

**Let the
dialogue
begin**



D2.1: CONCEPTUALISATION OF DISCUSSION FORMATS

Project: **Cross-sector dialogue for Wildfire Risk Management**

Acronym: **Firelogue**



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CONTENT

List of Figures.....	4
List of Abbreviations.....	5
Executive summary	6
1 Introduction.....	7
2 Firelogue Exchange Formats	7
2.1 (Digital) Annual Conference	7
2.1.1 Aim.....	7
2.1.2 Concept.....	7
2.2 Joint Impact Assessment Workshops.....	9
2.2.1 Aim.....	9
2.2.2 Concept.....	9
2.3 Peer Review Programme	10
2.3.1 Aim.....	10
2.3.2 Concept.....	10
3 Planning and next steps	13
4 Conclusion	13
5 Appendix.....	14
Appendix 1 – Firelogue Clustering Event Agenda	14
Appendix 2 – Plenary Miro Boards.....	16





List of Figures

Figure 1: Agenda Clustering Event Day 1	14
Figure 2: Agenda Clustering Event Day 2	15
Figure 3: Miro Board Day 1	16
Figure 4: Miro Board Day 2 (Plenary)	17





List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
DoA	Description of Action
IA	Innovation Action
REA	Research Executive Agency
TS	Thematic Strand
WFRM	Wildfire Risk Management
WG	Working Group
WP	Work Package
Consortium Partners	
ADAI	Association for the Development of Industrial Aerodynamics
CMCC	Centro Euro-Mediterraneo sui Cambiamenti Climatici
CTFC	Consorci Centre de Ciència i Tecnologia Forestal de Catalunya
EDGE	EDGE in Earth Observation sciences Monoprosopi IKE
FhG	Fraunhofer Gesellschaft für Angewandte Forschung e.V. (FhG)
IIASA	International Institute of Applied System Analysis
INESTEC	Instituto de Engenharia de Sistemas e Computadores, Tecnologia e Ciência
KEMEA	Centre for Security Studies
NOA	National Observatory of Athens
PCF	Pau Costa Foundation
SAFE	SAFE Cluster
TIEMS	The International Emergency Management Society
TRI	Trilateral Research
UAH	Universidad de Alcalá
VOST	Virtual Operations Support Team from Portugal





Executive summary

Following its motto of promoting different dialogue formats, Firelogue envisions a number of different workshops and events during its lifetime. Based on the work done in WP1, Firelogue will host three different event series: a (digital) annual conference, a number of joint impact assessment workshops and a peer review process. All these events are targeted to foster cooperation between the three Innovation Actions (IAs) and offer dedicated spaces for dialogue on a number of different topics related to wildfire risk management (WFRM).





1 Introduction

Firelogue, at its heart, aims to foster dialogue and cooperation between the associated Innovation Actions and beyond. As collaboration across projects does not always come naturally; it is vital that Firelogue offers the space and opportunity for all partners and stakeholders to come together throughout the projects' lifetimes and have open and fruitful discussions about progress, results and synergies.

2 Firelogue Exchange Formats

Firelogue foresees three main exchange formats within the Task 2.1 context, specifically dedicated to the Innovation Actions and FirEURisk. These encompass:

- A (digital) annual conference,
- Joint Impact Assessment Workshops, as well as a
- A Peer Review Programme

In the following sub-sections, each of the three formats will be detailed.

2.1 (Digital) Annual Conference

2.1.1 Aim

The aim of the annual conference to be organised by Firelogue is to derive an updated overview on the Status Quo of the projects, their progress and activities. It also aims to connect the projects and individuals, give them room to collaborate, find common ground and build on each other's achievements. The annual event may be held digitally and will focus on the IAs and FirEURisk while also involving related WFRM Cluster projects such as SAFERS, AFAN, NEMAUSUS, Fire-in, FireLinks, etc.

To achieve this, it is necessary to provide the consortia of the IAs, FirEURisk and cluster projects with the space and opportunity to exchange ideas and talk about the specific project results. In a dedicated annual conference, partners from all funded projects can come together and achieve exactly that: share their knowledge, ideas and project results and hopefully find synergies, critically reflect how the other projects' results could affect or benefit their own work and collaborate on future ideas and activities.

During the conferences, representatives of each of the projects will give updates on their current status, their progress and past and upcoming activities. Each project will receive sufficient and ample time to present their progress and to critically discuss potential questions or issues with the other projects' representatives. The final aim is always to promote positive development and mutual collaboration between projects.

2.1.2 Concept

The conference will take place at least once per year. In light of an ongoing pandemic, as well as in order to reduce travelling, the initial plan is to prefer hosting the conference in a digital form. If it becomes possible and sensible to schedule a physical meeting, efforts will be made to align it with larger WFRM events or conferences to keep travel efforts low. At the same time, and due to the large





number of consortium members, as well as ever changing situation surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, the annual conferences might be held in digital or at least hybrid form. Although digital meetings offer fewer opportunities for informal exchange and discussion, the safety and well-being of all parties involved, as well as the ecological impact that constant travel can have, should always be kept in mind. A physical conference will only be considered and planned if it is deemed appropriate in terms of safety and cost. The Project Officer and Firelogue's coordinator will discuss the option of a physical meeting ahead of time.

Irrespective of the format, the event will be aligned with the envisaged series of Clustering Events by the Research Executive Agency (REA). The event will be structured around the interaction of projects at two levels:

- I. Strategic discussions about fields of collaboration, mainly with the managerial teams of the projects.
- II. Content-related discussion based on step I at the working level, involving project partners, WP leads, etc.

As a first attempt to test this concept, the first digital annual conference (Clustering Event) was hosted virtually on the 5th and 6th of April by Firelogue's project coordinator and the European Commission. Participants were, apart from the partners of the three innovation actions, FirEURisk and Firelogue, also other older H2020 wildfire-related projects such as FIRE-IN and SAFERS. In addition, the COST Action FireLinks and representatives from DG ECHO Projects such as NEMAUSUS and AFAN and the MSCA Action PyroLife were represented in the event.

Following the two-step approach proposed above, the first day was dedicated to discussions at a project management level. High-level topics of cooperation and overlap were discussed between the participants, including how the results of the 'legacy' projects could be useful in the future, and finding topics for further discussion on day two. The more content-related, concrete discussions were held on the second day of the event. Building on the D1.1 survey across the IAs and FirEURisk, and initial discussions with the projects, the following thematic break-out groups were developed:

- *Impact Assessment (towards Green Deal 2030 targets)*
- *Research Integration (Fuel Maps, Fire Event database, others)*
- *Knowledge Management on research results and WFRM practices*
- *Case study collaboration and exchange*
- *(Technical) exploitation | legacy uptake*
- *Communication & Dissemination incl. Joint Events*

The idea behind this split was that more specific results and to-dos could be agreed upon between the specialised experts from each project. The agenda as well as screenshots from the Miro board that was used during the plenary sessions can be found in the appendix (see Section 6). In the aftermath of the event, the moderators of each individual break out group drafted their respective reports, including the agreed-upon next steps for the individual projects. These will be used to draft a Road Map for Firelogue and the IAs and their future work. Reviewing the Road Map will be part of the annual conferences.





Over the years, the event size is envisioned to grow in size, and extend the list of invitees to include continuously more projects and stakeholders.

2.2 Joint Impact Assessment Workshops

2.2.1 Aim

In order to achieve a joint assessment of the impacts of each project, close interaction with the respective experts of WFRM community involved in the IAs and FirEUrisk and beyond is necessary. Firelogue is hence planning to organise dedicated workshops throughout the WFRM community regarding WFRM impact assessments, in order to better understand the reach of the impacts set by Green Deal Call for 2030, and how they can be measures both as a baseline for 2019 and as results of the AIs' activities. More specifically, topics to be discussed are:

- A potential revision of targets defined by the Green Deal call:
 - a. 0 fatalities from wildfires
 - b. 50% reduction in accidental fire ignitions
 - c. 55% reduction in emissions from wildfires
 - d. Control of any extreme and potentially harmful wildfire in less than 24 hours
 - e. 50% of Natura 2000 protected areas to be fire-resilient
 - f. 50% reduction in building losses
 - g. 90% of losses from wildfires insured
 - h. 25% increase in surface area of prescribed fire treatments at EU level
- Critically discuss on the feasibility/achievability of the impacts
- Define a standard and clear terminology based on realistic KPIs, which will be correlated with impacts of the Call
- Identify sources of information for measuring the baseline values of the described impact dimensions for the baseline year 2019
- Develop a shared approach for the assessment of impacts towards the mentioned targets
- Suggest a future EU methodology and define joint actions towards the 2030 Targets

2.2.2 Concept

A first step towards developing and implementing the workshops was made during the Clustering Event on 5th and 6th April (see above) during which a break-out group was dedicated to discussing Impact Assessment aspects.

In order to implement the WP3 work and to continue the exchange with the Impact Assessment group, workshops will be continuously implemented. Two different types of formats are thereby envisaged:

- i. Digital formats for about 1,5 hours and be organised on a quarterly basis, starting in May 2022, building on the group of experts gathered during the Clustering Event in April 2022
- ii. Physical formats to complement the digital formats and focusing on very specific aspects of the impact dimensions. These physical formats will be linked with conferences and the





respective thematic expertise. For example, during the Aerial Firefighting Conference in Nîmes in May 2022, Firelogue, the IAs, FirEURisk and NEMAUSUS will have a joint session on (technological) innovations in aerial firefighting. It will be complemented with a panel discussion on the feasibility and measurability of “Control of any extreme and potentially harmful wildfire in less than 24 hours”. Further opportunities to focus on specific impact dimensions are for example the Fire & Ecology conference in Florence in October 2022 where a workshop on the “25% increase in surface area of prescribed fire treatments at EU level” target may be hosted. Additional impact assessment workshops will be suggested to conference organisers and, if accepted, attendees from all over Europe and different expertise will have the chance to discuss their ideas. These options will be preferred as they will encourage the stakeholders to network.

After the end of the workshops, Firelogue will collect the material shared and share it, if the authors provide permission to do so. The outcome from the workshops together with the workshop slides will be shared among the stakeholders who attended the workshop. Firelogue WP3 Leader NOA will integrate the findings into the related Deliverable and an Impact Dimensions Context Paper.

2.3 Peer Review Programme

2.3.1 Aim

Firelogue partners have encompassing expertise in implementing different peer review processes. For example, Fraunhofer INT has contributed to the implementation of the 2017-2019 DG ECHO Peer Review programme¹ in the past. Partner KEMEA has implemented a peer review process for the Council of Europe and a consultation process on behalf of the World Bank. These processes were set for rather large programmes, aiming to exchange expertise and enhance policies. Within Firelogue, the peer review process is regarded as a more low-threshold initiative to bring together experts and good practices on topics of relevance to the IAs and FirEURisk and to generate new knowledge networks in order to establish and intensify dialogue between projects and experts. The programme will hence be handled with great flexibility to allow the maximum consideration to project needs and resources.

Overall, the programme aims to allow projects to mutually assess their efforts and results, not as an evaluation but as a dialogue among equals to identify gaps and overlaps and thereby increase both efficiency and impact of all ongoing activities through mutual learning. (Firelogue DoA, p.9)

2.3.2 Concept

The Peer Review process is a methodology for (research) evaluation. The underlying goal is to obtain advice on enhancing a topic under review, which can be a scientific publication, a policy or a research approach, to name just a few. This advice is expressed by experts in the field who are able to compare

¹ [Peer Review programme \(europa.eu\)](https://ec.europa.eu/echo/peer-review-programme/)



the performance to an international reference level. While different evaluation approaches bring along different (dis-)advantages, the peer review is considered to be a very effective tool for quality improvement, which can be applied to all disciplines (see Rons et al. 2008, p. 46²).

Consequently, the Firelogue Peer Review process has to determine several aspects related to the approach which will be described in more detail in the following sections:

- i. Define the topic under review
- ii. Define the experts (peers) that are to review the topic
- iii. Specify an approach and key criteria that are to be included in the review
- iv. Define and steer the overall process of peer review implementation and documentation

2.3.2.1 Review topics

Instead of dictating the topics of review to the IAs and FirEURisk, the topics will come directly from them in cooperation with the Working Groups and the Thematic Strands. A call for topics will be issued to all partners involved, at least once a year (or more frequently depending on the responsiveness and feedback). Topics can be grouped along the WGs and TSs in order to give more structure to the call for topics. Prior to the call, WG and TS leaders will be consulted to narrow the call for topics and to harmonize it with the current work flow. In order to stimulate the submission of topics, initial criteria can be suggested by Firelogue and its consortium partners.

The call for topics will remain open for a two-week period in which topics can be suggested. Once the Firelogue platform is online, it might be possible to host the process in a dedicated area but until then, a suitable interim solution will need to be established (e.g. host the call for topics on the Firelogue website and receive submissions via e-mail).

2.3.2.2 Finding the peer

After the selection of topics, an open call for experts will be published across the WFRM community – once the platform is established the process could be hosted on there, until then, a different interim solution needs to be found. For now, a call for experts could be published on the Firelogue website, with applications to be submitted either via a dedicated online form or e-mail. The call for experts should explicitly list the topic under review as well as the requirements for the expert in question (e.g. technical expertise, geographical location, etc.). Experts will need to prove their knowledge in the relevant field with their application (i.e. CV, publication, etc.). After a period of two weeks (timeframe is adaptable, depending on the number of responses from potential experts), applications for each topic will be screened and a suitable expert will be selected by a group consisting of WG and TS leader as well as the project coordinator.

In order to ensure compliance with ethical criteria set out in D7.3, the selection of experts will follow similar guidelines and criteria:

² Rons, N., De Bruyn, A., & Cornelis, J. (2008). Research evaluation per discipline: A peer-review method and its outcomes. *Research Evaluation*, 17(1), 45–57. <https://doi.org/10.3152/095820208x240208>



“To ensure inclusive and representative participants and to establish a balanced and representative sample that captures a broad range of views, researchers will seek to achieve diversity across gender, age, geographical distribution, experience level, and regional socio-economic situation. During the research, the consortium will ensure that researchers behave in such a manner to ensure there is no judgment, discrimination or bias and that they respect all people they will be interacting with”. (Petersen et al, 2022³)

Participation in the peer review process will be based on a voluntary basis by Firelogue and WFRM cluster partners alike and should be free of judgment or malice. It is the expressed purpose of this process to make the best use of the expert knowledge of partners within the cluster and to improve the overall results of the projects. Since the success of the process is highly dependent on the commitment of all parties, participants are urged to put in the required effort and time.

2.3.2.3 Approach

The selection of experts will be handled by WG and TS leaders, together with the project coordinator. If necessary, a dedicated committee will be established to minimize the time commitment on all partners. Fraunhofer as the project coordinator will be responsible of setting up the peer review process and making sure all stages are completed on time.

Experts will be selected on a number of criteria that will be defined by the requesting party and might differ from call to call. Criteria common for all calls will include, but are not limited to: geographical proximity (to minimize the cost and time commitment), scientific expertise in the field in question (demonstrated through publication, work experience, etc.) and motivation expressed in the response to the call, as well as availability to conduct the review.

After each review cycle, a short, internal review will be conducted to adjust the process if necessary. This could include for example adapting the criteria for experts or aligning timelines and deadlines. Feedback from the participating parties and partners will help improve the entire process and ensure success in future iterations.

2.3.2.4 Implementation and documentation

After completing the review, experts will provide a short report to the Firelogue project coordinator outlining the topic, possible issues as well as recommended solutions. Reports should give a concrete assessment on areas to be improved, as well as possible measures to implement it. The final report will also be provided by the case study, project, etc. reviewed and should be completed no later than one month after completing the review.

Finished reports will be stored by Firelogue’s project coordinator on their secure SharePoint servers, in case later reference is needed.

³ Petersen, K., Pettinari, M.L., Overmeyer, M., Martín, D., Kaskara, M. (unpublished). D7.3 Ethics Protocol and Equality Management Plan. Firelogue project.



3 Planning and next steps

After successful completion of first Firelogue Clustering Event, next steps for the Innovation Actions have been sketched out. Close evaluation of successes and points of improvements will determine the next steps for the Firelogue Coordination team (lessons learned for next annual meeting). Questions that will be considered during the evaluation:

- Is the two-step approach reasonable/successful?
- To what are future events could the annual conference be 'attached' to?

Impact Assessment workshops need to be further developed and planned, in concert with the responsible partners from the Innovation Actions. A meeting of the relevant partners responsible with impact assessment has been scheduled for May 2022.

Lastly, after the process of setting up Working Groups is complete, an initial call for topics will be published. Until then, the process of selecting both topics, as well as experts, will be further developed and shared with the IAs to prepare them.

4 Conclusion

A mutual exchange of knowledge across the projects within the call and the cluster of WFRM is vital to foster mutual learning and exchange of ideas. Different workshop formats, each aiming to deal with different thematic issues, as well as operate on different levels of the projects, have been sketched out with the explicit aim to promote open and effective dialogue between the actors within the cluster. Over the course of the projects' lifetime, Firelogue aims to host these workshops, conferences and processes to maximise cooperation among the projects.

An annual conference will be organized to update all participants of the work that is happening within each project and also offer partners to come together once a year and connect. The first iteration in form of the Firelogue Clustering Event has already been successfully completed in April 2022.

Impact Assessment workshops will be organized and hosted in order to find a mutual ground on which the results of the projects can be measured. Based on the discussion during the first Clustering Event, first steps have already been taken in that direction.

A dedicated peer review process will offer a forum to give concrete advice from relevant experts in the field on the ongoing work done by the projects. Topics will be submitted by the projects, in cooperation with the Working Group and Thematic Strand leaders.

All formats are designed to create spaces for open and mutual exchanges, free of judgement of progress or issues (neither by Firelogue nor by other projects). They are designed to give room for new ideas on how projects can work together and cooperate to maximise the effectiveness and (ultimately) the projects' impacts, while also trying not to burden the partners' already heavy workload and ambitious plans.





5 Appendix

Appendix 1 – Firelogue Clustering Event Agenda

Firelogue

Day 1, 5th April 2022

Participation of Project Coordinators with the objective to discuss the key priorities for cooperation:

Time	Agenda Item
10:00-10:30	Welcome and Introduction (EC + Firelogue) Aim: Presentation of the WFRM Clustering concept, opportunities and expectations
10:30 – 10:45	Tour de table
10:45 - 11:15	Presentation of Firelogue survey (PCF) Aim: Presentation of synergies and overlaps already identified; Introduction of the collaboration topics for the interactive session. <i>Note: IAs and FirEurisk would be asked to share additional project flyer/two-pagers in advance to familiarise everyone with the projects.</i>
11:15 - 11:30	Break
11:15-11:45	Advanced Project Pitches (FIRE-IN, FireLinks, SAFERS) Aim: Presentation of generated project results and suggested insight and legacy up-take by the "new" projects; <i>Note: This should include SHORT presentations by FIRE-IN, FireLinks and SAFERS of 10 minutes max. including up to three suggestions for the uptake of results/insights.</i>
11:45-13:00	Interactive session on collaboration topics (all, moderation FhG) Aim: Specification of high-level synergies between the projects (to be further discussed on Day 2) <i>Note: This session will build on the Firelogue survey results and suggestions by the "advanced" projects. Making use of Miro Boards, this session will be held in plenary. Planned topics are:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Impact Assessment (towards Green Deal 2030 targets)- Research Integration (Fuel Maps, Fire Event database, others)- Knowledge Management on research results and WFRM practices- Case study collaboration and exchange- (Technical) exploitation legacy uptake- Communication & Dissemination incl. Joint Events <i>The overall aim is to define the fields of collaboration where the more content related discussions could take place on Day 2 by involving the respective project teams.</i>
13:00 – 13:15	Break
13:15 - 13:45	Wrap-up (EC FhG)


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Figure 1: Agenda Clustering Event Day 1





Day 2, 6th April 2022

Participation of Project Managers and WP leaders and project experts to discuss each cooperation activity in more detail through parallel sessions:

Time	Agenda Item
10:00 - 10:10	Welcoming address by the Head of Department - Green Europe (EC)
10:10 - 10:30	Opening remarks by DG ECHO (Guillermo Grien) and the Joint Research Centre, European Forest Fire Information System (EFFIS) (Jesús San-Miguel-Ayanz)
10:30 - 10:35	Overview over Day 1 (FhG)
10:35 - 11:20	Break-Out Sessions – Round I: Aim: Specify synergies and collaboration topics between the projects, discussion of more concrete activities and content related overlaps. Planned break-out groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact Assessment (towards Green Deal 2030 targets) - Research Integration (Fuel Maps, Fire Event database, others) - Knowledge Management on research results and WFRM practices - Case study collaboration and exchange - (Technical) exploitation legacy uptake - Communication & Dissemination incl. Joint Events <i>Note: Each group will use its own Miro Board and have a moderator. Participants are the respective project content experts and WP leaders that may discuss in more detail the existing overlaps and synergies</i>
11:20 - 11:30	Break
11:30 - 12:30	Break-Out Sessions – Round II: <i>Note: This session continues the exchanges in the break-out groups. Participants will return to their groups. At the end of the session, the collaboration potential between the projects should be clear. Potential next steps to be presented in plenary should have been sketched using a template provided to the sessions' moderators.</i>
12:30 - 13:30	Closing Session (EC FhG) Aim: This session will provide an overview of the break-out group results and should specify the potential next steps in collaboration. Conclusions from the meeting will serve as the backbone for the WFRM Cluster framework and will be communicated through internal channels (EC + Projects consortia) <i>Note: This will take place in plenary. Each break-out group should summarise their results (no more than 5 minutes per break-out group). The session should include concluding remarks by the project managers and the EC, linking back to the options/expectations as defined on Day 1. By the end of the session, projects should have a clear sense of future collaboration and ways to engage with the other WFRM projects.</i>

Figure 2: Agenda Clustering Event Day 2





Appendix 2 – Plenary Miro Boards

Clustering Event - 05.-06.April 2022

DAY 1



Figure 3: Miro Board Day 1





DAY 2

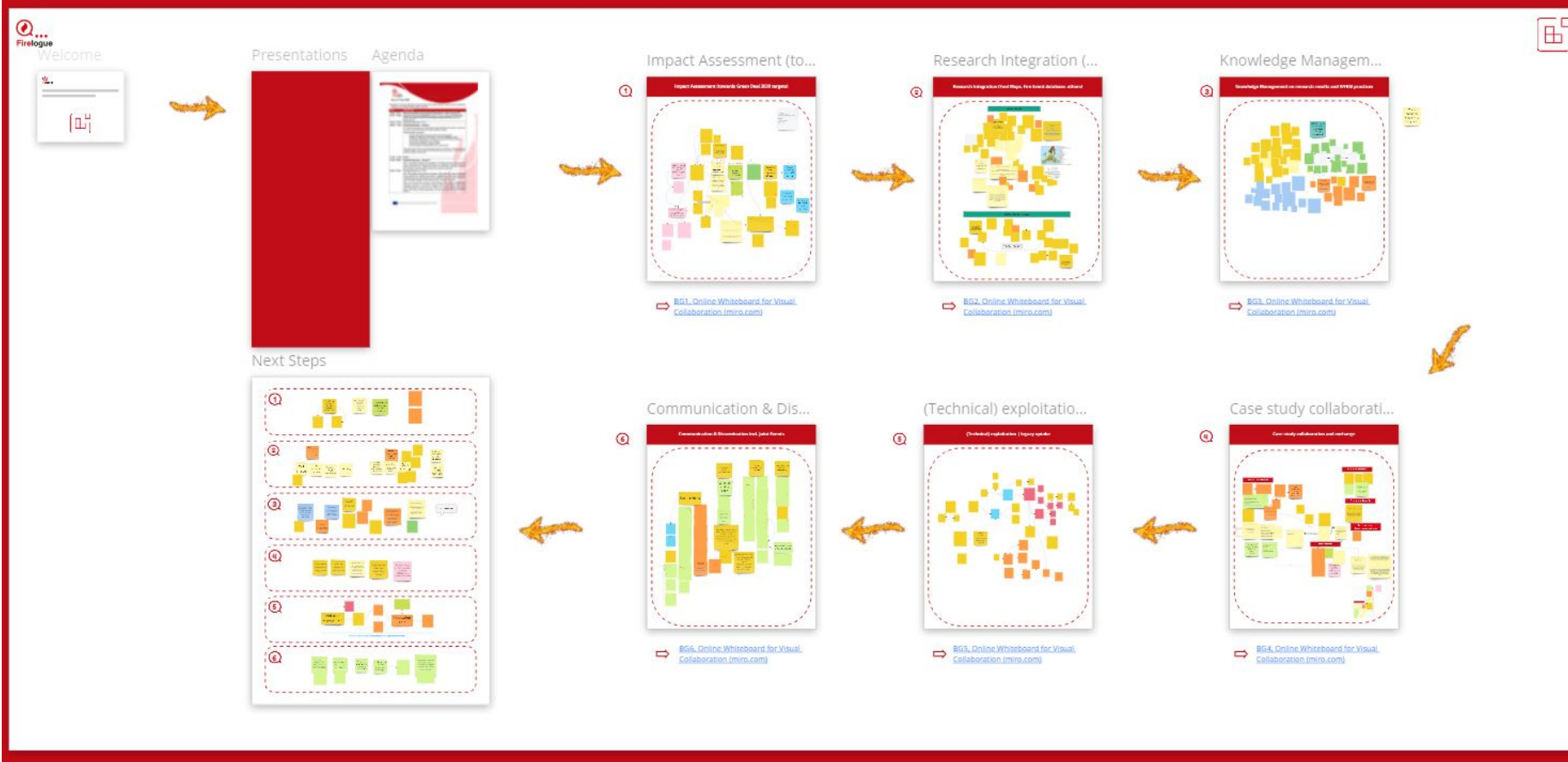


Figure 4: Miro Board Day 2 (Plenary)





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