

FEEDBACK TO THE 2023 ANNUAL EJP SOIL SCIENCE DAYS AND GENERAL MEETING

12-16 June 2023
Riga, Latvia



5 days | 248 attendees | 28 countries | 102 presentations | 58 posters | 3 debates



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Respondents:

80 people responded to the survey after 1 invitation and 1 reminder to the +250 attendees. 70 people attended the live event, 10 online.

Who were the respondents?

We asked the respondents to indicate their role within or related to the EJP SOIL programme. These were the responses:

Programme Owner	3
Member of the EJP SOIL Board of Programme Managers	2
Member of the EJP SOIL Ethics Board	1
Member of the EJP SOIL Advisory Board	0
Part of the EJP SOIL ExComm	7
National coordinator	8
Researcher working on one of the internal EJP SOIL projects	53
Researcher working on one of the external EJP SOIL projects	15
Researcher who is not part of the EJP SOIL consortium and not working on an EJP SOIL project	0
Part of the EJP SOIL administration or communication	9
Policymaker	1
NGO member	0
Other	6

Where were the respondents located?

We asked the respondents to select their country from a list of all EU countries. In total, 24 countries were represented in the survey (22 of which were countries represented in the EJP SOIL consortium, the other 2 are captured in the "other" category):

Austria	8	Italy	8	Sweden	2
Belgium	3	Latvia	3	Switzerland	2
Czech Republic	1	Lithuania	6	Turkey	1
Denmark	4	Netherlands	3	United Kingdom	2
Finland	1	Norway	1	Other	2
France	8	Poland	4		
Germany	5	Portugal	3		
Hungary	1	Slovenia	2		
Ireland	2	Spain	5		

Countries with 0 respondents were omitted from the list since the automated list included many small states and countries that are not a part of EJP SOIL.

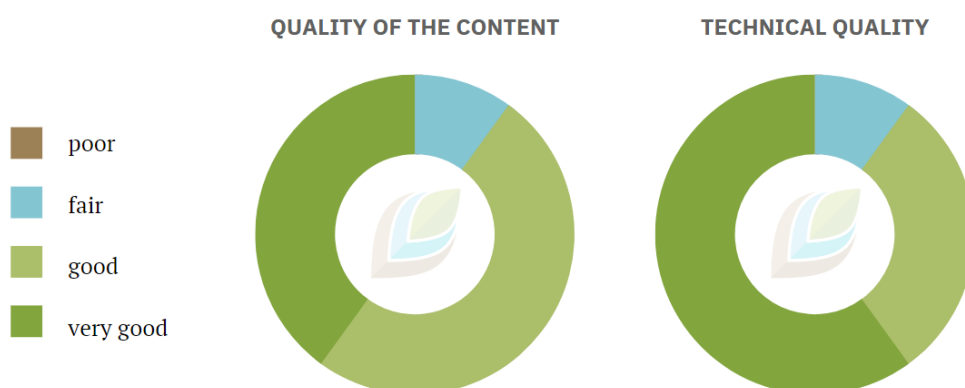


Online meeting

We asked the respondents who had attended the online event only few questions. The set-up of this edition of the event was that it was a physical event, which everyone in the consortium should be able to attend in person. Only for those who could not make it, we also set up a live broadcast, only for the plenary elements of the programme (not the breakout sessions), without hybrid options. Since an online event was not our intent our focus, we did not focus on getting feedback on it either. We did still want to allow the online attendees to have their say if they wanted to, which is why we included it in the survey, be it limited.

Of the 10 respondents who had attended online, none rated the quality of the content poor. 9 rated it either good or very good, and 1 fair.

The technical quality of the live broadcast was also rated good or very good by 9 out of 10 respondents, 1 rated it fair.



When asked for specific comments, 5 respondents had something to say:

- "I watched one talk only. I liked it very much, that is the reason I am evaluating the meeting. Unfortunately, I did not have time to see more talks. Thanks for letting us in."
- "We were not aware in forehand that the breakout sessions would not be broadcasted!"
- "It would have been very interesting to follow the presentations of the outbreak groups, too."
- "I would be really interested to participate to the breakout sessions of 13th June, but I understand the technical difficulties of broadcasting on-line parallel sessions."
- "One of the best meetings I have ever experienced for the the quality of the live broadcast. Great reporting by the young scientists - both the idea of having them report on the content of the breakout sessions and how they did such a great job of it was excellent."

Adding to the comments about following the breakout sessions online; a conscious decision was made not to invest in the expensive equipment and man hours for working the equipment for each separate breakout session (over 20 sessions), which was also clearly communicated both on the website and in the e-mail communications preceding the event.

Physical meeting in Riga, Latvia

1. Annual Science Days

GOALS

68 out of 70 respondents who attended the physical meeting indicated they were present at the Annual Science Days (ASD) part (from 12-14 June) of the week-long event (12-16 June). 62 responded to the open question on what their goals were in attending the Annual Science Days (see [Table 1](#)). An illustration of the common responses shows that the EJP SOIL projects (results, updates, networking, presenting,...) were the main focus for many attending the ASD event.



When asked if the respondents accomplished their goals for the ASD, 65 responded yes, and only 1 person said no.



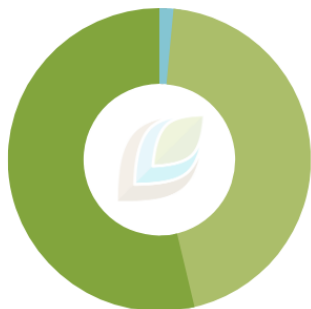
VALUE

The next questions inquired about the value the attendees got out of the different elements of the ASD event:

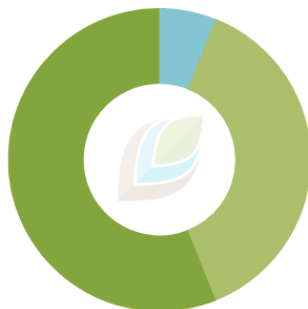
- The plenary sessions: 67 respondents: 0 answered "poor", 1 person "fair", 30 people said "good" and 36 rated the value they got out of the plenary sessions "very good" (see pie chart below).
- The breakout sessions: 66 respondents: 0 answered "poor", 4 people "fair", 25 respondents said "good" and 37 people rated the value they got out of the breakout sessions "very good" (see pie chart below).
- The poster sessions: 59 respondents: 7 answered "poor", 10 respondents "fair", 31 people said "good" and "18" rated the value they got out of the plenary sessions "very good" (see pie chart below).

Overall, respondents were very positive. The poster sessions were the only section that received a significant amount of "poor" votes and much fewer "very good" votes, which we will go deeper into further in this document.

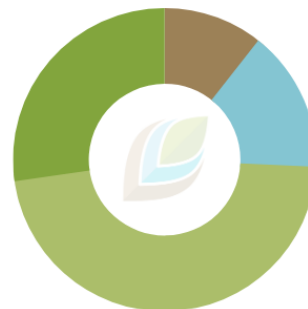
VALUE OF THE **PLENARY** SESSIONS



VALUE OF THE **BREAKOUT** SESSIONS



VALUE OF THE **POSTER** SESSIONS

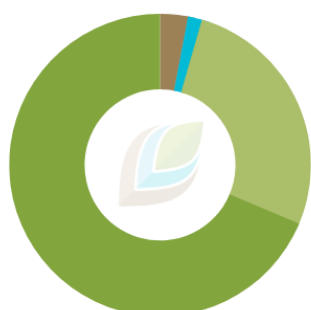


TOPIC RELEVANCE

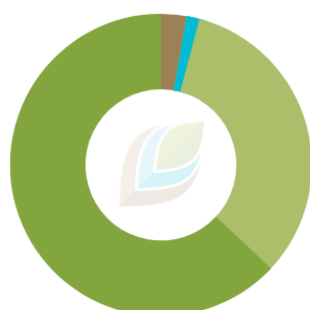
We also asked the respondents about how relevant they thought the topics discussed during the ASD were, for:

- The plenary sessions: 67 respondents out of whom 2 replied "very irrelevant", 0 "somewhat irrelevant", 1 "neither relevant nor irrelevant", 18 "somewhat relevant", and 46 "very relevant" (see pie chart below)
- The breakout sessions and the poster sessions (poster sessions were in line with the topics of the breakout sessions): 68 respondents out of whom 2 replied "very irrelevant", 0 "somewhat irrelevant", 1 "neither relevant nor irrelevant", 24 "somewhat relevant", and 41 "very relevant" (see pie chart below)

RELEVANCE OF THE TOPICS DURING **PLENARY** SESSIONS



RELEVANCE OF THE TOPICS DURING **BREAKOUT** SESSIONS AND **POSTER** SESSIONS

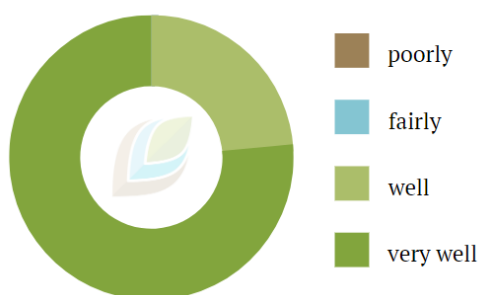


GENERAL

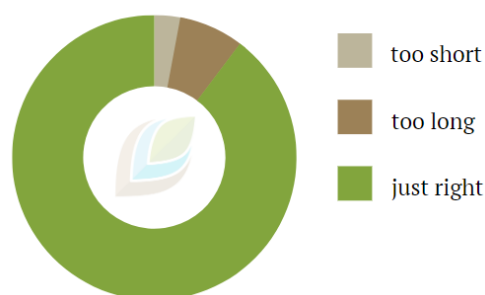
We asked the respondents about the general organisation and timing of the ASD event:

- “How organised was the Annual Science Days event?”: 68 respondents, out of whom 0 said “poorly organised”, 0 said “fairly organised”, 16 said “well organised” and 52 said “very well organised”.
- “Do you think the duration of the Annual Science Days event was too short, too long or just right?”: 68 respondents, out of whom 2 said “too short”, 5 said “too long”, and 61 said “just right”.

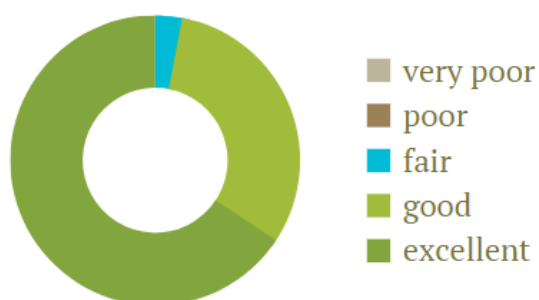
HOW WELL ORGANISED?



DURATION OF THE EVENT?



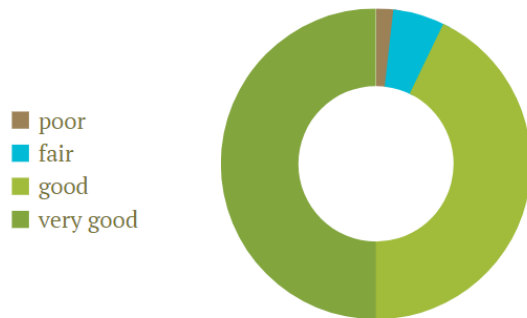
Ultimately, when asked to rate the overall Annual Science Days event, the responses were overwhelmingly positive. No one of the 67 who answered this question gave a “very poor” or “poor” rating, only 2 said “fair”, and the “excellent” scores (44) were more than double the amount of the “good” scores (21).



Finally, we asked them to share areas of improvement and any other thoughts they wanted to express about their ASD experience. 37 people gave input (see [Table 2](#)). The most recurrent topics regarded the poster sessions, which were often mentioned to be too short, not in 1 session, and not interactive enough (this feedback explains why a group of people gave “poor” scores to the poster session value question); more involvement of the hosting country and the different stakeholders within the programme; and the addition of round table meetings around current topics.

2. Social Dinner

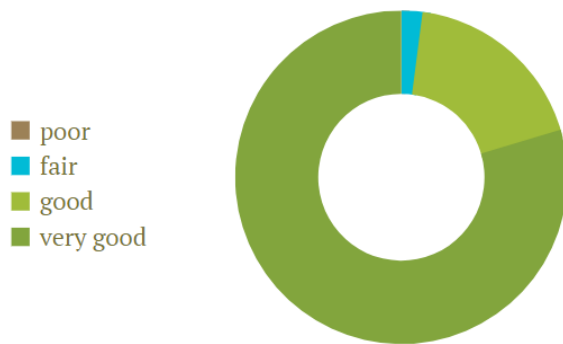
Out of the respondents, 56 attended the social dinner. Their overall rating of the dinner was great: 1 person rated it poor (this might be a result of the answers' initial order, which was reversed from all the other questions. This was adapted after this 1 person had already selected "poor". This person might have meant to select "very good", at the other end of the scale, but we cannot say for sure), 52 out of the 56 said either "good" or "very good", 3 people answered "fair".



We asked the attendees for areas to improve or other thoughts they wanted to share about their social dinner experience. 34 gave a response (see [Table 3](#)). Most responses were overwhelmingly positive, especially mentioning the casual atmosphere, the possibility for networking and bonding, and most of all the Latvian folk dancing session. Some criticisms mentioned the lack of enough seating, access to the buffet and vegetarian buffet, and the fact that the water ran out quite quickly. The idea behind this dinner was to have a casual walking dinner that made networking possible and easy, as opposed to a sit-down dinner where you are seated with the same group of people all night, but some attendees would have still liked to have some more seating room available.

3. Field Trip

The ASD event was followed immediately by an optional field trip after lunch on day 3 (14 June). 49 respondents attended the field trip, and overwhelmingly rated it “very good” (39), some “good” (9), and 1 person “fair”.



When asked for more comments and areas to improve, 23 people responded (see [Table 4](#)), mostly commenting positively on the opportunity to “empty the brains” after some long and intensive days, the chance to go outside and have a long walk, a beautiful location and an interesting visit to an “unusual” soil type for many (peatlands). Few criticisms were given on timing (the field trip went significantly over time for most groups), and there was a suggestion to split into smaller groups or have a guide with the group at all times to make sure everyone gets all the info.

4. General Meeting

GOALS

41 out of the 70 physical attendees that submitted the survey, attended the General Meeting (GM) event on Thursday 25 June. 32 described their main goals in attending the event (see [Table 5](#)); most mentioned a need for updates and insights on the progress and work of the Work Packages, hearing about the general direction the EJP SOIL is heading into and the future perspectives, how to start disseminating and managing all the new information and tools to come out of EJP SOIL, and the way forward. 34 indicated that they had accomplished their goals, 5 did not.



VALUE

We inquired about the value the attendees got out of the plenary and breakout sessions at the General Meeting. The responses were predominantly positive:

- Plenary sessions: 39 responses: 1 “poor”, 7 “fair”, 16 “good” and 15 respondents indicating “very good”.
- Breakout sessions: 41 responses, of whom 0 indicated “poor”, 7 “fair”, 19 “good” and 15 rated “very good”

VALUE OF THE **PLENARY SESSIONS**



VALUE OF THE **BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

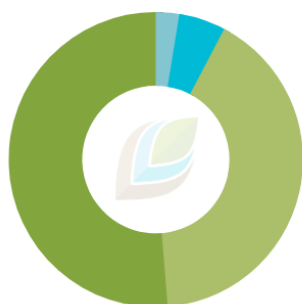


TOPIC RELEVANCE

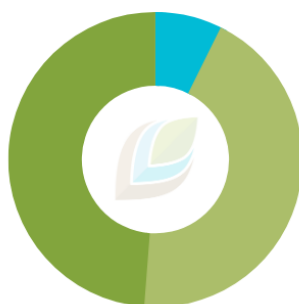
When asked about the relevancy of the topics discussed at the General Meeting, again the replies were almost all positive:

- Plenary sessions: 39 responses: 0 “very irrelevant”, 1 “somewhat irrelevant”, 2 “neither relevant nor irrelevant”, 16 “somewhat relevant” and 20 “very relevant”.
- Breakout sessions: 41 responses: 0 “very irrelevant”, 0 “somewhat irrelevant”, 3 “neither relevant nor irrelevant”, 18 “somewhat relevant”, 20 “very relevant”.

RELEVANCE OF THE TOPICS DURING PLENARY SESSIONS



RELEVANCE OF THE TOPICS DURING BREAKOUT SESSIONS AND POSTER SESSIONS



GENERAL

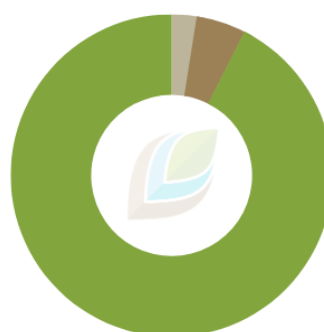
The general organisation and timing of the GM event received positive evaluations:

When asked how well they thought the General Meeting was organised, respondents indicated only “well” (17) and “very well” (24). When asked about timing, 1 person thought it was “too short”, 2 answered “too long”, but the other 37 respondents indicated that it was “just right”.

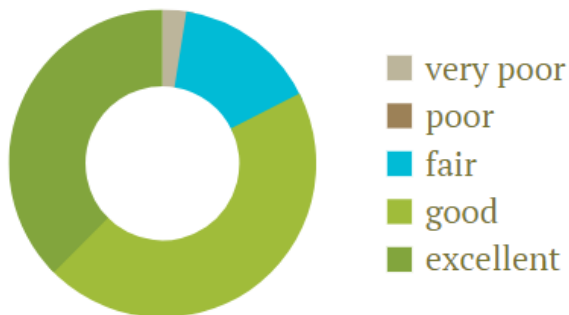
HOW WELL ORGANISED?



DURATION OF THE EVENT?



The overall rating of the General Meeting event was, again, overwhelmingly positive, with 1 person indicating “very poor”, 0 people rating it “poor”, 6 people “fair”, 18 “good” and 15 “excellent”.

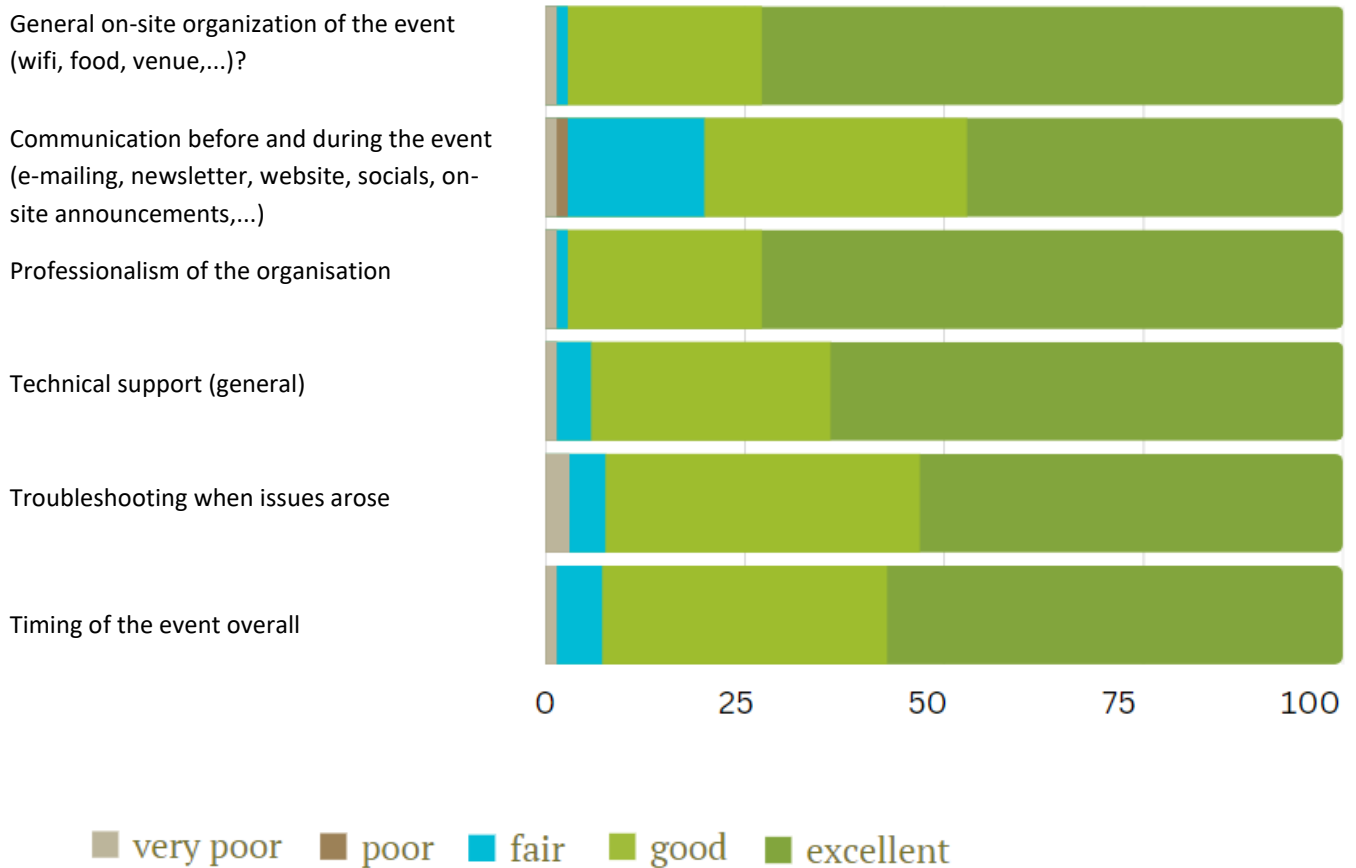


When asked for general comments and areas to improve, 16 people responded (see [Table 6](#)). Some comments mentioned the debate being a little too short and not interactive enough. Some said the GM should fall before the ASD event, and one person suggested to integrate them.

Overall rating of the organisation

We asked respondents to give their final scoring of some practical and logistical aspects of the on-site organisation. 70 respondents answered these questions about organisation, communication, professionalism, technical support, troubleshooting and timekeeping.

The results looked very positive:



Evaluation and conclusions by the organisation team

The organisation team of the ASD&GM event (consisting of EJP SOIL colleagues from coordinating partners INRAE and Wageningen University, WP9 coordinating partner Aarhus University, WP9 partner Teagasc, the hosting partner University of Latvia, and Task 9.1 (ASD organisation) responsible partners ILVO, BIOS and TAGEM) organised an evaluation meeting 2 weeks after the event, when most of the filled out feedback surveys had already come in.

Going over the survey replies, some comments were added by the organisation team. A need for improvement for the concept of the poster sessions during the ASD was generally agreed upon. The general consensus was that poster pitches during the breakout sessions could make the posters more attractive, and that a way to promote interaction during the poster session itself is needed.

A point of feedback that was mentioned several times both in the feedback form and during the event in Riga, was to make sure the order of presenters during the ASD breakout sessions was fixed, so that people could potentially "hop" sessions to follow multiple presentations they are interested in. Since receiving the final order of presenters from the session conveners can happen very last minute or not at all during these kinds of events, a decision was made to instill a deadline, and decide the order of presentations ourselves if the deadline is not respected.

A suggestion was made to change the order of events back to the order from the 2022 edition which started with the General Meeting, followed by the Science Days.

The amount of no shows during the event in Riga was noticeable, and the team thought about ways to avoid this. Sending confirmation and reminder messages was one of the things that we could do even more than we did for this year's edition, and an idea to add monetary consequences for no shows without cancellations was mentioned, but not decided on.

The results of the feedback survey and meeting will be presented to next year's hosting partner, LAMMC (Lithuania), along with a formal letter to confirm their status as the host for next year's event. We will also ask them what their options are regarding breakout sessions, although we will not impose anything in regards to this.

Overall, the 2023 edition of the EJP SOIL Annual Science Days and General Meeting was a great success, and we know which points to take into account for the next edition. A nice comment one of the participants made during the event in Riga was that he noticed how much we had improved on and take in to account the points of feedback and criticism that were given after the 2022 edition, so we are confident that we can only keep improving this already successful event.

A date for next year's edition will be set in September, in consultation with several major stakeholders and the hosting partner.

REPORT DRAFTED BY THE ASD&GM ORGANISING PARTNERS (INRAE, WUR, AU, UL, BIOS, TAGEM, TEAGASC, ILVO)
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Tables and figures

Table 1. "What were your main goals in attending the Annual Science Days?"

1	anonymous	to learn more about the topics
2	anonymous	To organise a nice and smooth event, where fellow researchers can socialise and brainstorm new ideas.
3	anonymous	Spread our research results and listen others' research results
4	anonymous	To meet project partners, listen to presentations, and present project results.
5	anonymous	exchange knowledge
6	anonymous	Leading my session, getting my research out to the EJP consortium, networking
7	anonymous	Engage with the projects, collect information on contributions to policy
8	anonymous	To meet project partners and hear updates from other projects
9	anonymous	Get the state of the art on the research done within EJP soil
10	anonymous	My main goals were to get more information about outcomes from EJP Soil projects, soil mission and carbon certification.
11	anonymous	Get information and knowledge on ongoing soil research in Europe, network with colleagues
12	anonymous	Sharing and connecting
13	anonymous	Share results and network with wider EJPSOIL community
14	anonymous	Update on project results + discussion with (internal and external) projects we are collaborating with on results and methods
15	anonymous	Interact with project colleagues - get overview of EJP soil research
16	anonymous	Presenting poster Getting new knowledge
17	anonymous	To know the state of progress of different tasks of EJP SOIL and internal calls, and also to discuss the best strategies to the future work we must do in different tasks
18	anonymous	To meet closely the other EJP SOIL /non-EJPSOIL soil scientists, exchange scientific idea/knowledge sharing and make better connection among us.



19	anonymous	To get an overview of project results and outcomes
20	anonymous	Sharing experiences
21	anonymous	Meet the researchers on the projects and working on the WP6. Exchanging on the results.
22	anonymous	To see project partners
23	anonymous	Show own results, learn about EJP project outcomes, meet people
24	anonymous	sharing research results, enforce collaborations
25	anonymous	to follow the session A3 B3
26	anonymous	Sharing research results, discussing and networking
27	anonymous	Presenting a poster with research results. Performing the role of reporting on the sessions as an NCR. Getting to know the research done by other projects. Networking.
28	anonymous	Networking, Knowledge gain
29	anonymous	Acquire information on EJPSOIL project results and promote collaboration with other researchers
30	anonymous	get the new overview of project progress and new data
31	anonymous	Update about scientific progress in the work of project partners
32	anonymous	Share my research, get insights of other projects' research and search for collaboration opportunities. Learn about science-policy bridging.
33	anonymous	Doing my job as WP9 leader and thereby collecting as much information on how to proceed successfully from here.
34	anonymous	Overview over project outcomes
35	anonymous	Present my research and meet other scientists.
36	anonymous	To learn the work done in other projects. To expand my knowledge of soil management.
37	anonymous	meeting with partners in other countries within projects and getting updates on their parts of the projects
38	anonymous	Networking, learning and inspiration



39	anonymous	To lead a session To give a presentation To give a poster presentation To listen to others To meet project members to meet new people in EJP SOIL To see sth of Latvia
40	anonymous	Getting to know about current process of projects
41	anonymous	Getting to know and seeing again colleagues for deeper exchange.
42	anonymous	Get an insight into the results and latest findings of the EJP soil projects
43	anonymous	I wanted to learn more about research conducted within EJP SOIL
44	anonymous	Project presentation, session covering, networking, update on EJP SOIL
45	anonymous	To meet in face project partners and discuss project related questions, also to hear about the on going studies in other EJP soil projects
46	anonymous	Presentation of the poster, acquisition of new information, communication with colleagues
47	anonymous	Update in Research,
48	anonymous	Share results and network with other internal and external projects
49	anonymous	To present results of work done in relation to the EJP soil projects. To see and share in other research activities from participating countries pertaining to EJP soil.
50	anonymous	Network with project participants, get up to date on state of the art knowledge. Learn to dance the Latvian way.
51	anonymous	meet project partners, get information about other on-going projects
52	anonymous	-dissemination of results from the STEROPES project/interaction with Probedfield/Sensres -convener of a session -discussion with project partners -setting of the SANCHOSTHIRST project
53	anonymous	to get acquainted with the EJP SOIL achievements, to exchange knowledge and ideas with EJP SOIL partners, to meet collaborators
54	anonymous	collecting information and networking with projects focusing on soil Carbon
55	anonymous	First contact to the partners of our project, second, have a look at other projects approach and results
56	anonymous	My aim was both to interact with members of EJP-Soil consortium and with members of other projects; and to hold a face-to-face workshop with members of the project I am involved in.



57	anonymous	To learn and network.
58	anonymous	Find out about current work progress and achievements in EJP SOIL projects.
59	anonymous	Getting better information on research projects and on possible synergies Examining science x society interfaces within EJP projects and at global EJP level
60	anonymous	Presenting preliminary results (poster) of lab experiments. Project meeting. Observer of my breakout session. Getting an update of progress/results/start of other projects. Meeting project colleagues and other EJP colleagues.
61	anonymous	Poster presentation
62	anonymous	To meet with EJP Soil colleagues and hear updates on project progress.



Table 2. " Please share areas to improve and any other thoughts you have about your Annual Science Days experience."

1	anonymous	Organisers are awesome!
2	anonymous	The order of speakers of the breakout sessions should be in the book
3	anonymous	I would have liked to see all posters to be present all the time. It was difficult that some poster sessions were on separate days than the actual oral presentation session.
4	anonymous	Many people were circulating and presenting the same or similar presentation as the previous years or the different EJP events during the year. The topics of the presentations were extremely relevant but the information or the progress not so updated
5	anonymous	Everything was excellent.
6	anonymous	Some of the breakout rooms lacked microphones so it was hard to hear
7	anonymous	Overall, very well done. The young scientist presentations were an excellent idea that I'd never seen before. Organization of sessions and workshops went smoothly, and the rooms were a very comfortable temperature (something that is often not the case in summer conferences). Two suggestions. 1. On the final day have everyone come forward at a pre-arranged time to be acknowledged/thanked (i.e. those in the organization team). This should be treated more seriously than just having people stand up or wave from their seats. 2. Allow the poster session to be as valuable as the oral presentations. It can be even better than oral presentations for facilitating conversation and information exchange, but it rarely works that way if it isn't planned for in the program.
8	anonymous	I rated the poster session as fair while it was great to see many posters were presented in different poster session and there were many very interesting posters. This because the poster sessions were too short in time. Due to the combination with the coffee break people only slowly moved towards the posters and because of the short time slot for the poster sessions it was not possible to visit many interesting posters (sometimes in combination with presenting your own poster). I do not think it would be a problem for most participants to end the day at 18:00 instead of 17:15 if they can get more added-value out of that day.
9	anonymous	The panel discussion on Monday was a weakness. Too many questions asked by the moderator - and hard for the panel to engage in a discussion with each other. It ended more as a "panel Q&A" than a panel discussion.
10	anonymous	More focus on the expected impacts of the program and more discussion on these impacts (less presentations).



11	anonymous	The posters must have more relevance. In one of the sessions I had attended posters were presented one by one. The authors present them briefly. I think it was a very good idea
12	anonymous	Some breakout session topics were very relevant for all EJP SOIL community (e.g. open science, EJP SOIL data/meta data repository), so these kind of sessions would be placed on general sessions.
13	anonymous	As EJPSOIL strives to promote knowledge on climate smart soil management, it is crucial to actively include local countries where ASDs are hosted. A specific session could be added to highlight or to learn whats going on in the host country eg. in Lithuania. A good advertising or promotion events will help to draw a lot of attention on upcoming ASD not just from researchers but also from multiple stakeholder groups (policy makers, practitioners, advisors). This will greatly boost dissemination of EJPSOIL outputs.
14	anonymous	Direct involvement of stakeholders facing soil challenges, besides policymakers. Providing target stakeholders (those one who face soil challenges in Europe and outside) adequate room in plenary sessions rather than using plenary sessions for scenario analysis which often offer unrealistic perspectives, even if quoted in high valued journals.
15	anonymous	The ASD program available online was not really clear regarding the poster sessions, so the first session occurred on the day before the corresponding breakout session. Posters were less seen than expected.
16	anonymous	Rules in sessions and timing of talks should be more aligned
17	anonymous	Insert a visit in field, representative of local cropping systems
18	anonymous	Change the poster session, give a possibility for short pitch for everyone presenter, than extra time for poster explorer.
19	anonymous	Not so many parallel sessions. There are too many topics that one regrets to miss them. Posters should have the possibility for short oral presentations (ca. 3-5 minutes) in the lecture room, with discussion possibility at the poster board afterwards.
20	anonymous	1. Separate the coffee breaks from the poster sessions. 2. Increase poster session time. 3. Allocate more time for stakeholders' debate.
21	anonymous	Next year WP9 needs a 4 hour joint NCR PCR meeting before we begin the ASD. We need to do a focused workshop meeting.
22	anonymous	Improve communication between scientists and train them in popularising science. Young scientists and Axel Don + Stephano Mocali were better at this (maybe because



		there are more humble?). Disappointed that the complexity of the messages, combined with the often very short speaking time, limited the extent to which the key message was retained.
23	anonymous	1. In the sign-up it is unclear (for a first-time ASD'er) what the different parts really include (e.g., the Thursday) 2. Confirmation of which parts of the ASD is signed up for. 3. Unclear if poster sessions were on their own or still related to the breakout sessions. In some cases, abstract submitters received an email they were given a poster, but after that email there was basically no more communication from the conveners to the poster presenters. 4. The debate seemed very planned and not much of a debate, but an outlined collection of monologues. 5. The breakout sessions were perhaps a bit long. With a lot of exciting information, it was hard to remain focused. 6. I liked the size of the ASD a lot. 7. I very much liked the keynote speakers on Wednesday
24	anonymous	Excellent conference!
25	anonymous	Most people seem content with sessions as they are (frontally). However, they could yield so much more if organised interactively, workshop-like, etc.
26	anonymous	Individual sessions on actual soil management issues also have to be planned
27	anonymous	More interactive poster sessions.
28	anonymous	I think more could be made of poster sessions ... it would be nice to have like a world cafe ... say 10 mins with groups of 5 or six for a short intro and questions I am sure we could develop an app for this ...
29	anonymous	please allow the posters to be displayed during all the conference and not only at the very time of poster session, in order to let the attendees have a look at them. I personally missed the posters which were displayed on Monday afternoon.
30	anonymous	I suggest the organization of round table meetings in smaller groups to discuss some problems.
31	anonymous	Round tables like cafe working meetings
32	anonymous	I participated also in the general meeting and in project meetings on Friday morning, so I had to dedicate the whole week to the EJP Soil ASD and GM, too much :D even if lovely!
33	anonymous	A session could be organised in which the Transdisciplinary Networks (national/European), related to soil, would present the results of their work.
34	anonymous	no comments



35	anonymous	Projects impact and impact pathways could be discussed deeper.
36	anonymous	Do not allocate the poster session at the same time as the coffee break: instead, poster session first (even short time) and then coffee break (room to expand discussion). Do not allocate the poster session in another physical place as the coffee break. Otherwise, everyone stays where the coffee is (especially if it is outside).
37	anonymous	An excellent experience in Riga. Very well organised, lovely food, refreshments and superb venue.



Table 3. " Please share areas to improve and any other thoughts you have about your social dinner experience."

ID	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	loved the framework with the dancing
2	anonymous	The dance was a brilliant idea! It was good, that more wine was handed out, there was a water shortage though!
3	anonymous	was amazing, really allowed bonding
4	anonymous	I would have like to sit down during dinner. More vegetarian options would be needed also (maybe all food could be vegetarian, and only meat as an option). Dance was very nice :)
5	anonymous	More time and space for networking
6	anonymous	The formula of social dinner was very good. The food was very good and dancing was excellent.
7	anonymous	I enjoyed the casual, standing arrangement for eating. Note: the catering could have been a bit more organized, with two lines, drinks at a different table and plates at the beginning so the flow of people through the lines went more smoothly.
8	anonymous	If correct, we had to leave the building around 10:00. This was quite early. It would have been nice to foresee some more time to talk to more persons. Apart from this, the social dinner was very well organized!
9	anonymous	Food was poor, dances were very good.
10	anonymous	I have no ideas to improve. For me it was OK
11	anonymous	Very interactive and cheerful! This was perfect!
12	anonymous	dinner itself was poor in choice (same food as lunch), but the location and the activity were great.
13	anonymous	nothing
14	anonymous	It was a wonderful experience. No improvemwnt possible.
15	anonymous	Consider the amount of drinking water in relation to the guests number
16	anonymous	divide meal service in few places.
17	anonymous	The informal character was pleasant. The location at the top level of the Science House was agreeable and ample.

ID	Name	Responses
18	anonymous	The social events were great. University of Latvia really knows how to organise a conference.
19	anonymous	Logistics around access to the buffet and the places to sit with your dinner must equal the number of participants.
20	anonymous	Great team building to dance all together !!
21	anonymous	Que was too long, not enough cutlery and glasses. Strange that the vegetarian food table serves only part of the meal. I loved the cultural part!
22	anonymous	The latvian folk dance was a brilliant element during the evening.
23	anonymous	Todo long quewe. There should be always more tables where good is served to reduce the effective waiting time. But otherwise just excellent!
24	anonymous	The performance of the music group perfectly rounded off the evening and brought the participants closer to Latvian culture.
25	anonymous	Very nice evening!
26	anonymous	NA
27	anonymous	Two lines for serving ..
28	anonymous	Very nice welcome ! Some things that could be improved (but the social dinner was truely a success!) Please add water and bread; anticipate seats (better having dinner seated around a table!); provide the deserts just after the main plate.
29	anonymous	Too much time standing up
30	anonymous	absolutely great dances!!!!!! and the terrace was spectacular
31	anonymous	sitting at table would be better
32	anonymous	Doing it outside if the weather allows it. Find ways to avoid long waiting times: creating more than one line (additional to the vegetarian food). Having more vegetarian food (maybe?).
33	anonymous	Maybe more tables from where we can take food.
34	anonymous	A sit-down served meal may have been nicer, but overall I really enjoyed it.



Table 4. "Please share areas to improve and any other thoughts you have about your field trip experience."

ID	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	It was great! It was good to have the stations while at the same time have enough time to relax, as the brains were very tired after those long days.
2	anonymous	The trip was very good organised. I do not see areas to improve.
3	anonymous	I loved that the field trip allowed us to walk for such a long distance - that's unusual in conference excursions. Consider next time splitting full buses into smaller groups and staggering their start times (or having different groups assigned to talk to staff members in a different order).
4	anonymous	Smaller groups would have been useful since it was now sometimes difficult to allow all people to understand the information provided at the site.
5	anonymous	I think it was OK
6	anonymous	It was very useful to introduce very unusual soils (peatland) for other countries.
7	anonymous	The visit of peatlands was very well organized, and interesting!
8	anonymous	nothing
9	anonymous	More realistic estimation of needed time for the walk would have been useful,
10	anonymous	The field trip was very well plans and super interesting.
11	anonymous	Very nice explanation and useful activity to air out our brains.
12	anonymous	It was somehow clear from the beginning to me that this would take (much longer) than originally planned. :) But it was a great experience!
13	anonymous	The visit of peatlands in natural and anthropogenic use was an exceptional opportunity. A very well organized excursion.
14	anonymous	Very well organised and interesting
15	anonymous	NA
16	anonymous	It was great and all rangers gave really good information..
17	anonymous	It was pretty well organized.
18	anonymous	Having someone all the time with us to explain certain things, I understand this is difficult

ID	Name	Responses
19	anonymous	I have some questions left about the peatlands... maybe more time for a general introduction was needed, even if I have to admit that you gave us a printed copy for introduction, so maybe my fault!
20	anonymous	Very interesting area; I only missed the participation of the people who are exploiting the mine, to give us their version of the work they are doing; as well as local politicians and civil society, to give us their opinion.
21	anonymous	No comments
22	anonymous	Some présentation related to lettonian agriculture could have been presented
23	anonymous	Great to get a walk in a beautiful location. Excellent host and bus service.



Table 5. "What were your main goals in attending the General Meeting?"

ID	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	improved insight into other WPs and work of colleagues
2	anonymous	Listening in for my NC to find out if there are any new obligations or so.
3	anonymous	Updates on EJP SOIL progress
4	anonymous	Updates about the progress of the EJP
5	anonymous	Get the status of the EJP project and works to be done
6	anonymous	The main goals were to get more information about soil data and dissemination of scientific outcomes.
7	anonymous	Share results, gather information, network, understand where EJPSOIL is at and goals for coming year
8	anonymous	Updates on WP's achievements and progress but also on the work planned for next 2 years.
9	anonymous	Keeping up what's happening in the project
10	anonymous	To know the situation of the works in progress, and the future activities of the project
11	anonymous	To have information about general activities of the program and discuss how we can improve them for next duration.
12	anonymous	To get overview of framework activities and learn planned future activities.
13	anonymous	See policy makers and discussions about the
14	anonymous	get an overview of aims, issues and future steps
15	anonymous	following news from WP6
16	anonymous	Tuning with the main goal of EJP SOIL and the tasks to be performed in the next year. Knowing the progress made.
17	anonymous	to hear about future perspectives
18	anonymous	To hear something about the general strategy of EJP Soil.
19	anonymous	Doing my job as WP9 leader and thereby collecting as much information on how to proceed successfully from here.



ID	Name	Responses
20	anonymous	Position of EJP SOIL at a higher level and the way forward
21	anonymous	To collect tools for managing data and communicating to policy-makers.
22	anonymous	Current state of play of EJP SOIL
23	anonymous	Learn about the progress of the EJP soil program and get instructions for further activities.
24	anonymous	I wanted to increase my knowledge related to all the activities within EJP SOIL and what is planned for the near future.
25	anonymous	EJP SOIL update + information
26	anonymous	Acquisition of new information and networking
27	anonymous	Gain an idea of the programme's current status
28	anonymous	Learn
29	anonymous	to participate in the knowledge sharing
30	anonymous	To deepen the understanding of the evolution of the EJP-Soil programme and the possibilities for its continuation.
31	anonymous	Better information on EJP long terme impact at européen level and for.european farmers
32	anonymous	To obtain an update on EJP Soil governance.



Table 6. "Please share areas to improve and any other thoughts you have about your General Meeting experience.

ID	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	the dabates could have been a little longer
2	anonymous	It is a necessary evil. E.g. only very few people would enjoy the findings of the ethics meeting, but it is nevertheless important! The panel discussion was not really a discussion. There, a bit more diversity in opinions would facilitate discussion.
3	anonymous	Panel discussion was fair, but not as engaging as the one during the science days, perhaps a better topic ? Opening and closing presentations were a bit long and hard to follow how they related to the context of EJP SOIL. Presentation by Claire was excellent as was the ethics board recommendations. These presented useful information that I consider more relevant to the EJP SOIL consortium that are usually present for the GM.
4	anonymous	Again the topics were relevant but the content was repeated. During the Workshops I would expect more input from the organizers as now it was mostly them getiing feedback from the participants.
5	anonymous	I think it would be better to organize this general meeting before the annual science days. In Palermo, many people attended the general meeting on the first day of 'general meeting + annual science days'. In Riga, many people were absent on the general meeting after 2.5 very interesting days at the annual science days. More focus on the progress, results and planning of the EJP SOIL's WPs would really be an added value. The workshops had very interesting topics but some of them were to short to be able to get the most out of it. Instead of repeating the workshops in two time slots, more time can be foreseen for each workshop.
6	anonymous	Why are general meeting and ASD separate. There is large overlap. in audience and focus.
7	anonymous	For me it was OK. May be to have a little more time for questions and answers
8	anonymous	It could be integrated into ASDs! Family friendly event, please try to provide child care facilities (a room with few books and toys plus few student care takers - with small fee). even if its for couple of hours, it will encourage mange parents to bring their kids/family to ASDs and GM.
9	anonymous	in the general meeting I would have preferred that the workshops were not in paraller but shorter, consecutive and not repited
10	anonymous	.

ID	Name	Responses
11	anonymous	One day for General Meeting would be enough.
12	anonymous	It might be useful to create a tree of all the participants (name + photo + research topic in brief), broken down by research centre and country, to encourage people to meet up, especially for young scientists.
13	anonymous	I was missing a bit the state of play of the different WPs and the overall performance of the entire EJP SOIL project their goals and objectives...For me it was to general to much focussed on science to policy and WP7 and communication
14	anonymous	Everything was fine
15	anonymous	All the presentations were very timely and interesting. Moreover, Mary Ritter's (Ethics Board) evaluation of the work done and the measures to be implemented for improvement was very welcome.
16	anonymous	Complementary Discussion related to EU CAP strategy and EJP soil contribution would have been very relevant

