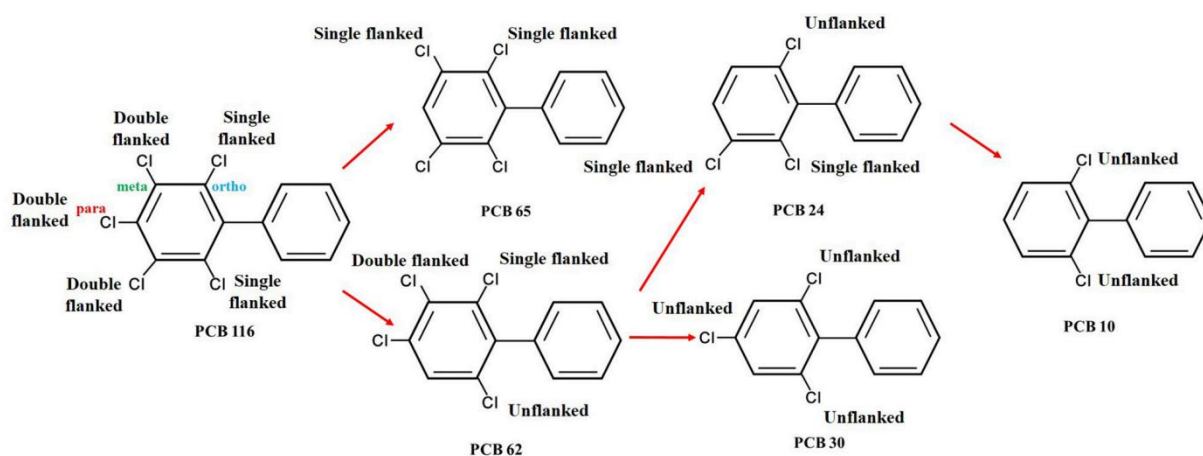




Management of POPs Risks in the Context of Transition to a Sustainable Bioeconomy (Acronym: POPs_RISKMANbase)

Annex WP4 D4.3

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Contents

Summary of the Task Addressed	4
Introduction.....	5
1. Objective of the Interim Public Report and the Implementation Framework.....	6
2. Interim Project Implementation Status.....	7
3. Interim Project Results	8
3.1 Overview of Work Package Status and Project Deliverables	8
4. Interim Achievement of Project Milestones	10
5. Project Management, Data Management and Publicity.....	11
6. Interim Dissemination and Project Website	12
7. Identification of Issues and Risks and Measures Taken	13
8. Plan for Further Work and Follow-up Activities.....	14
Conclusion	15

Summary of the Task Addressed

The interim public report D4.3 summarizes the state of implementation of the project Management of POPs Risks in the Context of Transition to a Sustainable Bioeconomy during its interim implementation phase. The report provides an accessible public summary of the project objectives, the approach adopted, results achieved to date, the status of work packages and follow-up activities planned for the next period.

The project aims to establish a knowledge base and holistic methodological support, C&HMS/PCBRISKMAN, for analyzing, assessing and managing risks associated with persistent organic pollutants, especially PCBs. During the interim phase, the analytical and methodological foundations of the project were elaborated, basic project-management mechanisms were established, data management was prepared, and the project website was launched as a public communication tool.

The report is prepared as an interim public deliverable of work package WP4/KPB4 – Management and Dissemination. It does not replace the technical reports of individual work packages; rather, it summarizes their interim status in a public form and provides a basis for the subsequent completion of the WP1/KPB1, WP2/KPB2, WP3/KPB3 and final WP4/KPB4 deliverables.

Introduction

The project Management of POPs Risks in the Context of Transition to a Sustainable Bioeconomy addresses an environmental and socially significant issue: the long-term risks associated with persistent organic pollutants, primarily polychlorinated biphenyls. PCBs are substances that persist in the environment, bind to sediments, soil, organic matter and biota, and can have long-term effects on public health, the food chain and land-use potential.

Given the complexity of the issue, the project is implemented on an interdisciplinary basis. It links environmental engineering, risk management, analytical and monitoring approaches, GIS processing, risk modelling, technical and organizational measures, and digital decision support. The envisaged outcome is the PCBRISKMAN framework, which will make it possible to move from recording environmental burdens to active risk management.

This D4.3 report provides an interim public summary of project implementation. Its purpose is to explain how the project progressed during the first part of implementation, which deliverables had already been prepared, which were under development and which activities were planned for the next period. The report also documents that project implementation proceeded in accordance with the approved work-package structure and schedule.

1. Objective of the Interim Public Report and the Implementation Framework

The objective of the interim public report is to provide the public and stakeholders with an overview of the current state of project implementation, partial results achieved and the future direction of the work. The report forms part of work package KP4 – Management and Dissemination, which ensures project management, partner coordination, data management, publicity and public access to information.

Project implementation is divided into four work packages (Fig. 1). Work package WP1/KPB1 – Analysis establishes the project's knowledge and analytical base. Work package WP2/KPB2 – Methodology follows with the design of the methodological, data, modelling and GIS framework. Work package WP3/KPB3 – Verification is intended to prepare validation, check the model and assess its usability. Work package WP4/KPB4 – Management and Dissemination ensures management, coordination, data management, the website and public project deliverables.

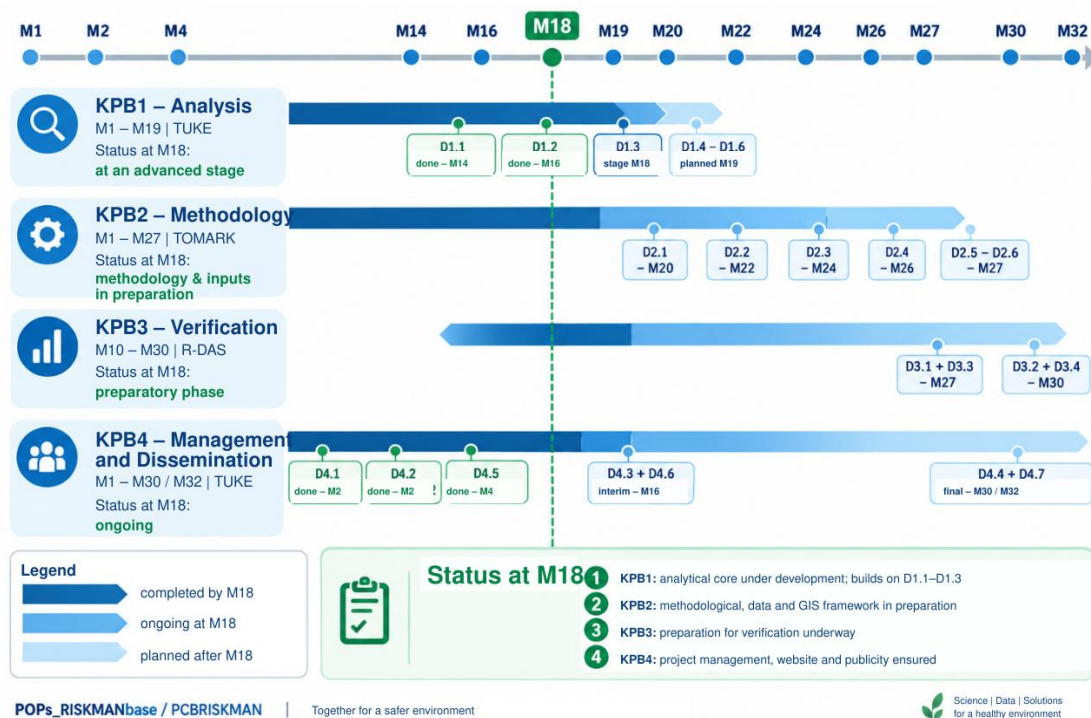


Fig. 1 Project progress at milestone M16

During the interim phase of the project, emphasis was placed primarily on establishing analytical foundations, defining the basic logic for PCB risk assessment, preparing the data framework, coordinating partners and configuring project communication tools. These activities created the prerequisites for the subsequent completion of the methodology, modelling, verification and the design of measures in the following implementation stages.

2. Interim Project Implementation Status

During the interim phase of project implementation, the tasks arising from the approved project description and the work-package schedule were systematically addressed. Initial project activities focused above all on collecting and professionally evaluating available knowledge on POPs/PCBs, identifying pollution sources, analysing available data and establishing a basic framework for further methodological and modelling work.

At project inception, activities in KPB1 were addressed in particular. The project team focused on analysing the status of POPs risk management, analysing requirements for POPs detection and boundary conditions, identifying relevant PCB sources, and preparing the basic structure of the future PCBRISKMAN model. In parallel, the project documentation, project management plan, data management plan and project website were prepared.

A significant part of interim implementation was ensuring coordination among the partners TUKE, TOMARK, s.r.o. and R-DAS, s.r.o. The joint implementation of the project made it possible to integrate academic expertise, technological and aviation inputs, smart monitoring, data solutions and the needs of the future practical application of the results.

The interim status confirmed that the project progressed in accordance with the planned logic, from problem analysis towards the design of the methodology and preparation for verification. The next period is intended for completing KPB1 technical deliverables, developing KPB2 deliverables and preparing follow-up KPB3 activities.

3. Interim Project Results

The interim project results consisted primarily of analytical and organisational foundations that enabled work to continue in the subsequent stages. A basic project knowledge base, a structure for assessing PCB sources, an initial PCBRISKMAN model framework and inputs for later methodological development and verification were established.

3.1 Overview of Work Package Status and Project Deliverables

An overview of the status of work packages and their main deliverables is provided in Table 1.

Table 1 Overview of project work-package status and deliverables

Work Package	Main focus	Interim status	Significance for further work
WP1/KPB1 – Analysis	Identification of sources, transport pathways, receptors and critical scenarios	Analytical deliverables under development; D1.1 and D1.2 prepared as inputs for further deliverables.	A basis was established for identifying PCB sources, transport pathways, receptors and critical scenarios.
WP2/KPB2 – Methodology	Measurement, data, modelling and GIS framework for risk assessment	Methodological framework and inputs for modelling, GIS and data collection under preparation.	Builds on KPB1 analytical deliverables and prepares the concept of the risk management methodology.
WP3/KPB3 – Verification	Preparation for verification, model checking, measures and residual risk	Preparatory stage; technical activities build on KPB1 and KPB2 results.	Establishes the conditions for future model checking, verification and assessment of measures.
WP4/KPB4 – Management and Dissemination	Project management, data, website, public deliverables and dissemination	Project management, data management, the project website and ongoing communication ensured.	Supports project coordination, transparency, publicity and public access to information.

During the interim phase, deliverables D1.1, D1.2, D4.1, D4.2 and D4.5 were prepared as key supporting documents. Further deliverables were under development or planned for the next implementation period in line with the schedule (Table 2).

Table 2 Status of key project deliverables in the interim phase

Deliverable group	Status in the interim phase	Note
D1.1 – D1.2	prepared / submitted as part of the interim monitoring report	Analysis of POPs risk management status and specific POPs detection requirements.

Deliverable group	Status in the interim phase	Note
D1.3 – D1.6	under development	Follow-up analytical KPB1 deliverables, including critical scenarios and the KPB1 public report.
D2.1 – D2.6	under development / planned according to the schedule	Methodological, data, modelling and GIS deliverables of KPB2.
D3.1 – D3.4	planned for the follow-up period	Deliverables of the KPB3 verification phase.
D4.1, D4.2, D4.5	prepared / submitted	Project management plan, data management plan and project website.
D4.3	prepared as an interim public summary	Interim public report on project implementation
D4.6	prepared as an interim dissemination deliverable at milestone M16	Interim public report on project dissemination and promotion
D4.4, D4.7	planned for the final period	Final public report and final report on dissemination and promotion

4. Interim Achievement of Project Milestones

Interim milestone achievement corresponded to the project implementation phase. In the first part of implementation, milestone M1 – Critical Scenarios Defined, which is substantively linked to work package KPB1 – Analysis, was partly achieved and further developed. Milestones M2 and M3 were under development in the interim phase in accordance with the schedule and were linked to further planned project deliverables – Table 3.

Table 3 Interim milestone achievement

Milestone	Work Package	Interim status	Supporting document / link
M1 – Critical Scenarios Defined	WP1/KPB1 – Analysis	partly achieved / under development	D1.1, D1.2 and deliverables D1.3–D1.6 under development
M2 – Methodology Concept Designed	WP2/KPB2 – Methodology	under development	builds on KPB1 analytical results and planned D2.1–D2.6 deliverables
M3 – Experimental Verification of Methodology	WP3/KPB3 – Verification	under development / planned for the next phase	builds on KPB1 and KPB2; future deliverables D3.1–D3.4

Interim milestone achievement was not assessed as a delay with a negative impact on the project objectives. Activities were planned so that technical deliverables would arise in a mutually linked sequence and so that the methodological and verification parts of the work could be completed in the following stages.

5. Project Management, Data Management and Publicity

Work package KPB4 ensured project management, communication among partners, administrative support, data management and public access to project information. During the interim phase, basic management documents were prepared, providing a framework for coordinating the work, monitoring task fulfilment, preparing deliverables and communication within the consortium.

The Project Management Plan defined the basic rules for work organization, partner responsibilities, deliverable preparation and project communication. The Data Management Plan established rules for recording, validation, secure storage, backup, distribution and archiving of data produced or used during project implementation.

Publicity included the creation and use of the project website, which served to publish basic information about the project, its objectives, funding, partners and planned deliverables. Project publicity was implemented in accordance with the requirements of the Slovak Recovery and Resilience Plan and the visibility rules governing EU NextGenerationEU funding.



6. Interim Dissemination and Project Website

Within work package WP4/KPB4, activities related to public information, knowledge dissemination and project promotion were also carried out on an ongoing basis. The main communication tool was the project website “riskman.lf.tuke.sk”, through which basic information about the project, its objectives, partners, work packages and planned deliverables was published.

Interim dissemination activities included professional communication among partners, preparation of public deliverables, presentation of project topics in the professional community and preparation of materials for further dissemination of the project results. A more detailed assessment of dissemination and promotion activities is the subject of the separate deliverable D4.6 – Interim Report on Dissemination and Promotion.

7. Identification of Issues and Risks and Measures Taken

During the interim phase, risks arising from the complex nature of research and implementation processes were identified. These concerned the time demands of some technical deliverables, uncertainty associated with data availability and quality, possible delays in external approval or communication processes, and temporary fluctuations in project team capacity.

To mitigate these risks, activities were organized so that they could run in parallel or partially overlap. At the same time, ongoing communication among partners, preparation of documents sufficiently in advance, documentation sharing and the availability of substitutes within the project team were supported. This approach made it possible to maintain continuity of the work and prepare conditions for follow-up technical deliverables.

The identified risks did not represent an obstacle that would prevent the continuation of the project or achievement of planned deliverables. Interim measures focused on maintaining the schedule, reducing uncertainty, and ensuring the quality of deliverables.

8. Plan for Further Work and Follow-up Activities

The next project period is intended for completing WP1/KPB1 analytical deliverables, particularly those focused on selected threats, environmental changes, critical scenarios, and a public summary of work-package results. These results will be followed by WP2/KPB2 methodological deliverables focused on data collection and management, modelling, risk characterization, GIS processing and the design of the risk management methodology concept.

Follow-up WP3/KPB3 activities will focus on preparing verification, control and assessment activities, designing an application-specific research framework and preparing a public summary of the verification results achieved. Under KPB4, continued project management, dissemination, website updates, preparation of interim and final reports and preparation of public deliverables are planned.

The planned activities were designed so that the results of individual work packages would be mutually interlinked, and the project would progress towards establishing a comprehensive PCBRISKMAN framework for the assessment, management, and future verification of POPs/PCB-related risks.

Conclusion

The interim public report D4.3 documents the state of implementation of the POPs_RISKMANbase project during its interim phase. During this period, the project established analytical, organizational and data foundations for further technical work on POPs/PCB risks and for the gradual development of the PCBRISKMAN framework.

Under KPB1, analytical groundwork for identifying sources, transport pathways, receptors and critical scenarios was prepared and further developed. KPB2 and KPB3 are being prepared on the basis of these results and in accordance with the project schedule. KPB4 ensured project management, preparation of management documents, data management, creation of the project website and basic dissemination activities.

The report confirms that the project progressed in a logical sequence from problem analysis towards methodology design, verification, and final assessment. The interim results provided the basis for completing technical deliverables, achieving project milestones, and further making project results publicly available.