Any feedback or changes provided during this review process may affect the final version, and approval from the relevant parties is required before the deliverable is considered complete.

List of Abbreviations

CSA	Climate Smart Advisor
NC	National Coordinator
CoDIE	Co-Design Innovation Experiment
CoP	Community of Practice
PDF	Pilot Demonstration Farm
WP	Work Package
CFD	Climate Farm Demo
TL	Thematic Leader
CSF	Climate Smart Farming
CSC	Climate Smart Coach
PIP	Projects, Flagship Initiatives and Policy Makers
CS	Climate Smart
AKIS	Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems
EU	European Union
M&A	Mitigation & Adaptation
GA	General Assembly
CFD	Climate Farm Demo
SEO	Search Engine Optimization
BIOS	BioSense Institute
UPS	Uninterruptible Power Supply
SSH	Secure Shell
HTTPS	Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure
PM	Project Manager

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Final 1.0	29-01-2024	Erika De Geest (EVILVO)	final layout corrections, version for upload

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1 Abstract

D8.6 – Project website, is a deliverable describing what and how, regarding Climate Smart Advisors project digital infrastructure, meaning project website, is designed, developed and how it is going to be upgraded and maintained during the project life cycle. The process of development is followed from the initial steps – research on needs and requirements of the CSA project Consortium regarding project online infrastructure, until the website release and making it publicly available for end users to explore and use.

The assessment of needs and requirements provided the development team with an initial structure of the website which is based on 5 main pillars of content and functionalities. Those are: Project – with basic and most important information about CSA project, its objectives and stakeholders; People – representing key roles in the project who will be carrying CSA towards its milestones; Resources – where key project results, deliverables and outcomes will be stored and shared with the community; Activities – section about practical activities are taking place in different CoPs and countries; and Updates – as a place to go for all stakeholders who want to be in the loop regarding CSA project news, activities and results.

Release of the project website early in the CSA project lifecycle means that many upgrades will be made in the later project phases when more and more needs will arise and become more clear to the project stakeholders. Goal of the BioSense team who is in charge for WP8 is to furtherly develop and maintain the CSA website as one of the main tools for communication and dissemination in the project.

2 Introduction

In ClimateSmartAdvisors, advisors are recognised as being in a key position in developing and sharing climate smart (CS) innovations and good practices between peers and with farmers. Therefore, ClimateSmartAdvisors works on improving the opportunities, knowledge, and skills of agricultural advisors to support farmers in the implementation of climate change mitigation and adaption actions across Europe. The project aims to boost the role of agricultural advisors and advisory service providers (ASP) across by strengthening their capacity in providing targeted advice on climate mitigation and adaptation approaches, and by sharing solutions for impactful advisory methods. By boosting the role of the EU agricultural advisory community, we aim to contribute to an acceleration of the adoption of climate smart farming (CSF) practices by the wider farming community within and across EU Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (AKISs).

ClimateSmartAdvisors work package (WP) 8 works on communication, dissemination and exploitation activities for the CSA project. From the development of communication & dissemination strategy, to the organizing activities and coordinating the CSA partners for these tasks, WP8 team have to ensure that knowledge and project results are communicated and disseminated to the EU agricultural advisory community and all other relevant actors and stakeholders across the EU. This will be done by creating Dissemination, Exploitation and Communication Plan, dissemination and communication activities at project and national levels, and by capacity building on the ClimateSmartAdvisors results. One of the important tasks in this WP is development and maintenance of the project website, described in this Deliverable.

This document describes how the CSA project website, is designed, developed and how it is going to be upgraded and maintained during the project life cycle. The process of development is described from the initial steps – research on needs and requirements of the CSA project Consortium regarding project online infrastructure, until the website release and making it publicly available for end users to explore and use. Some of the main project activities which the CSA website should support are: 1) an EU-wide network of 260 advisory Communities of Practice (CoP) to support the development of 1500 advisors who will form the core of CS knowledge exchange; 2) 140 advisors in receiving expert training on selected topics, relevant for their context and for facilitating CoPs; 3) to facilitate Thematic Networks where international knowledge exchange on 12 thematic areas will happen; 4) to present and showcase project results, deliverables, practice abstracts and results; and 5) to help monitoring, evaluation and learning activities which will capitalize lessons learned in and outside the project.

Thus, the CSA project website is designed to be the main crossing point for all project stakeholders and for interested public as well, as project activities and outcomes would be facilitated at the best possible way, providing project actors to perform their best and for project goals to be achieved in the most efficient way. The following chapters will explain the process behind developing the CSA website and elaborate on steps to come after this deliverable is submitted.

3 Collection of user needs & requirements

Before starting the website design and development process, it was very important to conduct a research and ask the main users what they actually want and need from the product itself. The development team with experience in this type of projects can have rough overview on what is needed to be made, but the most important input should come from the users who will be using the product most of the time. In that sense it is very important to firstly elaborate on who are the users of the product we are developing, and among them, who are the primary users whose input we need to take into consideration the most.

After mapping and targeting our users, i.e. stakeholders of the project, we had to decide what approach in needs and requirements collection we want to apply in this case. For this occasion, the development team decided to apply three different user needs and requirements collection methods, including interviews with key stakeholders, online workshop with broader project Consortium members, and to elaborate needs confirmed at previous projects which had certain similarities with CSA.

3.1 User roles mapping and targeting

Defining who will be the actual users of the CSA website was the first step in preparation to conduct research on user needs and requirements. It was important to firstly map all possible users and afterwards to prioritize the ones with highest importance to this task, meaning the ones who will be the most interested to use the product and benefit from its features. Some of the user groups we identified during this process are:

1) CSA project management & coordination team
2) CSA Work Package leaders
3) CSA Task leaders
4) Advisors of CSA project
5) Coaches of CSA project
6) Thematic Leaders of CSA project
7) National Coordinators of CSA project
8) Farmers interested in CSF practices
9) European Commission representatives
10) People from other topic related projects and initiatives
11) Policy makers
12) Research community in climate M&A topics
13) Interested public

Having in mind that during the needs & requirements collection process it was impossible to reach all listed stakeholders, and due to time and resource limitations, the development team had to choose and focus on only few user groups of highest interest and highest importance for the outcomes of this task. Thus, it was decided to firstly focus on users from the project inner circle, who at the same time had the most information about the CSA project itself, and had the best possible overview on needs and requirements which exists, and which will evolve during later stages of the project.

As primary group for inputs gathering, CSA project management team and WP leaders were chosen for one-on-one interviews during November 2023, while broader circle of people from project Consortium, including climate smart coaches, thematic leaders, national coordinators and advisors were engaged for this task during the second General Assembly meeting during November 2023.

As a third method of needs and requirements collection, an analysis of other Horizon Programme project websites was done, in order to compare and get additional ideas about what should be included in the CSA website as well.

3.2 Needs & requirements gathering methods

For this purpose, three different methods were chosen and implemented, as stated in the previous section. One-on-one interviews were applied for the group of primary stakeholders; an online workshop session was applied for the secondary stakeholder group, while analysis of other similar project websites was done to collect additional ideas and possible features for the CSA project website.

3.2.1 Interviews with key stakeholders

During November 2023, the development team approached CSA coordinators and WP leaders in order to organize one-on-one interviews in order to collect needs and requirements for the project website. One-on-one interviews were chosen as a method as we wanted to give space to the primary stakeholders group and opportunity to them to be more open and elaborate on their needs in a more intimate atmosphere.

10 interviews were conducted and for each of them the same set of questions was used, with opportunity for interviewee to add additional inputs in case questions did not cover all important areas. Each interview lasted for around 45 minutes as WP8 team did not wanted to take too much time of participants, and wanted to focus only on crucial points. This is the reason why questionnaire had only 5 questions. The list of questions can be found below:

1) What is **essential** for CSA website to have/provide?
2) What is **nice to have** for CSA website to have/provide?
3) What are the specific requirements regarding CSA website for **your WP/role**?
4) What should be the same and what should be different from **CFD website**?
5) What you personally **like/don't like** to see at other similar project websites?

With this questionnaire we wanted to get a clear picture of what is essential for the CSA project website to provide, and what are optional functionalities which can add value to the product only after essential ones are developed. Interviewed users were asked to think about the project website from the overall perspective, but also from the perspective of their specific role in the CSA project.

After all planned interviews were conducted, gathered data was structured and analysed, together with data collected by two other methods.

3.2.2 Workshop with the Consortium

On 23rd and 24th of November 2023, the second General Assembly meeting was held online through Zoom web platform. This was the perfect opportunity for WP8 team to reach the wider circle of CSA Consortium members, including NCs, TLs, CSCs, Advisors and Task leaders, and engage them about their respective needs and requirements towards project website. This session was placed at the second GA meeting day, and it was optional for participants to join, meaning only users interested for this topic showed up ready to actively participate by giving their inputs on this topic. Around 15 participants with different roles in the project participated at the session.

Content wise, the structure of the workshop was similar to the structure of the interviews but slightly adapted to fit the online workshop format. By having a similar content structure later it was possible to compare data gathered through interviews, with data collected during this online session.

In order to make the online session interactive and more appealing for participants, a Mural board was used for preparation and during the session itself, where all participants were able to write and post their opinions on the board, and also to comment or support posts made by others. Questions/tasks for this workshop can be seen below:

1) What should be the main Call to Action (CTA) / main message of the CSA website?
2) Write 3-5 main functionalities CSA website should provide. Must haves.
3) Prioritize functionalities written.
4) Nice to have functionalities.
5) Write project websites you can name as role models/examples of good practice.

These questions/tasks were followed by verbal explanation of a facilitator who guided the group through the board. Following picture shows how the board was designed and inputs of participants attached as sticky notes.

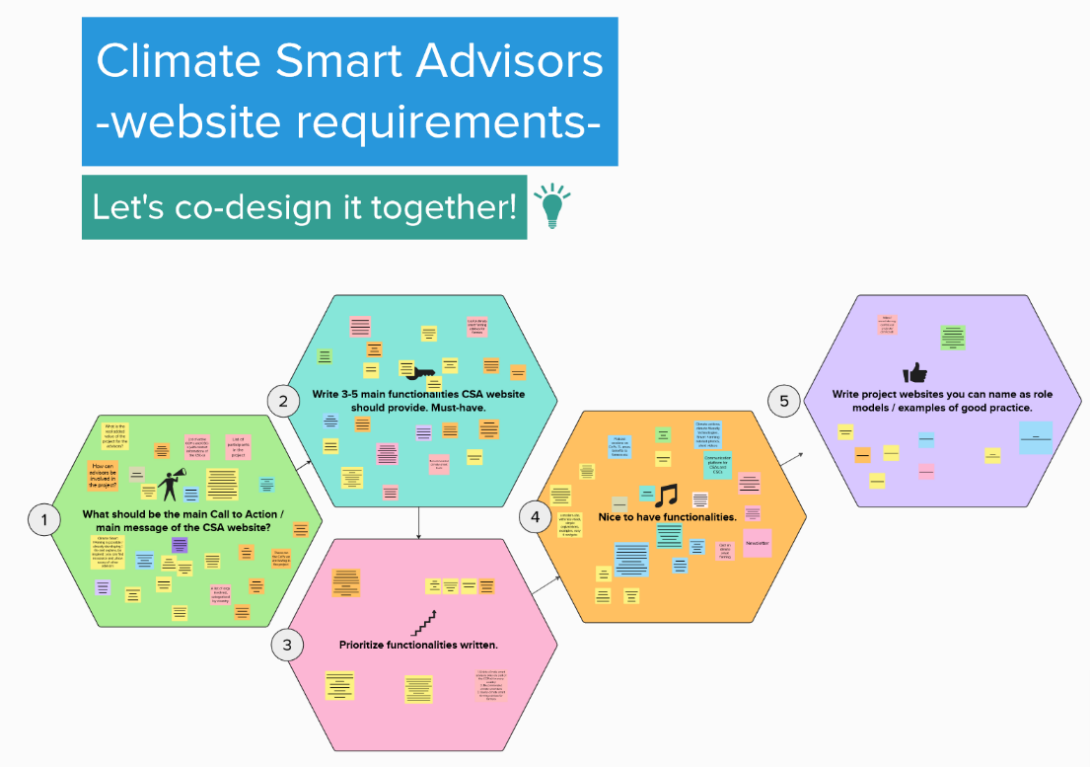

Figure 1 - visual board used for the workshop with project Consortium

With the first question we wanted to find out what should be in focus of the CSA website from the overall Consortium perspective. This highly influenced the design of the website's homepage and key messages we want to show to website visitors. After only few moments spent at the website, new visitors should know what it this project is about.

The second task in the session aimed to expose all important functionalities this product should provide the Consortium with. Some functionalities were new while others were mentioned during the first stage of the requirements collection. To find out which of all mentioned functionalities are really

important to users, as a third task we asked them to prioritize items from the previous task as an evaluation method for what is really important to them.

A fourth task was about which functionalities users would like to see, but which are not essentials and can be left for implementation at later stages of the website development. The final task for participants was to list the project websites with similar topic, mostly EU Horizon projects, which can be seen as a role models or examples of good practice, regarding design and/or website functionalities.

3.2.3 Gathering needs and requirements from previous projects

Learning from previous experiences has been chosen as a third method of requirements and needs assessment, as BIOS team was part of multiple projects so far where one of the tasks was to develop, or co-develop project websites and platforms for different purposes, and in different contexts. Every project has its own specificities while also most of the projects of this type, have common similarities which can serve as a starting point for development of new digital products.

One of the most common projects to analyse was CSA sister project – Climate Farm Demo, where BIOS team was in charge to develop website and platform for this purpose. CFD is a project with very similar topic and project structure, so it served as a good study example. Lessons learned from Nefertiti project (CFD predecessor) were also taken into consideration. Along these two, some of the project websites also analysed were: Pathways project, Agriland, Grazing 4 Agroecology, Agroforward, Foodlevers, Agro Mix Project, Go Green Routes, etc. From each of this analysed project websites certain conclusions were made and additional ideas were taken for the CSA website development.

3.3 Gathered data analysis

All data gathered during the month and a half of user needs & requirements collection, were filtered and important inputs were organized into one common document where data was structured and made more easily to compare. During analysis, input, which was the same or similar from different stakeholders, was highlighted and after several iterations it started to become clear what messages and what functionalities will be in focus during the website development phase.

By using three different sources of input for the development phase, this activity was also used as a data validation method, where all important functionalities were mentioned several times at different occasions, by different users. At this stage qualitative and quantitative analysis was made, which provided BIOS team with clear design path and served as a starting point for developing core website structure.

4 Website design based on gathered inputs

The Website design phase started right after the needs & requirements phase finished. Without having all inputs collected it was challenging to imagine how the website should be designed and what elements should be provided to the stakeholders. After qualitative and quantitative analysis, it started to be clear what kind of structure, design and content should be developed.

By having experience from previous projects, BIOS team was aware of possible mistakes and challenges which can occur in this kind of activities. Sometimes, requirements and needs stated during its collection from stakeholders did not equally represent what was actually needed to be provided. That's why the third method – comparison to previous projects and their websites - provided us with insights about what can be very important and useful to include, and what sometimes users ask for, but do not use actually after its implementation.

4.1 Developing website structure

The initial website structure has experienced several iterations before the final structure was applied. Eventually, it was decided that website structure will be made of five main pillars, where each pillar will have its substructure. It was challenging to segment all content into these five groups, as some content is very similar to another, and duplicating content was hard to be completely avoided.

Structure for the first version of the live website is contained by the following main segments:

1) Project
2) People
3) Resources
4) Activities
5) Updates

The "Project" segment is the informative part of the website where all important and relevant information about the ClimateSmartAdvisors project are being placed. This segment answers on the questions WHAT the project is all about, WHICH partnering organizations are involved, HOW the project work is being organized through work packages and tasks, WHO is leading which activities and WITH which sister projects is CSA related. Finally, in the following period at this segment, the CSA Advisory Board will be presented to the audience.

The "People" segment reflects the opinions of the vast majority of stakeholders, who stated that this project is all about people (Advisors, Coaches, NCs, TLs) and that this impression should be in focus for website visitors. Thus, CSA people have this segment of the website dedicated only to them, so the interested public could see who is standing behind the project. Dedicated pages are made for National Coordinators, as they will be the ones who will coordinate activities in their respective countries; Climate Smart Coaches, as they will be in charge for facilitating the Communities of Practice, central in the project; Thematic Leaders, as they will take the lead in each of 12 Thematic Areas related to adaptation & mitigation measures; and the CSA Management team, as those are the people who take care that the CSA project runs smoothly and achieves its objectives. Advisors (also known as CSAs in the project), for which we expect to have around 1.500 of them during the project length, are not personally represented at the website as it was technically and content-wise not feasible for such a large number of personas.

By presenting the most important project roles at the website, it is going to get a human face and go above the function of just technically presenting project information. Also, for the people in the

project Consortium, as for the interested public, it will be easy to understand and find out who is in charge for which task, and even to easily contact the right person.

Every person presented at the website has the same or very similar set of information, including: name and surname, individual photo, role in the project, short biography, country of residence, organization/employer, thematic area (if applicable) and contact (e-mail). With this equal set uniformity of this website's section is achieved.

The "Resources" segment is part of the website where the majority of useful learning materials will be presented, including: the Knowledge Repository, Deliverables, Practice abstracts, Videos page and External resources. As agreed among Consortium and CSA management team, the most important part of this segment – the Knowledge Repository – will be external from the CSA website as this Repository will be a common place for knowledge objects of, so far, three different projects – CSA, CFD and ClieNFarms project. In this way all related knowledge objects produced among all three projects will be placed at the same place which will make it easier for users and visitors to find and apply collected topic-related materials.

The joint Knowledge Repository will be made by Athens University team (AUA), with support of BIOS and other partners involved. It is planned for this repository to serve as a common digital repository for certain other related projects, which will start in the future.

Other than the repository, the Resources segment will host all project Deliverables divided per Working Package, Practice Abstracts, educational videos and a page where all related projects, initiatives and repositories will be presented as an additional source of information for visitors who are interested in the CSF topic.

The "Activities" segment is a place to visit for users who want to find out more about what are the concrete steps taking place in the CSA project, and how they can get involved. Activities in CSA are structured mainly through Communities of Practice (CoPs) and Thematic Areas (12), which both of them having their own dedicated pages in this segment. CoPs are communities divided per countries which gather groups of people who will learn and practice CSF activities in small groups, and in selected topics. At this section visitors will be able to learn about each CoP and to follow its progress.

Thematic Areas, 12 of them in total, will be explained more in detail, with presentation of Thematic Leader for each of them.

The "Updates" segment is a common element of these types of websites as is very useful for visitors who wants to stay in track of what is going on in the project. With pages dedicated to News, Newsletters and Social Media, this segment will be updating users about all latest project activities and results.

All five pillars of CSA website structure are visually presented at the figure bellow.

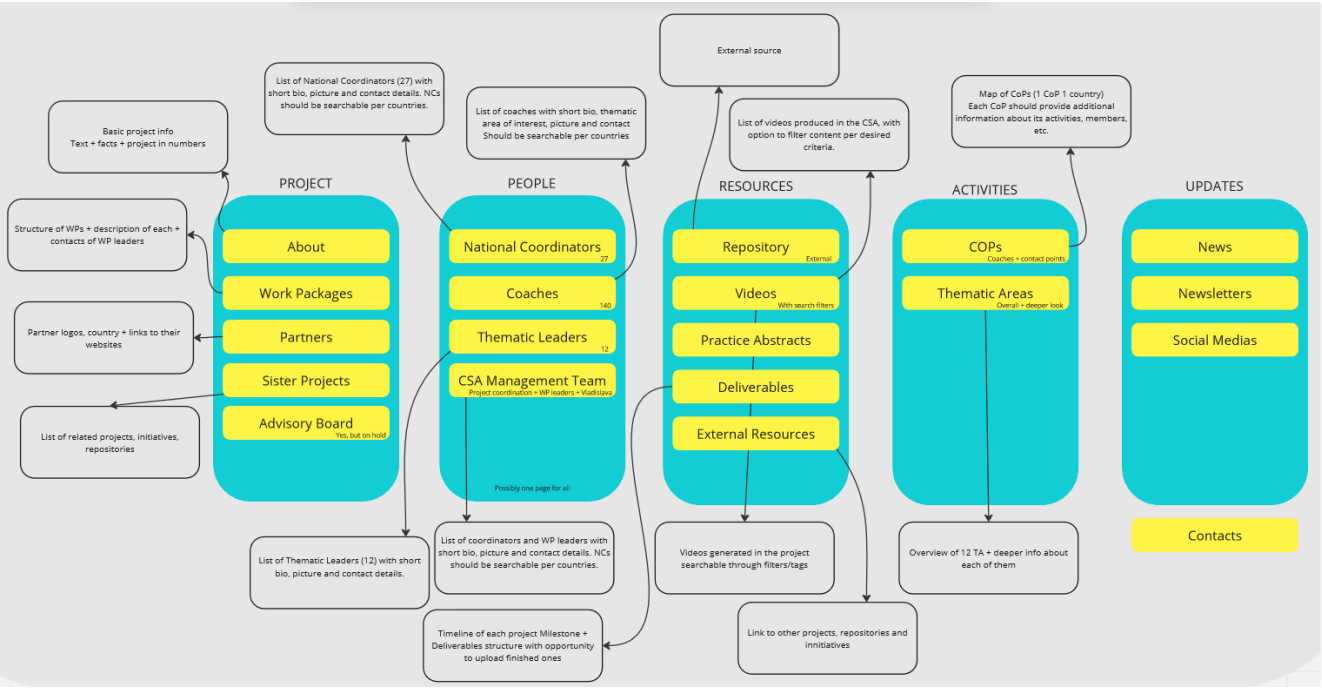

Figure 2 - website structure designed in Miro board

4.1.1 Validation of produced structure

Achieving the final version of the website structure required several rounds of feedback sessions among development team, and finalization with CSA management team. First versions of the structure were developed based on input received during requirements and needs assessment, and feedbacked among BIOS team. Later versions were presented to the CSA management team which had an opportunity to state opinion and request changes to the structure presented. After thoughtful discussion and after changes were implemented, the final version was accepted and the development team was then able to continue the development process. Having the website structure developed and accepted, served as a ground stone for later stages of development.

4.2 Visual design principles

The starting point for visualisation of the CSA website was the official “Visual Guideline Book For ClimateSmartAdvisors” created by BIOS team among WP8 tasks. This book describes basic principles of visual design which should be respected and applied in variety of situations where project materials of any kind are produced (i.e. deliverables, practice abstracts, website, newsletters, leaflets, etc). This is important as by respecting this defined visual principles, uniformity of CSA representation will be achieved, which will enable users and public to see the CSA project as an integrated activity with common values.

The CSA Visual Guideline covers all important elements of project’s visual identity, including official project logo, correct logo application, project colours, and recommended fonts to be used. Basic visual elements and principles applied can be seen below.

Figure 3 - CSA logo applied in different variations

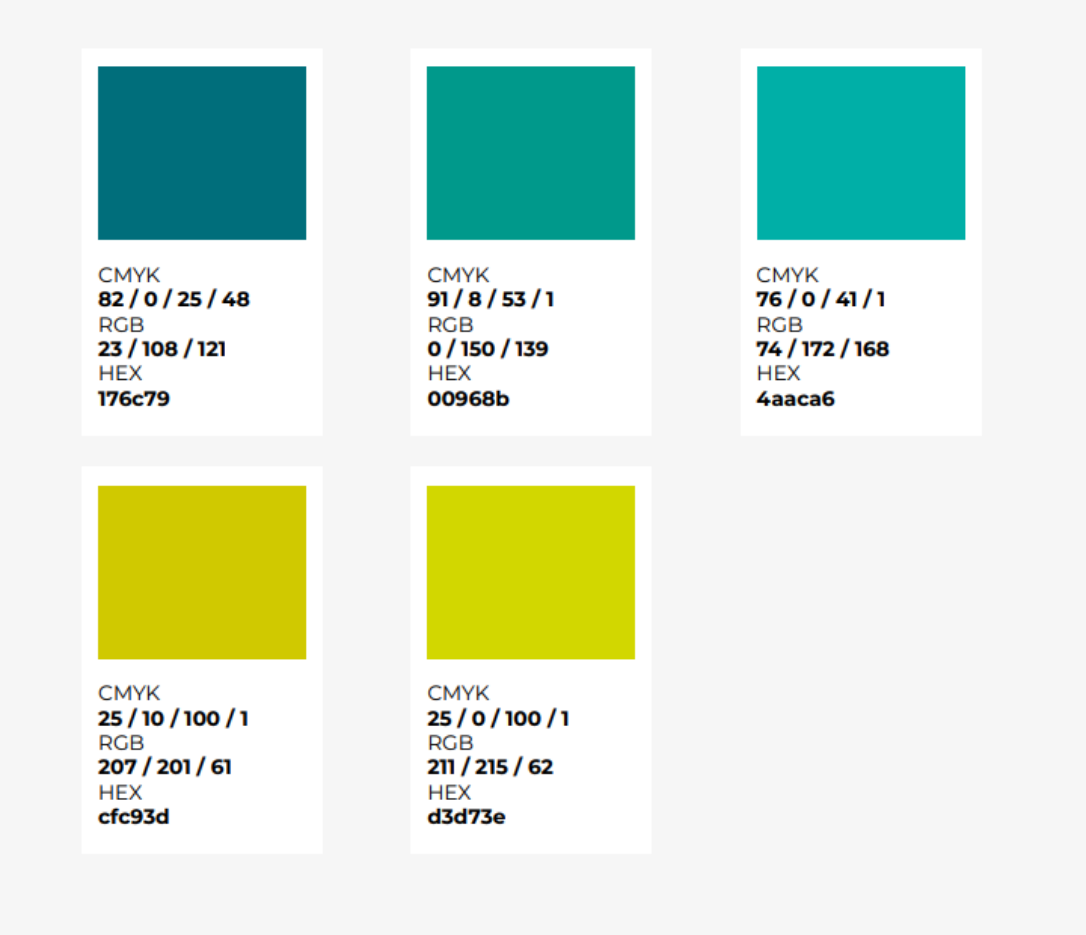

Figure 4 - official CSA colour palette

Montserrat regular

https://fonts.google.com/specimen/Montserrat

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Figure 5 - official CSA font in use

All these elements are successfully implemented into the website design process, and together make consistent visual unity.

In addition to the basic visual elements mentioned above, further website imagery also needs to represent the CSA project and its objectives in an consistent manner. With this imagery, the development team wanted to go in line with input gathered from the Consortium during the requirements assessment, and put people in visual focus throughout the project website. This is done in innovative way as we used GPT Chat Plus and its DALL-E AI tool which creates realistic images and art from a description in natural language. By using selected keywords and descriptions, interesting and innovative imagery was produced and used at several different pages of the website. It is intended to, by using this artificial art, differentiate CSA website from others in the field. Some of the imagery produced during this process can be seen below.

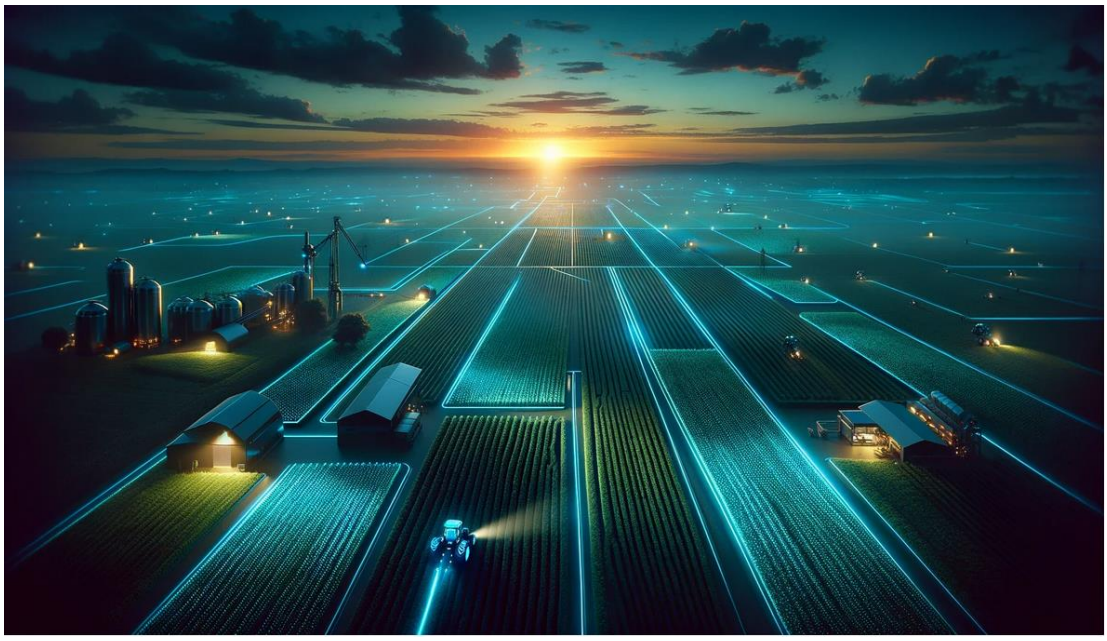

Figure 6 - example of CSA website visual 1

Figure 7 - example of CSA website visual 2

Figure 8 - example of CSA website visual 3

Figure 9 - example of CSA website visual 4

Figure 10 - example of CSA website visual 5

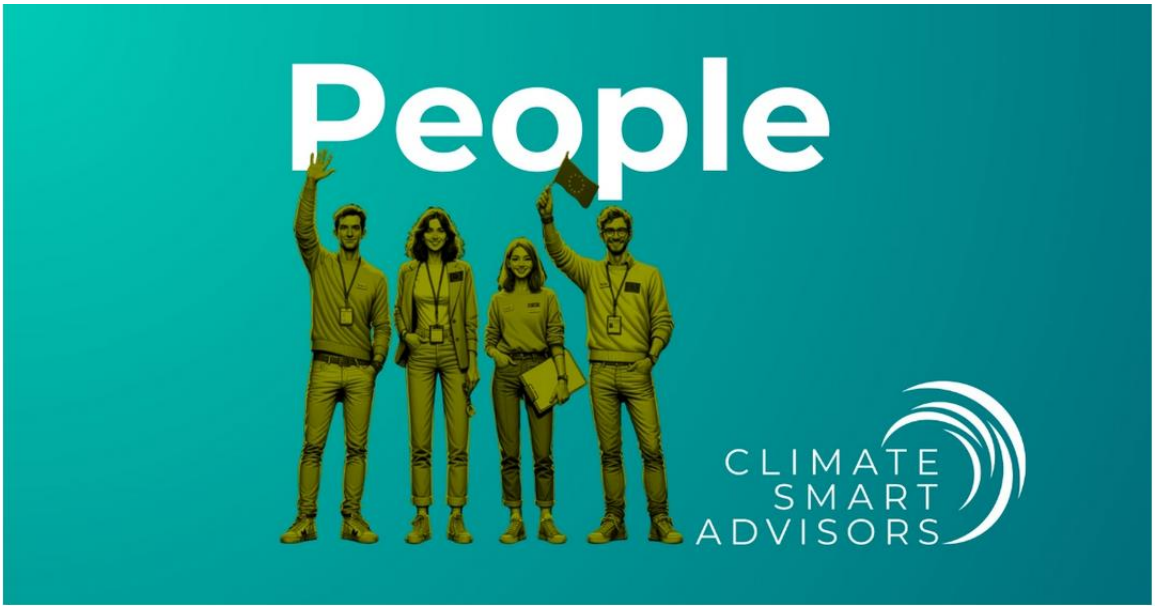

Figure 11 - example of website visual 6

It is expected that new needs for imagery, in future website upgrades, will be satisfied through the same format in order to achieve consistency.

5 Setting of the digital infrastructure

After the initial website structure was completed and design principles adopted, it was possible to go forward into the direction of setting the infrastructural scene for the website development at the web itself. Starting points were to make a consensus of domain name and where the website will be hosted – the servers.

The second step was to implement the website's initial page as people from the project Consortium could already know at which domain the CSA website could be found in future, and to announce work in progress on this task. Although no content was still available at the website domain, it was the right time to think and work on setting security measures, in order to prevent any kind of digital infrastructure failures, cyber-attacks and damages caused by web bots. These measures are closely connected to data protection and security in order to keep it safe and sound.

5.1 Domain and hosting

The process of choosing a website domain name was short and easy as ClimateSmartAdvisors is a unique domain which clearly represents the project and is good for Search Engine Optimization (SEO), to draw attention of visitors with interest in this topic.

As the project is pan-European with 27 countries involved, it was obvious that EU domain is the best option for domain extension. This means that the final version of the website full domain, which will be used throughout the whole project, is: www.climatesmartadvisors.eu. This domain was free and possible to lease.

The domain was arranged via SBB d.o.o. Cloud&Hosting company based in Serbia, which is well known for its trustworthy services and is a long term partner of BIOS.

The BioSense Institute has its own infrastructure regarding internet servers which can host different types of websites, platforms and applications, so hosting the CSA website at local servers was a convenient and safe decision.

5.2 Initial website page

Release of the CSA website was planned for M10 (January 2024) while certain project activities started to happen earlier, which was followed by activities at the CSA social media. To support this, the WP8 team decided to release at least one page of the website to announce that the project website is in progress and that, until it is released, project activities can be followed through social media accounts which were already active. The initial homepage, which was active until the full version of the CSA website was released, can be seen below.

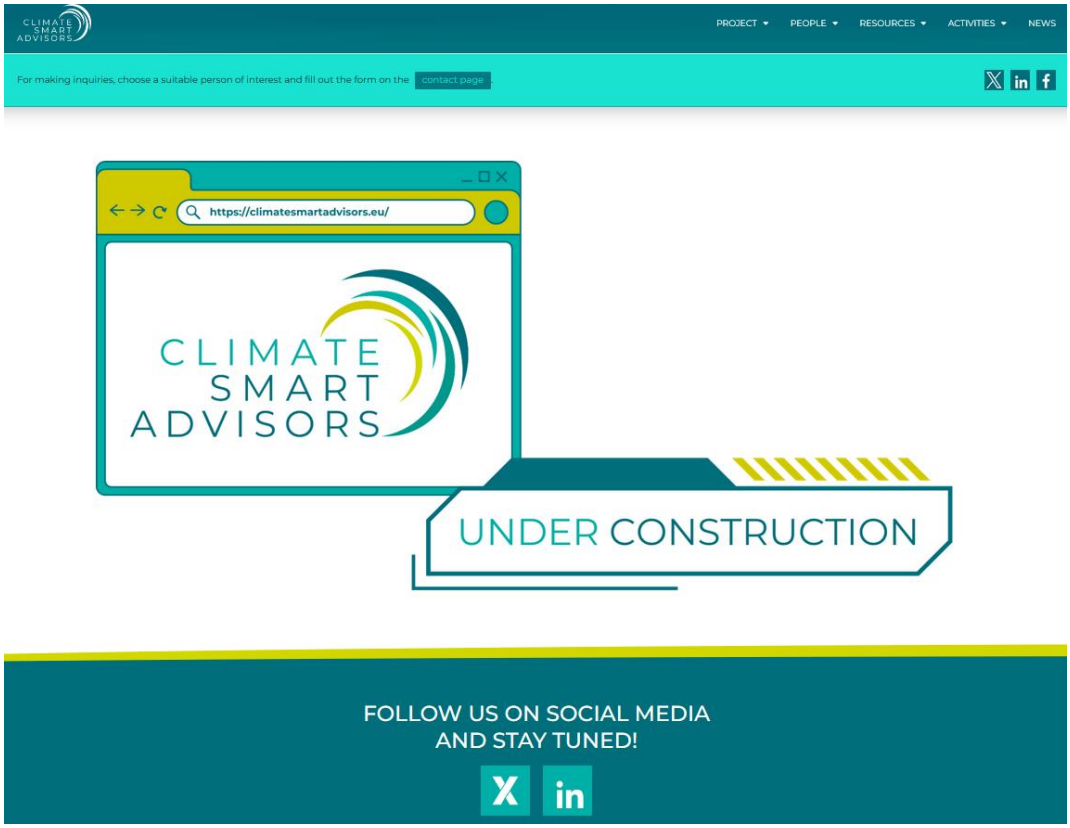

Figure 12 - website initial page

The initial website page was replaced when the website was launched in full scale, in January 2024.

5.3 Website security measures

To insure that all website data remain safe, as stated in chapter 5.1., everything is hosted at BioSense owned Data Centre. As most others, BIOS Data Centre has a backup power supply in case of electricity power cuts supported by UPS (Uninterruptible Power Supply) and power aggregates, fire protection system and protected physical access to the server space, accessible only by authorized BIOS Institute employees.

Virtual access to the database and servers is possible only via SSH client (Secure Shell) network communication protocol that enables two computers to communicate. Access is possible only from specified web addresses while authentication is done by SSH keys.

BIOS Institute uses Novi Sad University official internet network, part of Giant internet network which makes internet connection with very fast bandwidth. Database servers are separated from applicative ones, with daily, weekly and monthly backups, to prevent any major data loss. Communication between web browser and servers for the website domain is done exclusively by HTTPS protocols (Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure), with Let's Encrypt TLS (Transport Layer Security) Certificate. TLS is an authentication and security protocol widely implemented in browsers and Web servers, while Let's Encrypt is a free, open certificate authority provided by ISRG (Internet Security Research Group).

Access to WordPress management administration is possible only from the BioSense Institute Network, or via BioSense VPN (Virtual Private Network) approved to user by BioSense web security team. This makes management of WordPress developed pages very secure and under strict control.

Since hackers and spammers are mostly targeting blog pages for their attacks, we are using Akismet Anti-Spam plugin for stopping them before they can take any unwanted action.

5.4 Data management and protection

Data management is organised according to the instructions given in the CSA Data Management Plan (DMP) (Deliverable D9.1). The DMP outlines the process of data management, and describes the data which will be collected, generated, processed, or reused within the ClimateSmartAdvisors project. In compliance with the Open Access strategy of Horizon Europe, CSA will predominantly facilitate the re-use of anonymized data collected during the project, through data deposited on free data sharing platforms, making the dataset available at project website.

By the DMP, it is foreseen that the following types of data will be generated or reused during the project duration:

a. Documents, measurements, interviews, surveys, reports, briefs, guidelines, and publications in formats such as .pdf, .pptx, .doc, .docx, .jpg, .jpeg, .png, and similar formats
b. Databases in .csv format.
c. Spreadsheets in .xls/.xlsx format.
d. Pictures in .jpg, .jpeg, and .png formats.
e. Videos in MP4 and WEBP formats.
f. Web and social media content.

This list is not final and through the course of the project it will presumably extend. As stated in the Grant agreement the ClimateSmartAdvisors project aims to reuse existing datasets already produced in previous research projects, especially NEFERTITI, CLIENFarms (Green Deal), CARBON FARMING (Life) and EJP SOIL (H2020) as well as the "sister project" namely Climate Farm Demo and the project funded under "HORIZON-CL6-2023-CLIMATE-01-4". If so, a memorandum of understanding will be drawn up between the projects in which the reuse of these existing datasets will be outlined.

The data both generated and reused within the CSA project will be utilized by various users, from scientific community, other sister projects, policy makers and end-users. All outputs that are to be made publicly available to the public (project reports, deliverables, scientific papers, methods and tools, information on CoPs & CoDIEs, and project events) will be incorporated on the CSA website.

The part of data concerning project monitoring of interest for the project Consortium, will remain available only to CSA project members with predefined user roles at the project "SharePoint". The majority of data produced and collected across the CSA Work Packages, will be easily findable at the website. User navigation at the project website is done in accordance with User Experience (UX) standards, in order to provide every user with easily findable segments of content. The project will comply with GDPR concerning processing of personal data, consent, breach notification, right to access and right to be forgotten. CSA will secure the highest ethical standards and legal restrictions regarding personal data. DMP (D9.1) sets the guidelines of the procedures for the data collection, operation, and storage.

No processing of special categories of personal data as defined in Article 9 of GDPR are anticipated to be collected. At this point, the plan for collection of personal data for the purposes of the CSA website is based on the following:

For the members of the project Consortium:

- names and surnames
- role in the project
- personal photo
- short biography (basic version, in a few sentences)
- contact details (email, country of residence), and
- basic information of the persons employer, i.e. project partner organization

For the users outside of the project Consortium, i.e. Advisors, Researchers, Policy makers, Training attendees, etc.:

- email address for the purpose of signing up for the official project newsletter

All other data related issues will be handled in accordance to the CSA Data Management Plan.

6 Development method, tools and technology

Before starting to work on the CSA website development, the BIOS team had to decide which development method and technologies would be used to achieve the objectives of this task. Firstly, the methodology for needs and requirements collection was chosen. This was done through interviews with key stakeholders, an online workshop with representatives of the CSA Consortium, and by comparison of collected needs with websites of similar Horizon EU projects.

After analysis of collected data and making directions of development clear, it was possible to make a decision on a framework for development and a framework of technologies which are going to be used in order to achieve desired outputs in the most efficient way, respecting the timeframe (M10).

6.1 Development method

From previous experiences of development of websites and other digital products, the BIOS team decided to use the Agile framework for CSA website development as the most appropriate one. The Agile framework enables us to develop products in short to medium iterations and adapt quickly to user needs while adjusting to iterations of feedback from stakeholders, in order to satisfy their needs and make sure we are on the right path.

As Agile framework has a broad meaning, and includes several methods, the development team decided to use the Scrum methodology for this situation. Scrum is well known among IT professionals as a method where a product is being developed in short iterations called Sprints, usually two weeks long, where a certain amount of tasks are planned and implemented. Every Sprint starts with a Sprint Planning event, where Product Backlog is the main source of tasks for the coming Sprint. After the project manager, or scrum master, together with their team of developers, decide on what tasks are entering the coming sprint, the team starts working on these tasks for the following one or two weeks. This is usually followed by short Daily meetings, where potential obstacles and status updates are being discussed.

Each Sprint time box is finished with Sprint Retrospective and Sprint Review events. A Sprint Review is a kind of presentation of work done in that specific sprint to the project manager/scrum master, and/or to other important stakeholders as well. This is an opportunity for PM or stakeholders to ask questions about the work done and give their feedback to the development team regarding further development or need for a rework.

A Sprint Retrospective is an internal event where the development team points out and discusses pain points of the process itself, teamwork and any potential space for improvements. This event evaluates the past period and should improve the Scrum process by introducing small incremental changes to the framework.

The BIOS team was already familiar with the Scrum methodology and it was a logical decision to apply it to this product development. So far, experience with Scrum is that it is a good solution, especially for time pressured projects with strict deadlines. Also, it reduces rework as feedback iterations are often and regularly provide the team with sufficient information. The Scrum process with its events is presented at a figure below.

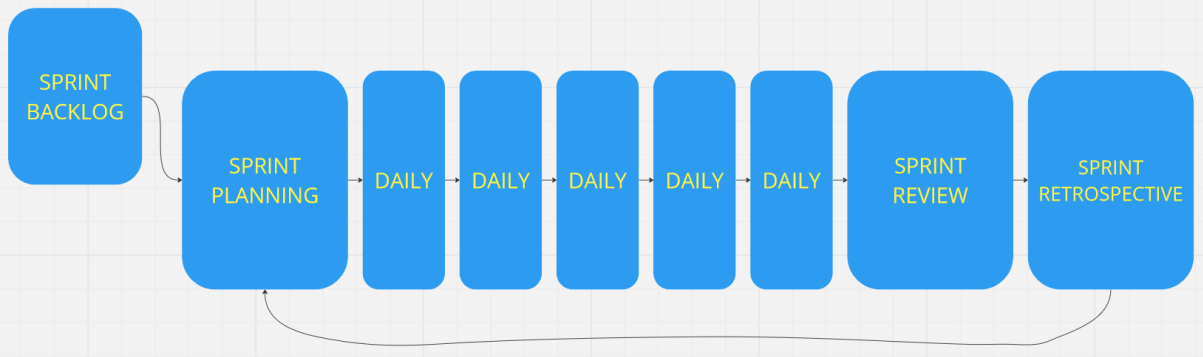

Figure 13 - visualisation of SCRUM methodology used for CSA website development

Further development will be organized according to the amount and dynamic of tasks arriving from the project Consortium. If the amount of new tasks arriving is lower than in development phase, it is possible that Scrum will be replaced with some less intense method.

6.2 Development and management tools

Management and monitoring of the development process was done through the task management system called Trello (www.trello.com). Trello is a popular PM tool used by many teams in the IT industry and it helped us to plan and keep the pace throughout sprints by using its boards and made it easy to collaborate among team members.

As visualisations were an important part of the planning and evaluation of proposed solutions, we needed an online tool to help us share the vision and collaborate during ideation phases. For this we used Miro board (www.miro.com) online tool as a very practical tool for this task, as a user friendly way to collaborate on website structure and its basic design.

For further design and visualization of the website elements AI tools were used for the first time for this purpose. Chat GPT with its Plus (Pro) version (openai.com/gpt-4) helped us to write adequate prompts while GPT Chat add-on for creation of images – DALL-E (openai.com/dall-e-3), was used as a source for different types of visuals used at the project website, next to the graphic designer who had its standard role in the visualisation process. In addition, also Canva (www.canva.com) was used at some points to achieve the desired visual impression.

For the purpose of project and website monitoring, it is going to be important to know how many users visited the CSA website, which segments are the most popular and useful, how long they stayed in average, and from where they are. All this data will be followed by integration of the CSA website with most popular web analytics tool in the industry – Google Analytics (www.marketingplatform.google.com/about/analytics). Alternative for Google Analytics is Plausible, or some other web service with similar features.

The project newsletter is one of the most important channels of communication with the CSA Consortium, and is integrated within the CSA website. The tool behind the newsletter communication which is going to be used is MailChimp (www.mailchimp.com).

6.3 Development technology

Based on the user requirements, and after analysing advantages and disadvantages of each proposed technology solution, the development team decided that use WordPress (wordpress.org) as web development technology.

WordPress is a well-known platform for the development of a variety of website types, from “one pagers” to very complex web solutions. Advantages are that using the WordPress platform makes the production process faster and it can provide the development team with useful elements which can add value to the CSA website structure. Usage of different kinds of elements , such as sign-up fields, animations, icons and similar graphical items, is much more efficient with the Elementor plugin. Elementor (elementor.com) is one of the most important add-ons to the WordPress, and the team used the latest Elementor Pro v3.18.1 version. WordPress version used is the latest WordPress 6.4.2. Constant updates of both the WordPress platform and Elementor plugin will happen during the website operational existence.

Future features and upgrades of the CSA website will be done either in WordPress, or some other technology, based on the complexity of requirements which will find its place at the Product Backlog list.

7 Website content

The CSA website content follows the website structure described in chapter 4.2, which is based on the needs assessment with project main stakeholders. Considering that the website is deployed by Month 10 of the project, several website segments and pages lack content, as it is going to be provided in later stages of the project lifecycle. For that reason, certain pages are made but have no content to display, or only a very low level of content information. Despite this, the development team considered that these pages should be deployed to show the visitors what kind of content they can expect to find at the CSA website in the future. In this chapter, the content which exists at this moment (M10) will be further explained.

7.1 Header and footer

Website header and footer are fixed website elements which serve for user navigation through the website, and for providing users with basic information about website structure, its pages, contact details, EU attribution and links to project's social media. Header and footer are shown at every website page in a consistent style.

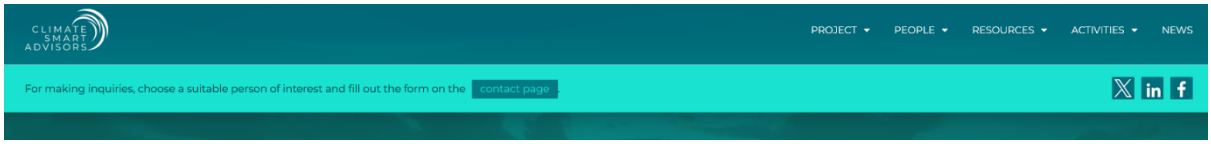

Figure 14 - universal CSA website header

Figure 15 - universal CSA website footer

7.2 Homepage

A website's homepage is usually the most visited page by users, and highly influences user experience (UX) of visitors. The homepage should represent the website and the project in the best way, in a very limited format. After just a few moments into the visit, the website visitor should be able to understand what this project is about and to navigate easily to the website segments of his/her interest. Good practice is to show the most prominent calls to action (CTAs) at the homepage, which will put in focus the most valuable content the website has to offer to its users.

Having in mind that the CSA project is still at its early stage, the first section of the homepage is designed to welcome all visitors and briefly explain what this project is about, with attractive imagery behind it. Call to action for this part is “Explore CSA” which forwards users to the “About” page where all relevant information about the project can be found.

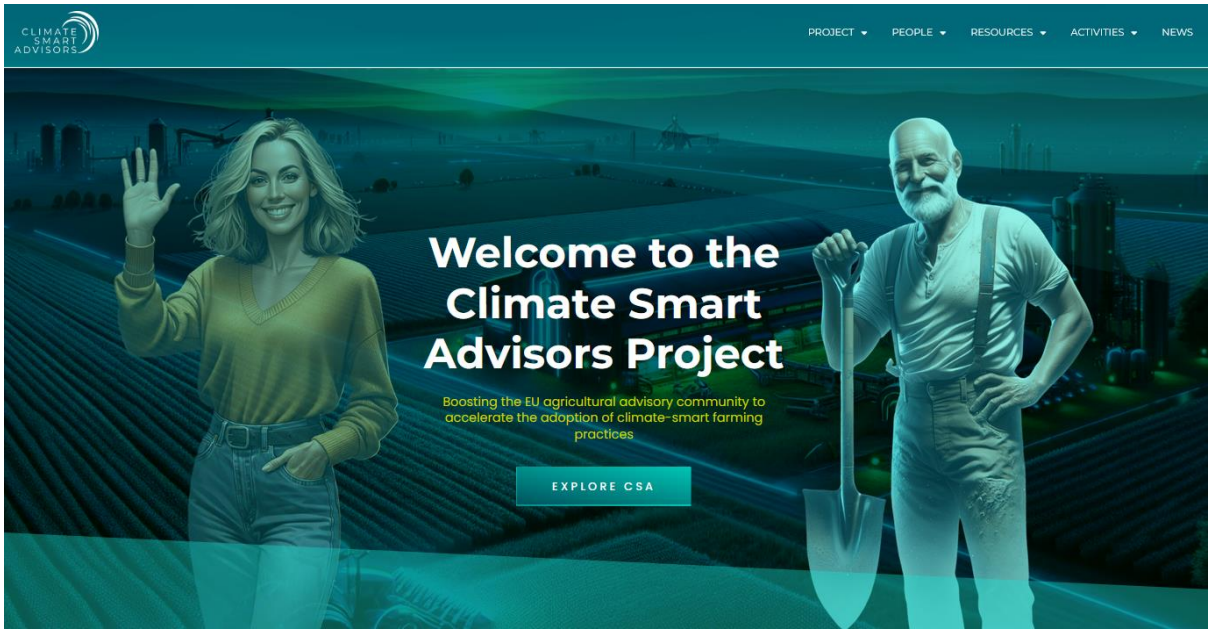

Figure 16 - CSA website homepage "hero" section

One of the most common inputs from the needs assessment was that the CSA website should emphasize the role of people in the process of shifting the EU agricultural sector towards more sustainable and climate resilient practices. In order to fulfil this need, the second call to action is for visitors to meet the ClimateSmartAdvisors people, including the management team, the climate smart coaches, thematic leaders and national coordinators.

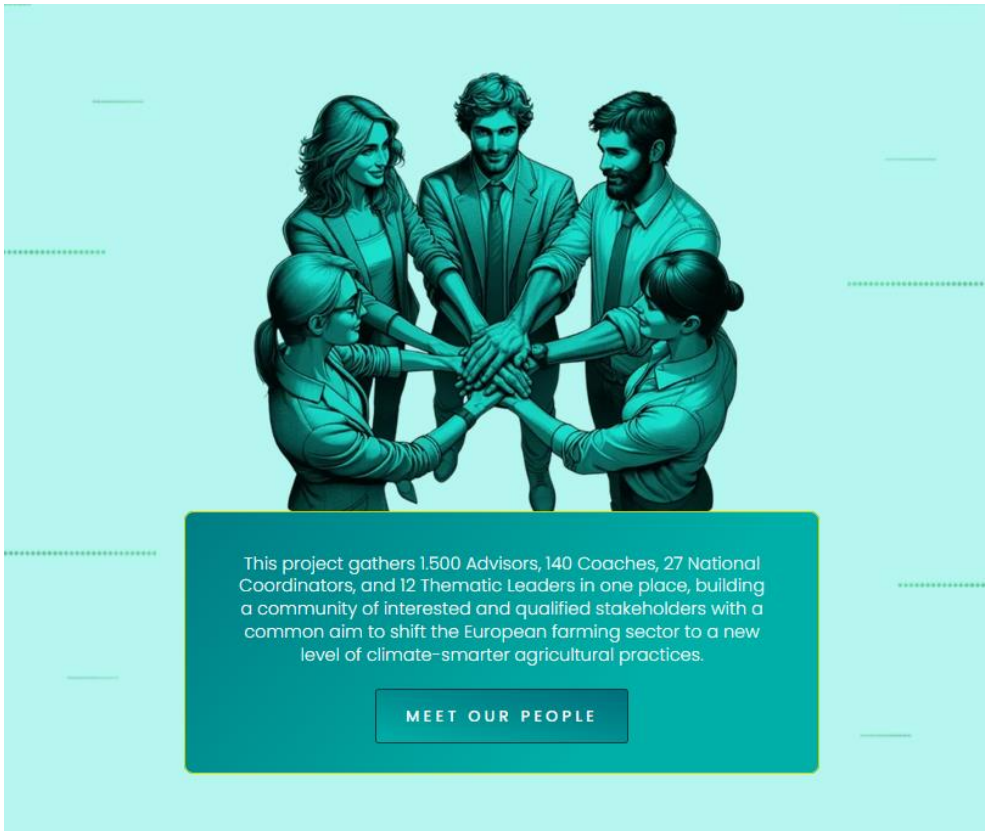

Figure 17 - CSA website homepage element 1

The third homepage segment is dedicated to CoPs as one of the most important project features. As CoPs are still not completely formed and active, this will serve as announcement for this important segment.

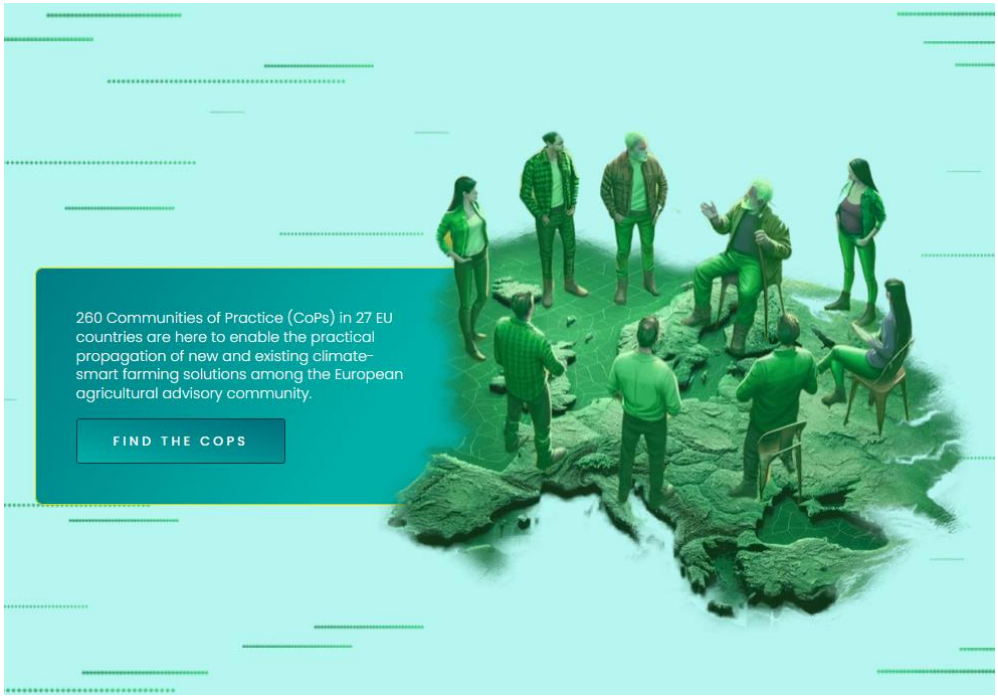

Figure 18 - CSA website homepage element 2

A similar situation exists for the Knowledge Repository, which is going to be one of the most important outputs when ready. At this point it is only possible to announce it and emphasize its importance in later project stages.

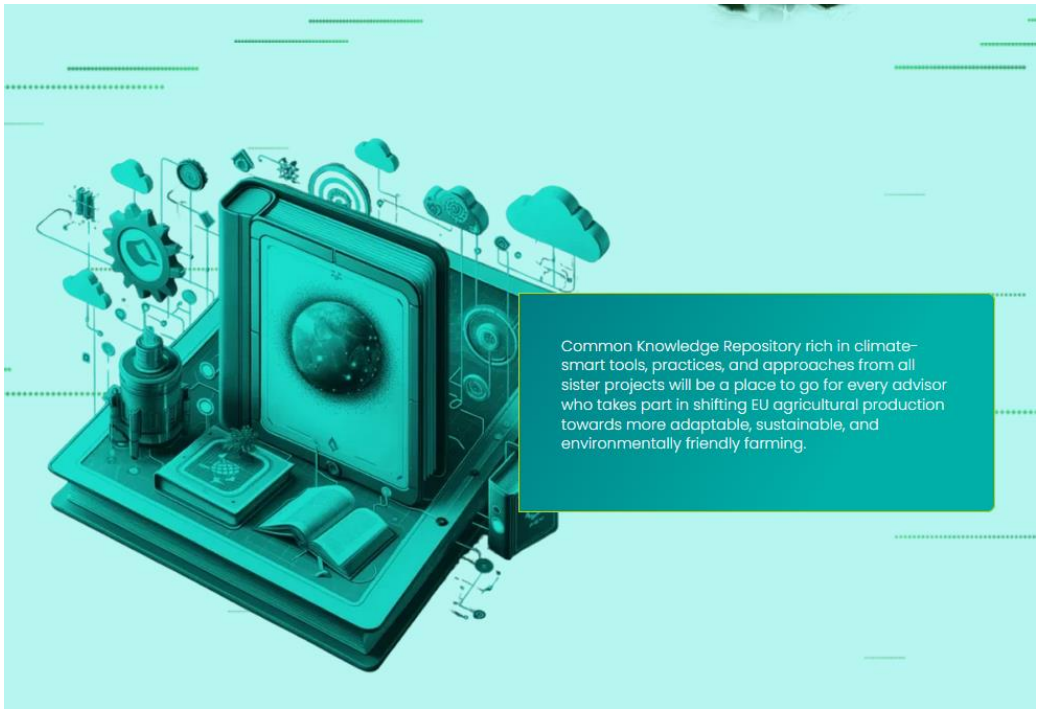

Figure 19 - CSA website homepage element 3

In addition, to make the website's homepage more dynamic for users, the 3 latest posts from the „News" section will be shown at the homepage, and a slider is included with CSA people sourced from the „People" website's pages. In addition to fixed content, this should make a balance between fixed and always fresh dynamic content.

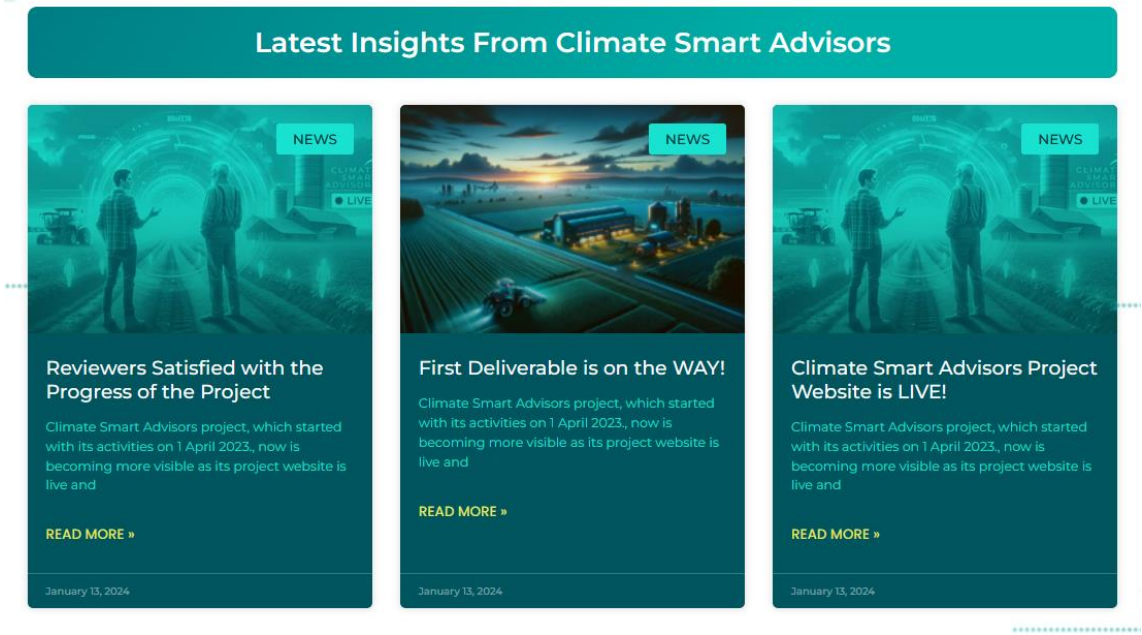

Figure 20 - Three latest project news at the homepage

Figure 21 - random overview of CSA people and its roles at the homepage

7.3 „Project“ cluster content

The “Project” segment of the website is dedicated to providing all important information about ClimateSmartAdvisors for the website visitors. It is a project ID card with an overview of its main organisational aspects. In this section visitors are able to see the project description at the “About” page, with all relevant information like project duration, funding, number of partners, tasks, coordination, etc.

Figure 22 - CSA website "About" page

The second page “Work Packages” is dedicated to explaining how this project work is structured, with brief information about each Work Package, including Tasks for each.

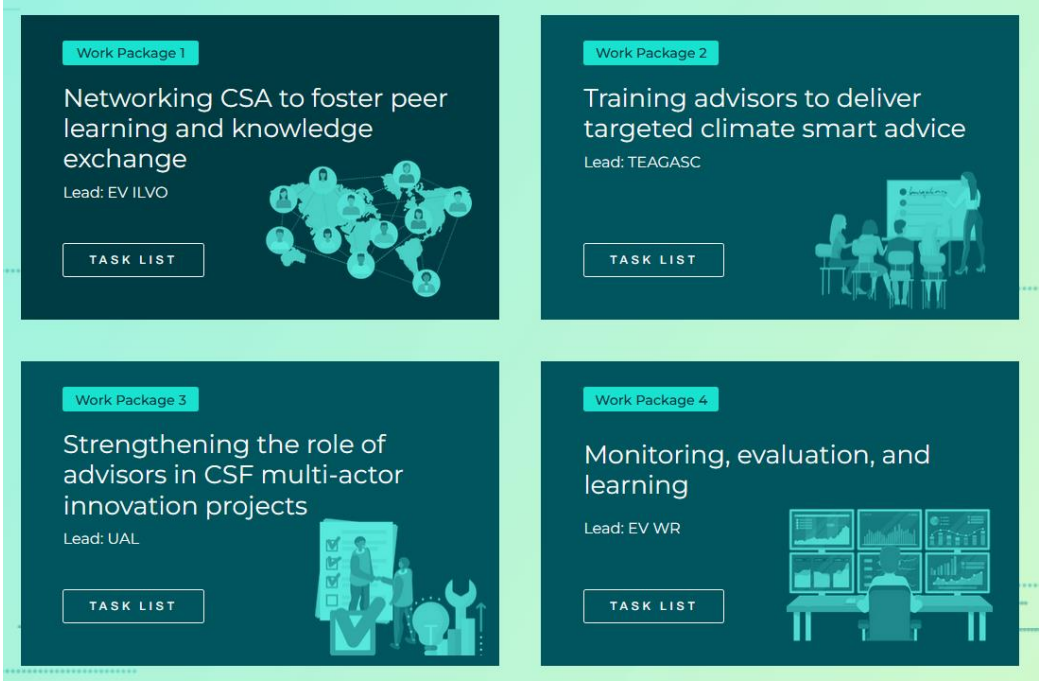

Figure 23 - CSA website "Work Package" page

The “Partners” page is designed to represent each partner organization in the CSA project, following the Grant Agreement. Every partner is presented with its official logo, and a click on the partner box leads to their original website.

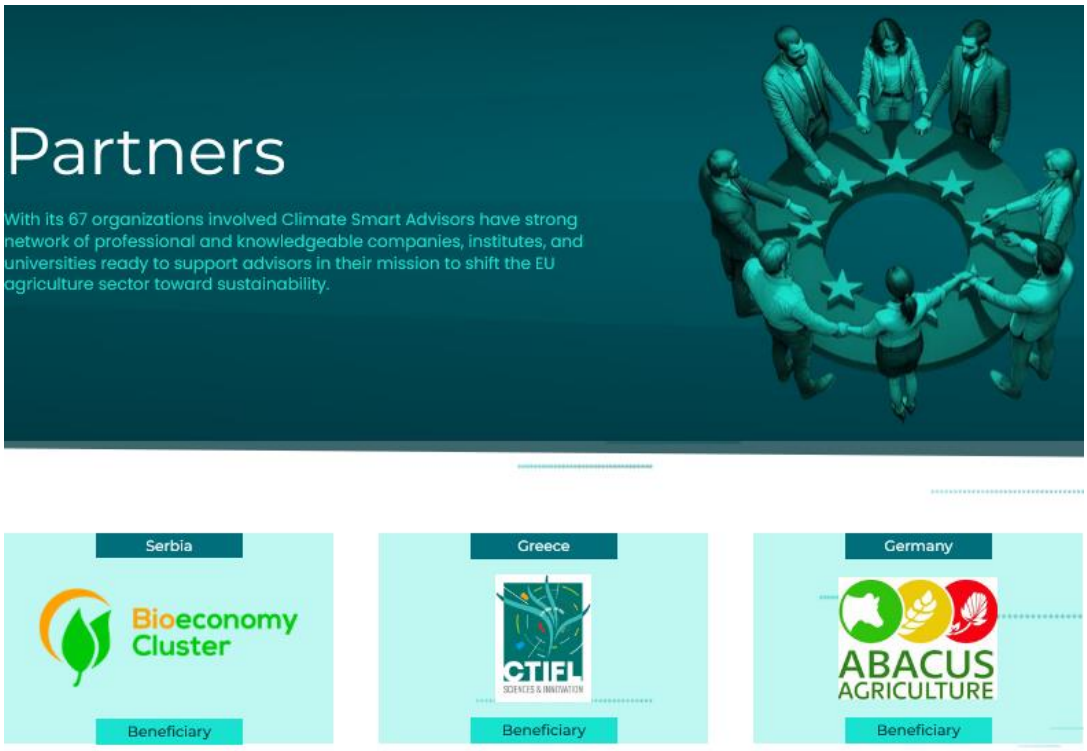

Figure 24 - CSA partnering organizations page

For the “Sister projects” page, the idea is to emphasize the connection and synergies with EU projects with close ties to CSA. At the moment, Climate Farm Demo is the only active project represented at this section, with additional projects to be added to this page at later stages.

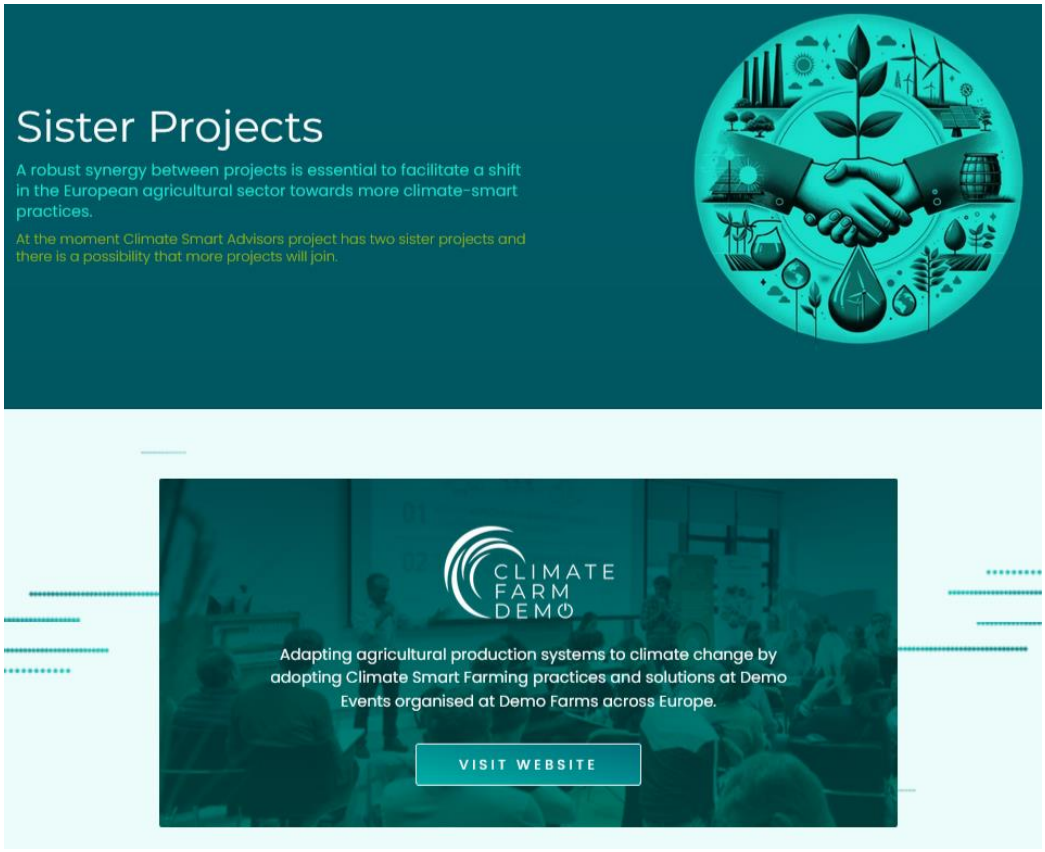

Figure 25 - CSA website "Sister Projects" page

After the CSA project Advisory Board is formed, its members will be presented at a specific page also under the website’s “Project” cluster.

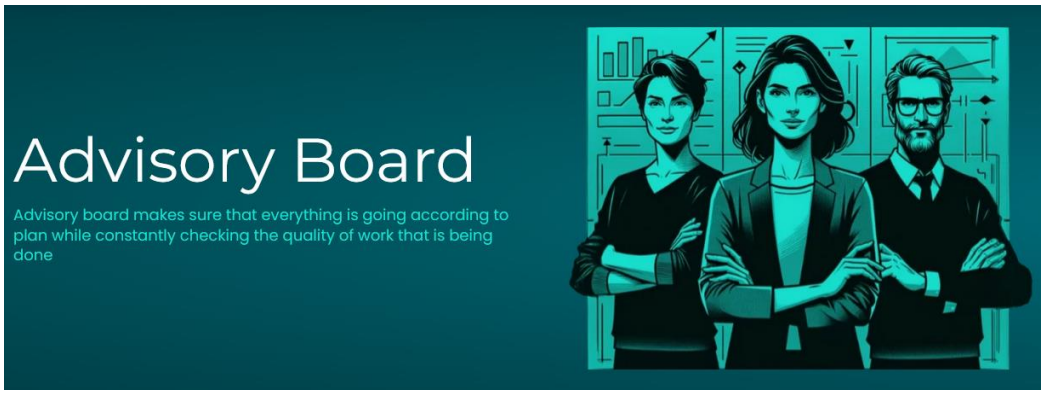

Figure 26 - Advisory Board page

7.4 „People“ cluster content

At this section of the website, CSA people, including the Management team, Climate Smart Coaches, Thematic Leaders and National Coordinators, are represented with the idea to give credits and show personalities behind crucial project roles. This cluster is also about giving a “human touch” to the

project and putting people at the first place of its success. It will also allow website visitors to easily find people they need and to get in contact if needed.

Each person in this section is represented with the following information:

- Personal photo
- Name and surname
- Role in the CSA project
- Organisation
- Short biography with essential information
- Country of residence
- Contact email

Overview of this section will be shown in a slider at the website's homepage. Examples of design for this cluster can be seen below.

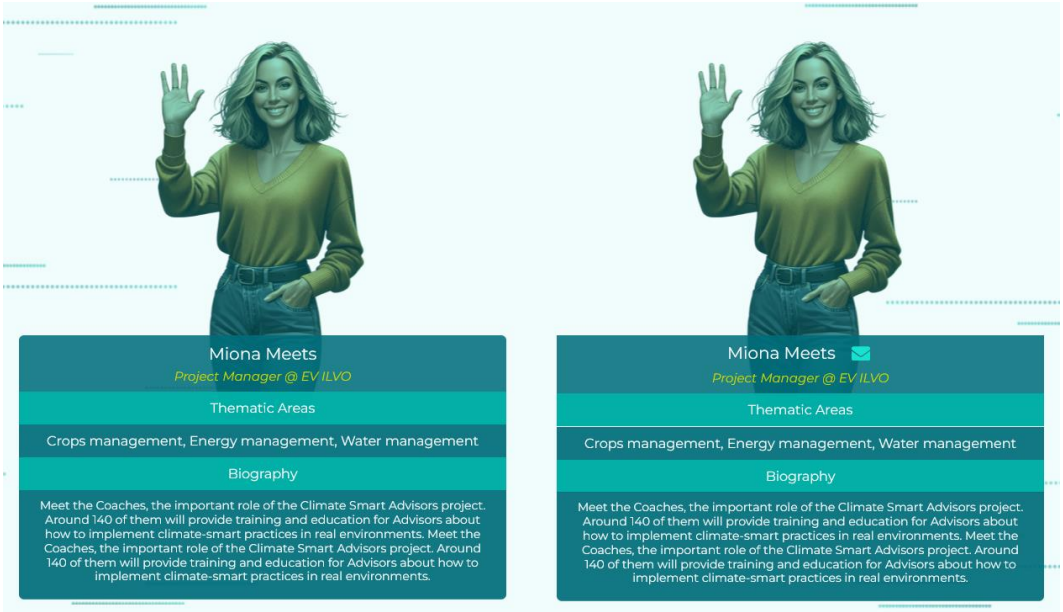

Figure 27 - CSA people presentation - format 1

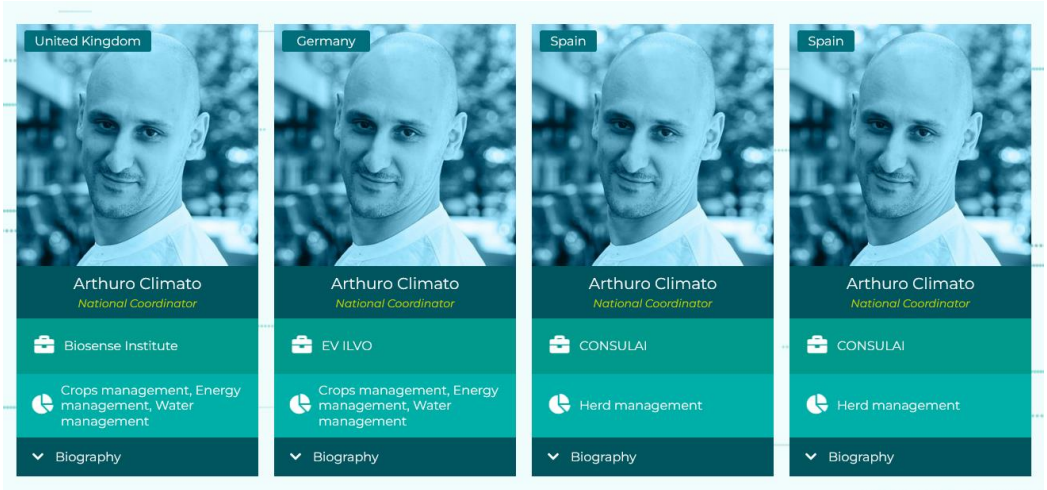

Figure 28 - CSA people presentation - format 2

7.5 „Resources“ cluster content

This cluster is dedicated to subject knowledge, learning and education about CSF practices. The main point for this area will be the project Knowledge Repository which will be developed by the Athens University (AUA) in cooperation with BIOS and other project partners. This repository will serve as central point for all knowledge objects related to climate smart farming, and will combine information from CSA, Climate Farm Demo, ClieNFarms, and possibly some other projects in the future. Easy and fast access for users to the Knowledge Repository is essential, so it is included in this cluster menu, where a click on it will lead to an external website where the Knowledge Repository will be hosted. Also, the Knowledge Repository will be promoted at the website's homepage with a clear call to action.

Other knowledge objects are/will be hosted at a "Videos" page, "Deliverables" page, "Practice Abstracts" page, and there is a page which will be dedicated to all external resources, including topic-related projects, repositories, materials, which can be useful for CSA members and website visitors to find and learn from.

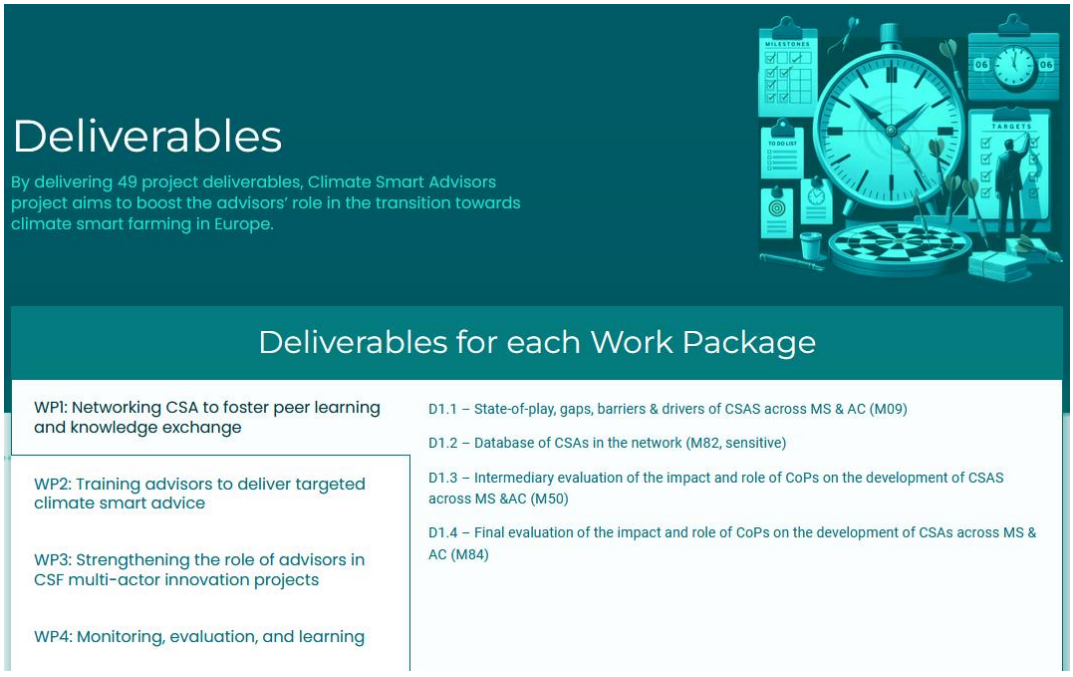

Figure 29 - CSA website "Deliverables" page

While "Videos" and "Practice Abstracts" pages are still empty as content still need to be produced, "Deliverables" page is already hosting some CSA project deliverables in PDF, with new deliverables being uploaded there at the moment of completion.

7.6 „Activities“ cluster content

The "Activities" cluster the website's will be dedicated to practical activities which will happen in the Communities of Practice (CoPs) throughout Europe, and by the activities around the 12 Thematic Areas of interest of CSA project. As CoPs yet need to be formed, and its activities to start at later stages of the project, content for this important page will be provided in the coming months. Similar situation is with Thematic Areas page, where at the moment, there are only 12 areas listed with its logos. This page will be enriched with content in the coming period as well.

7.7 „Updates“ cluster content

This cluster is foreseen as a place at the website where visitors could quickly find out what are the ongoing activities and results achieved so far in the project. „News“ is the page where the latest news from different working packages will be published, announcements for project events and important milestones, or news about successes achieved. The “Newsletters” page will host all project newsletters sent to the internal and external members, so people who join in later stages of project will be able to have an overview of what they missed and what were the most important outcomes so far. The “Social Media” page aims to, at one common place, present the latest posts from CSA social media accounts.

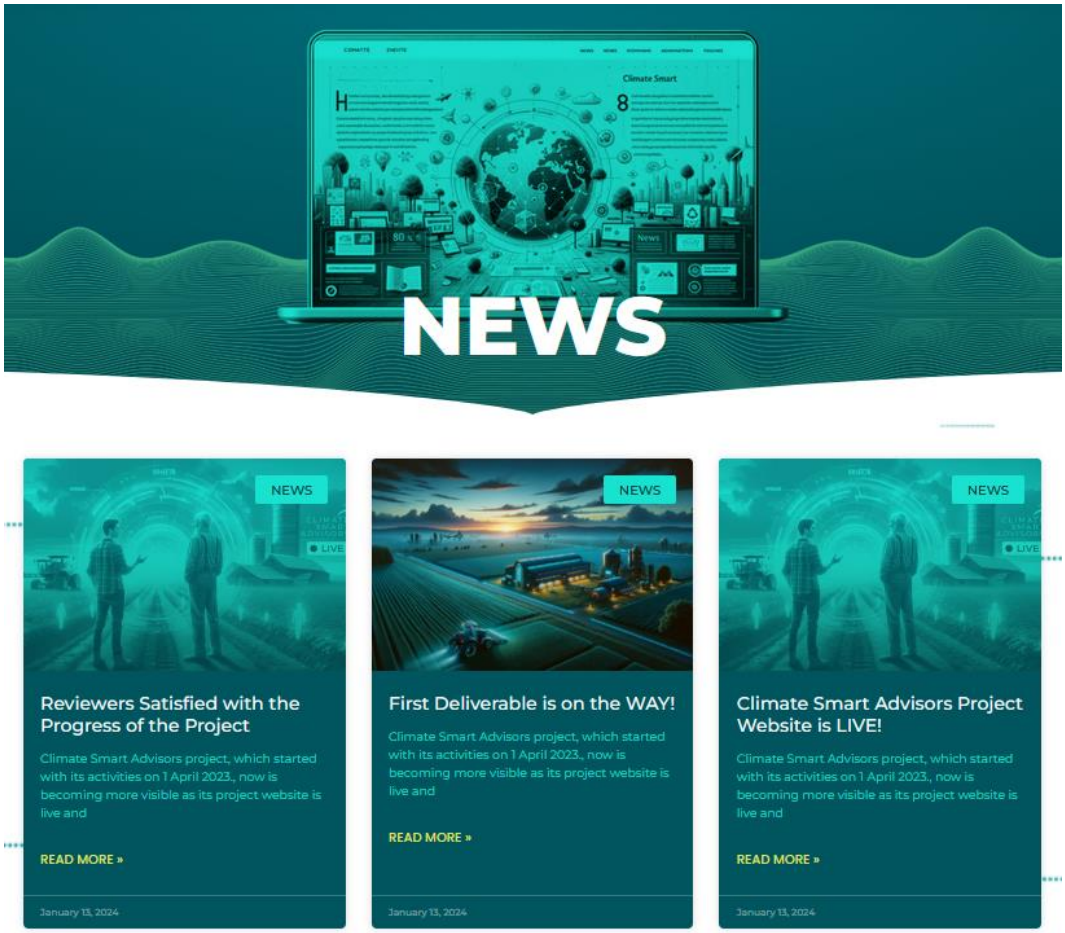

Figure 30 - Project News page overview

8 Further development

The ClimateSmartAdvisors official project website, at the time of deployment, is presenting the project at its current development level. CSA together with its 10 Working Packages, during the following months and years, is going to evolve and produce a lot of quality content, results and outputs. The Project website will follow this evolution, support it and help stakeholders to do their best, especially in a sense of mutual communication, whether it is towards an internal or external audience.

The main project outcomes and its influence are yet to come. The CoPs, the Knowledge Repository, Practice Abstracts, Videos, … will be produced and all these items will find its place at the project website in a way of new functionalities or call to actions for visitors.

In addition to content-wise updates, the website will also be further developed in the sense of its design, visuals and user experience. All this will be possible only after real users test the website in real environment and provide valuable feedback towards the WP8 development team. BIOS, as website authoring organization, will be not just open to feedback, but will be actively searching for it during information exchange with other partnering organizations, WP and Task leaders.

The platform on which the website was built, will be constantly updated with latest plugin versions, as it must follow the latest versions of elements it uses.

The next big step in website development will be language localization to all EU countries involved, which includes 23 EU official languages. This process will start right after the development team receives a sufficient amount of feedback from the end users, as only final versions of existing pages will be translated, in order to avoid rework, which could decrease engagement of partners for this task.

After the website is updated based on stakeholders' feedback, device responsiveness will come in place as it is expected that users can have satisfying user experience, no matter if they are visiting the website from their desktops, laptops, tablets, or most frequently, their mobile devices.

There is an ongoing discussion within the CSA management team around the need for a Backoffice – section of the website where only authorized users will be able to access and monitor/take specific action. This potential need will be elaborated through use cases descriptions from end users, and eventually evaluated as it seeks significant development resources to be implemented. The BioSense team will stay at service for all the work needed in order to provide the project with a highly useful digital product.

9 Conclusion

The ClimateSmartAdvisors project is going to last for 7 years which makes it a very long-term project. This means that many stages of development are yet to come and the project website, as one of the most visible project items, is here to facilitate this process in a digital environment. This process started by needs and requirements assessment, based on which this first website version was developed and launched. The development team working under WP8 is aware that several feedback and input sessions will happen during the following period, which will influence future website development.

Regarding structure, the website is built on five main pillars (Project, People, Resources, Activities and Updates) with the aim to support the variety of project activities in each Work Package. Each pillar has its own substructure to be further developed. The website homepage, as one of the most important website elements, emphasizes the essence of the CSA project, and in a very straightforward way describes to visitors what this project is about. The homepage also directs users to the CSA core values and website functionalities, as none of them should be missed by project stakeholders and the interested public.

A well-designed and developed project website aims to enable promotion of the project, internal and external communication, foster learning and education of advisors and farmers about adaptation and mitigation practices, which have to transform the EU agricultural sector towards climate smart farming solutions, applied on the majority of farms across Europe. By staying up to date with the latest trends in web technology on one hand and project progress at other, the WP8 team will, until the end of the project, work on achieving this goal and stay on service for all project stakeholders.

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the European Union

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