General observations based on ESR analysis:

- Surprisingly, a large proportion of shortcomings were due to carelessness, which most probaply were due to last minute submission/hurry or rush. Here come some examples: Carefully read the call text, related documents and forms – e.g. avoid simple mistakes as using a wrong template, do not ignore required aspects (e.g. gender issues, involvement of specific partners, attaching required consent/ support letters etc). Also other common mistakes are inconsistencies between Work Packages (WPs), only one of the expected impacts is addressed but not all, repeated activities in several WPs etc. This kind of mistakes would be the easiest to avoid and save unnecessarily lost points, therefore it is very important to start proposal preparations as early as possible.
- Demonstration of coordinator's reliability was brought out in many ESRs. It shows that it is very important to carefully choose your consortium's coordinator and there should be some extra information provided about the background and previous activities of this organisation/ partner (in the template - full proposal/2nd stage – part 3 „Implementation").
- It is better to provide more explanation, but at the same time keep a very clear focus of your project. If the focus is too wide and superficially presented, there is a great risk that it is not sufficient/convincing for the evaluator and as it is not possible to ask questions or give additional explanations it can be seen as a major shortcoming. The evaluator has to get everything at once from the proposal.
- All the numerical values should be supported by references, otherwise these are not convincing.Simultaneously try to keep the plane format (e.g. avoid too many footnotes).

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 642025

The main points based on ESR evaluation of waste, water and SC5 2014-2015 addressed by the evaluators

Excellence

Weaknesses	Strengths
The objectives match those of the call only partially, the objectives lack some specificity in some places and the description of efforts to achieve some objectives is insufficient. The methodology and approach are described in rather general or insufficient ways (e.g. not supported by facts or references), or are imbalanced (e.g. focus only on one technological aspect/area/theme/too much concentrated on literature only and the practical pilots are not described or briefly discussed). Chosen technology is not appropriate/enough justified/well described. Proposed approach is often not suitable/ convincing/justified for the ambition of the project. Ambition of the project is not realistic. Over ambitious targets at the limited time scale or also very limited aims are usually referred to as a major shortcoming. The level of trans-disciplinarity is limited, not dealt with or integrated or formulated in an unclear way. Scientific credibility is limited or the assessment of the level of the ambition is difficult The innovation potential appears limited/ only one part of the project has innovation potential, the innovation potential and capacity to go beyond the state-of-the-art is not fully convincing. In IAs there should not be too much focus put on research activities.	Ambitions well in balance with the project consortium capabilities, objectives, and duration of the project. The proposal is ambitious, realistic and comprehensive In addition to the fact that all objectives are clearly described, logically planned and refer to the scope of the call, they are also well formulated (importance of English proofreading!). Technological component is well described It is well seen if the replicability of the results is also considered. The proposal is innovative. Use of new methods/ technology is in general seen as a positive aspect by evaluators – but of course, it has to be well justified and proofed by references. Multi-actor approach is in majority of cases considered as advantage. It is important to remember that simultaneously the required target groups/ environments/areas should be highlighted. Clear priorities of the project have been well received by evaluators. Proposals which need engagement of different regions – the geographical coverage and thorough justification are highly appreciated. Positive attention could be gained through follow-up activities/plans Usage of results of previous projects, engagement with already existing thematic networks. The overall conceptual framework is sound, well described and designed

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 642025

Impact

Weaknesses	Strengths
Limited generation of new knowledge or the integration of new knowledge to existing remains unclear Limited engagement of stakeholders or limited research collaboration Lack of detailed IPR management Impact after the end of the project is questionable, as only insufficient information how the results will be maintained, updated and exploited beyond the duration of the project has been provided. It is highly connected to the problem that in many projects the data management is inadequately addressed. The description of the dissemination strategy lacks precision Risk analysis improperly considered Quantification of impacts insufficiently justified and impact measurement missing/insufficient. Concrete measures/indicators how the impacts will be assessed are not elaborated and it stays unclear how the results are reaching the target audience and what it will change. Achievability of the impact is often not convincing. Impact addressed in a very narrow scale is also problematic. It is often too much concentrated on local level benefits/benefits only to consortium members/certain narrow target groups – does not have an EU added value/ impact to wider public or market/impact to several different relevant stakeholders. Restricted access to deliverables is restricting strongly the extent of the impact Replicability of proposed solutions or methods uncertain	The expected impacts are outlined well The proposed measures for exploitation, dissemination and communication of the project results are extensive and adequate. All partners are somehow included to dissemination activities and communication activities. Open access provided, data management well elaborated High potential to enable new knowledge integration and transfer High potential to enhance innovation capacity The project consortium is strong, e.g. project brings together different stakeholders and participation of each partner is well justified Convincing methodology/business model will ensure high impact Management of IPR is properly addressed

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 642025

Implementation

Weaknesses	Strengths
Planning of Work Packages (WP) contains several mistakes, e.g. in timing of outputs, potential overlap between WPs, interconnections missing between WPs, some obligatory WPs are missing (e.g. management or dissemination), structure of WPs is too complicated, objectives and WPs are not linked, division of work between partners is unjustified or not clear, insufficiently high allocation of resources are given to the coordinator. Milestones and deliverables are not aligned with the work plan. Inappropriate or superficially described management structure. For example the management structure is too complicated/decision making procedure is not clear/is hard to follow in practice. If not all the consortium members are involved in management activities, it can lead to a situation where the interests of some consortium members are not taken into account. It is also necessary to note that management procedures should be suitable for the consortium size. The consortium appears somewhat imbalanced or there is a limited SME involvement. Some partner descriptions insufficiently elaborated Scientific coordination light and not enough structured The risk and innovation management inadequately addressed, some crucial risks have not been identified The relative lack of social sciences decreases the likely effectiveness of the implementation No advisory board is associated with the project A balanced participation of women and men is not ensured Innovation management is missing Budget not balanced or overestimated. Budget is not in accordance with person months and with the ambition of the project. Progress monitoring measures (during the project) are not planned or very briefly described Risk management not considered	Good balance between expertise, good balance and complementarity between the participants in the consortium. Consortium covers the entire value chain. Composition of the consortium is in good coherence with the requirements of the call text (e.g. some specific partners could be required). If there is a plan to enter to a new market – a specific partner from that area would be a great benefit to the consortium. The gender, career-stage and geographical spread of the partners is excellent. Coordinator of the consortium is experienced and demonstrates credibility to lead and manage international projects. The management of the project is very focused, transparent and well-conceived. Clear decision making process, conflict management and risk mitigation plan is a great benefit. The presence of a scientific advisory board is welcome. The work plan is well developed and work packages are coherent and complementary. The allocation of tasks is well distributed between all the partners. The expected deliverables are appropriate and presented in a very detailed way The budget is well justified, the overall planned resources are well distributed among work packages and tasks

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 642025