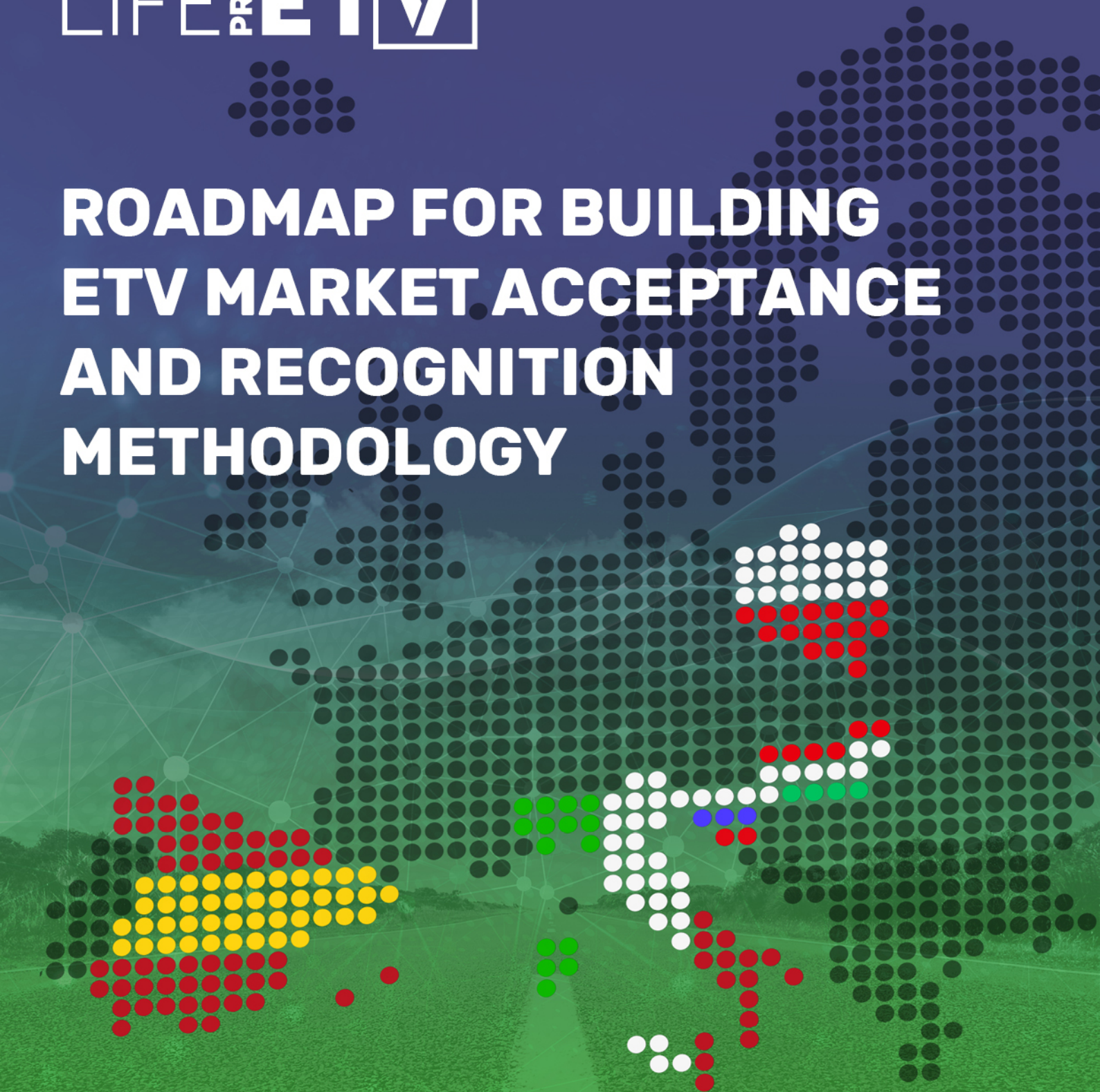
LIFE PROETV

ROADMAP FOR BUILDING ETV MARKET ACCEPTANCE AND RECOGNITION METHODOLOGY



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. About the document

This document describes a robust methodology for developing a Roadmap to build market acceptance and recognition of ETV as a voluntary environmental scheme to boost market uptake of new environmental technologies.

The purpose of the roadmap is therefore to trace a concrete valorisation path of ETV, identifying real business cases in which an impartial verification of the performance of environmental innovative technologies can be an important contribution to their application and diffusion.

The approach used to define the methodology is based on two main aspects:

- The priority and analytical definition of all the elements, the actors in play, problems and priorities that must be considered in order to create a strategic, shared and effective framework of actions aimed at addressing and resolving the challenges and innovation needs [1];
- The definition of a strategic project (Roadmap), starting from needs and priorities that emerged during a collaborative and inclusive path with the various stakeholders, which becomes a technical tool through which to stimulate collaboration and interaction[2].

This type of approach has already been used widely in various contexts in which a strategic path has been defined, marked in time and by actions in which the different roles of the interested parties (whether public or private) are well delineated. Therefore, some documents were taken as reference, in particular those drawn up in the field of National and European policies[3].

The methodology presented in this document can be used by a series of players with the aim of suggesting a method to undertake a valorisation path for new environmental technologies on the market, through the use of ETV, on the basis of real use cases and the challenges that arise in the reference contexts.

Technology producers and developers can use the methodology to highlight the main environmental benefits claimed for the technologies they produce, in specific contexts and in reference to specific environmental, political or regulatory challenges. This allows them to increase the competitiveness, credibility and innovativeness factors of the technologies proposed.

The methodology is also aimed at potential investors or users, as this allows the real benefits to be clarified, both in economic and environmental terms, but also to orient innovation choices in a way that is more responsive to real needs.

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[1] Regione Lombardia, 2020. Lombardy Roadmap for Research and Innovation on Circular Economy. R&I priorities enhancing Circular Economy in Lombardy. Italy

Available at the link: https://www.openinnovation.regione.lombardia.it/it/attachments/file/view?hash=613f29b7f0a693ebf32fd06c8552dd27&canCache=0

[2] European Economic and Social Committee, 2019. Circular economy strategies and Roadmaps in Europe. Identifying synergies and the potential for cooperation and alliance building. Final Report

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https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/publications-other-work/publications/circular-economy-strategies-and-Roadmaps-europe-study

[3] Ministry for an Ecological and Solidary Transition, 2018. Roadmap fort the Circular Economy. 50 measures for a 100% circular economy. France

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Political decision makers, using the proposed methodology, will be able to develop strategic innovation paths based on tools such as ETV[4] which allow for a clear reference for the standards and regulations linked to products and processes with a view to eco-innovation, overcoming the obstacles dictated by a lack of reference parameters for evaluating innovations.

Finally, in the context of the LIFEproETV project, the methodology was successfully used and tested by the 5 project partner countries, in order to develop 5 Roadmaps, one for each country, based on specific use cases.

Specifically, the use cases and business cases developed are as follows:

- Italy: ETV use case related to fostering circular economy value chains and business models (national approach, focus on national circular economy policy). The Italian challenge is the definition of ETV as a policy support tool oriented at the supporting the specific objectives defined by the Italian National Strategy on the Circular Economy;
- Spain: ETV use case related to accelerating innovations for sustainable water sector (sectoral approach, focus on EU and national policies). The Spanish challenge was targeting the water sector lies in effectively implementing Environmental Technology Verification (ETV) to address the specific needs identified by relevant stakeholders and water associations. ETV can work as reference test tool for water innovative technologies and also as a basis to build regulative framework;
- Poland: ETV use case related to support sustainability financing and reporting ecosystem with focus on water sector (national approach, focus on EU policies). The challenge for the ETV use case to be addressed in Poland is to position the ETV scheme system in the national sustainability financing and reporting ecosystem, taking into account the impact of the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), European Sustainability Reporting Standards (ESRS) and EU taxonomy for sustainable activities on the investment policies of companies, financing policies of public and private fund providers (banks, operators of public funding schemes) banks and new environmental technology adoption processes in companies in line with their sustainability transition plans.
- Hungary: ETV use case is related to innovative reliable green technologies and the need for those technologies to achieve European and national environmental targets and goals regarding zero emissions, renewable energies or even closing the material loops in circular economy. The challenge in Hungary is the lack of information, knowledge and examples about ETV and the strengthening force towards the companies to decrease their environmental load. In this case ETV can be a tool to support the innovative technology provider SMEs to provide claim of their environmental technologies and create market acceptance and support companies to find the right technologies to develop their operation according to the environmental requirements and challenges in Hungary
- Slovenia: ETV use case related to accelerating innovations for sustainable construction sector and to enhance understanding of the value of ETV statements for the company's sustainability reporting

[4] How the ETV scheme may foster the EU green transistion? Policy Brief, 2022. LIFEproETV 2022.
Available at link: https://lifeproetv.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/d.B.2.1-Policy-Brief_ETV-Final-1.pdf

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while competing with established environmental "certificates" such as EPD, national environmental indexes for sustainable construction[5] and EMAS[6].

Although the contexts for ETV market acceptance and recognition vary in the above-mentioned countries, the ETV use cases and the methodology for Roadmaps development may serve as a guidance material for other countries, decision makers and organisations interested to apply the ETV scheme for their purpose.

1.2. ETV status

The Environmental Technology Verification (ETV) system has been developed to help new environmental technologies confirm their green performance credentials and gain market traction much faster. Based on internationally recognised verification procedures incorporated in EN ISO 14034 (Environmental management — Environmental technology verification (ETV) and competences confirmed by national accreditation bodies by accreditation for compliance to ISO 17020 (Conformity assessment — Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection) for inspection bodies type A, verification bodies provide objective evidence that the declared performance of environmental technologies is true and based on quality assured test data.

ETV can operate as a stand-alone scheme on a market basis or as a programme aimed e.g., to support environmental policies. In that sense, the European Commission provided and promoted a dedicated EU ETV Programme for several years. It started with a pilot in 2012 for 3 technology areas: water treatment and monitoring, energy technologies, materials, waste, and resources. Four more technology areas were also defined: cleaner production and processes, air pollution abatement and monitoring, soil and groundwater remediation technologies and environmental technologies for agriculture in view of the EU ETV Programme extension from pilot to full scale. However, following an internal assessment, the European Commission decided to terminate its support to the ETV programme as of November 2022.

Despite that decision, and considering the increasing need, role and interest of stakeholders in obtaining objective information about environmental technologies defined as products, processes and services resulting in reduced environmental impacts as green alternatives to similar solutions currently used, ETV as provider of such information demonstrates a strong market and policy support potential. Therefore, the LIFEproETV project (https://lifeproetv.eu/) aims at promoting and building strong market acceptance and recognition of the scheme as a voluntary environmental scheme to verify the performance of new environmental technologies declared by providers when they are ready to enter the market.

It should be however indicated, that since the European Commission took the decision in 2022 to discontinue its work on the EU ETV Programme, the verification bodies and other entities (business support organisations, accreditation bodies) previously working within this programme now have to elaborate a market-oriented business model to continue their activities following the ETV scheme in accordance with ISO 14034 Environmental management — Environmental Technology Verification (ETV). First of all, they have to overcome the misinterpretation by stakeholders concerning the difference between the European ETV Programme and the ETV scheme. Many organisations are in the opinion that, as a result of the decision of the European Commission to end the EU ETV Programme, the ETV system is

[5] LIFE IP Care4Climate. Sustainable construction and the efficient use of energy in buildings and companies. https://www.care4climate.si/en/project/project-areas-and-activities/sustainable-construction-and-the-efficient-use-of-energy-in-buildings-and-companies#project-activity

[6] Slovenian Institute of Quality and Metrology. https://www.siq.si/en/our-services/organization-certification/about-us/environment-and-energy/emas/

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no longer supported and has lost its credibility. This means that the ETV bodies in Europe will have to build new partnerships with market players and to explain their role in value chains, while positioning their competencies related to the specific needs of the environmental technologies market and policies which ETV may satisfy.

1.3. Why a Roadmap?

The Roadmap has been recognized as an opportunity to define a structured strategy to boost ETV acceptance starting from the needs and the priorities collaboratively pointed out by diverse stakeholders (E.g., policy and decision makers, technology providers, technology buyers), in a wide participative and collaborative process.

The ETV Roadmap is a useful and concrete tool to define the potential and advantages that ETV verification can bring to new technologies operating in the environmental field. This strategic document helps define the possible fields of application of ETV based on specific use cases intercepting the needs and outlining the opportunities that ETV may provide in relation to the challenges linked to the diffusion of new environmental technologies in different fields and related business cases. Therefore, a Roadmap aims to outline and direct a series of actions that contribute to the construction of a future vision of ETV as a tool to support the diffusion of innovative environmental technologies on the market and ensuring that ETV involves a business case for technology providers and/or entities involved in the ETV process.

The elaboration of the Roadmap started with the definition of a shared vision of the role of ETV by the main stakeholders who were involved and consulted during meetings, conferences and brainstorming sessions organized within the LIFEproETV project. The consultation of the main stakeholders aimed at defining the opportunities and the main obstacles in the acceptance of the ETV verification protocol on the market and therefore defining a clear framework of solutions to achieve the objectives to enhance the market value of this tool.

To start building a roadmap it is necessary to define a real use case which, once shared, approved and analysed, represents the basis for the development of a roadmap which will provide strategic support for the start of a real business

The methodology for the Roadmap development process takes these requirements on board as presented below.

2. METHODOLOGY

The methodology described in this document is developed as a structured process in phases (steps). Each step of the process is explored in detail, defining the individual elements that emerge according to a structured scheme.

The diagram in Figure 1 gives a general vision of the methodology adopted, specifying which aspects are addressed in each phase and the elements that characterize it. The phases can be briefly described as follows:

- Step 1: ETV Use Case Definition. In this phase, the key actors who will use ETV are defined, their role and the methods of using ETV in order to satisfy certain objectives outlined in relation to specific needs.

The partners of the LIFEproETV Project, in this phase, formulated use case hypotheses and, following consultation with the main stakeholders potentially involved, the use case was validated on the basis of positive feedback deriving from the actual confirmation of the validity of ETV in achieve set objectives.

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This procedure allows to validate and strengthen the hypothesized objectives and proceed with the implementation of the subsequent phases.

- Step 2: Problem Definition. The objective of this phase is to describe and explain in detail the problems, conditions to be improved and challenges related to the specific context of the use case. This phase is necessary to understand what the gap is between the problem presented and the objective (or objectives) to achieve. This phase helps to focus attention on what hinders the application of the use case, to carefully define the stakeholders involved in its resolution and the priorities.

- Step 3: Action Plan. At this stage, a checklist is formulated for the steps or activities that need to be completed to achieve the set goals. The action plan is the main component that constitutes the strategic planning process.

In this phase, in addition to the actions to be implemented, the relevant subjects who will have to implement them, the action priorities and the timing of application of the actions are also defined.

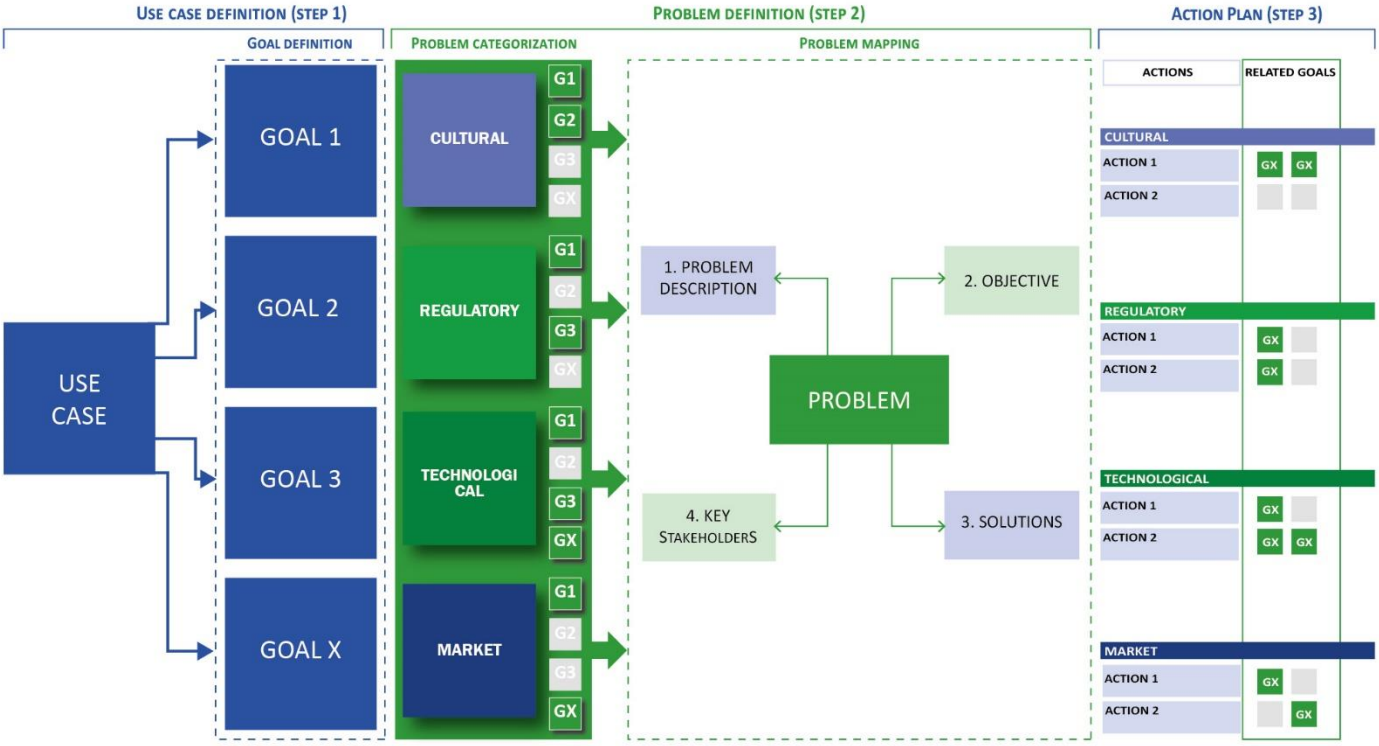

Figure 1 Methodology diagram

2.1. ETV use case definition (step 1)

The use case must reflect the real advantages and expected benefits that the adoption of ETV as a thirty-party verified performance of technologies can generate in a specific context.

In short, in the use case it is necessary to define what are the interventions and actions that transform ETV from a cost to be borne to an added value in the diffusion and marketing of the technology itself.

This added value translates into:

- greater attractiveness on the market;
- recognition of environmental benefits;
- large-scale applicability of the tested technology.

The use case development involves several phases (Figure 2):

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- ✓ The identification of the **specific challenges** and then of the main business opportunities linked to specific sectors or with reference to Community or National objectives;
- ✓ Propose specific **solutions** to solve challenges (or problems) or exploit business opportunities where third-party verification of environmental performance is a valid and useful option, and therefore ETV represents a solution;
- ✓ Define a strategic **approach** for solving the challenge;
- ✓ Highlight the **value benefits** of developing the use case relevant to develop a business case.

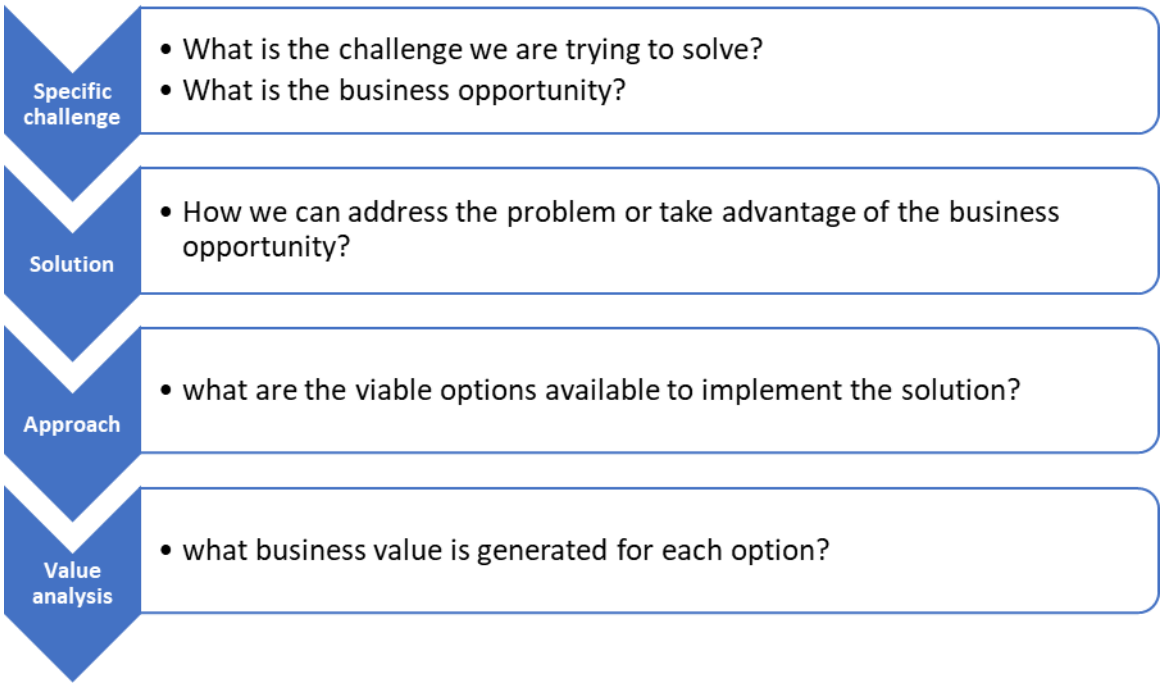

Figure 2 Use case construction phase diagram

In order to develop a business case closely linked to real needs and collect information on the actual opportunities dictated by the application of the ETV tool, a preliminary validation is necessary involving the main stakeholders. These must be identified and consulted through structured interviews or brainstorming sessions in order to understand whether the business case outlined is considered valid and effectively reflects the hypothesized benefits and whether it is useful for achieving the set objectives.

As shown in the diagram in Figure 3, the use case validation process is structured as follows:

- ✓ **ETV use case Idea hypothesis formulation**, based on the use case development procedure indicated above, various hypotheses are developed to be subjected to validation;
- ✓ Identification of the **Target groups** on the basis of the hypotheses formulated, i.e. the groups of subjects to be consulted who are decisive in understanding which and if the alternative hypotheses are to be considered valid;
- ✓ Consultation with **key stakeholders** based on structured interviews, in order to test the validity of the hypotheses and the current market interests;
- ✓ Choice and validation of one or more Use Case hypotheses. Positive feedback leads to the effective validation of the use case, a useful requirement for building the Roadmap based on the real needs of the market.

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Once the use case has been validated, the objectives are defined. This is an important phase of the Roadmap construction process as it helps to define the initial starting point and the final result you intend to achieve. In particular, it is essential to explain and motivate why the entrepreneurial project must be developed.

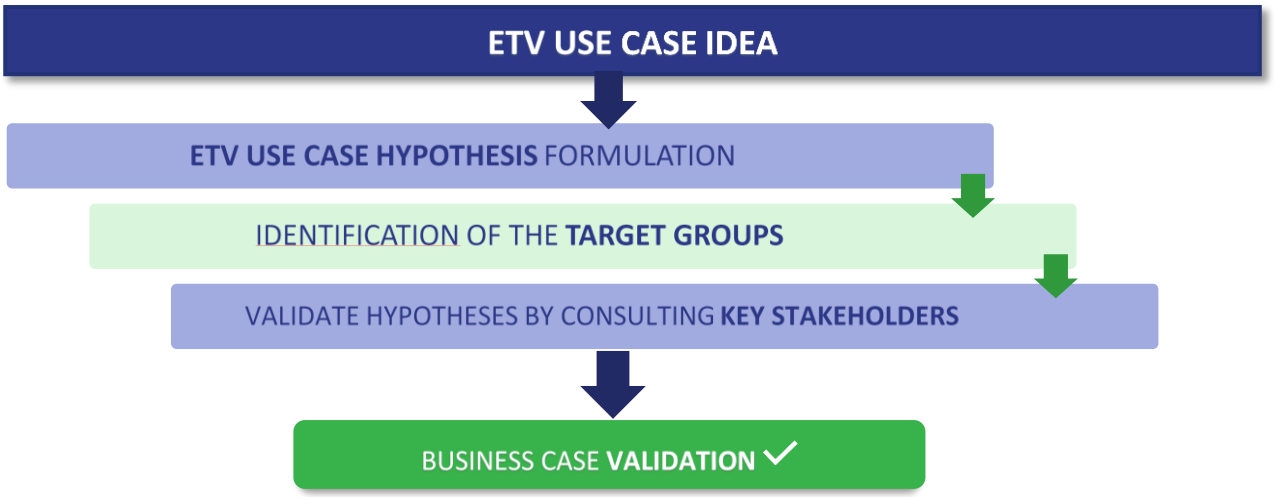

Figure 3 ETV use case validation process

2.2. Problem definition (step 2)

The second step proposed by the methodology involves defining the problem (problem definition), i.e., identifying the issues that limit/hinder the development and diffusion of new environmental technologies and above all their acceptance on the market.

Problem definition process involves two main procedures:

- Problem categorization, or the selection of problems based on four main categories: cultural, regulatory, technological and market;
- Problem mapping, an accurate analysis of the problems described and a first identification of possible solutions and opportunities deriving from their resolution.

2.2.1. Problem categorization

The classification of problems is a relevant phase in order to direct the analysis of the specific problem. The different categories are as detailed:

- The **Cultural Problem** includes barriers deriving from the uncertainty linked to innovation and therefore from the lack of recognition, acceptance and trust in innovations, especially in the environmental field, which hinder innovation paths. Some examples are the uncertainty in the diffusion of new technologies on an industrial scale and the hesitation in undertaking investments in innovations that are not supported by concrete evidence of improvement in environmental performance and overall, by the lack of knowledge on the benefits deriving from them.
- By **Regulatory problem** we mean the lack of a harmonized and defined regulatory framework of tools and policies to support the application and use of innovative environmental technologies. For example, regulatory problems include poor harmonization and coordination of test protocols, the scarcity of standards in the field of by-products or the lack of regulatory recognition of environmental performance measurement tools (such as ETV) in procedures to support GPPs.

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- By **Technological problem** we mainly mean the barrier generated by the weakness in the diffusion of innovative technologies which do not find a competitive and stimulating environment in the market that fuels the exponential development of new solutions. For example, a technological problem is the lack of innovative technologies to support the circular economy, or a limited number of innovative technologies with strong market acceptance towards green transition;
- The **Market problem** is linked to economic barriers such as the high initial investment costs for innovations, the scarcity of funds to support innovations and a rare tendency to evaluate the medium-long term economic benefits deriving from the adoption of cutting-edge solutions. In the specific case of the transition towards the circular economy, one of the main barriers are low virgin material prices which discourage the use of recycled materials.

2.2.2. Problem mapping

The problem mapping process, visually illustrated in the following diagram (Figure 4), analyses a central problem by assessing related issues and determining how they are connected to each other. Problem mapping involves four main steps:

- Describe the **problem**, define the focal problem in the form of a statement. This phase is fundamental to fully understand where the barriers that hinder the diffusion and adoption of innovative technologies arise in each specific reference area defined by the project partners. Here, the *causes* that contribute to generating or fuelling the problem analysed are described in detail, as well as an analysis of the current situation, a snapshot of the state of affairs in light of the obstacles generated by the problem in question.
- List the **objective** (s), i.e., specific and sectoral results that are intended to be achieved in relation to the problem analysed and the causes fuelling the problem;
- Foresee **solution** (s), represents the first step towards planning possible resolving actions for the specific challenge/problem, also taking into account the *opportunities* deriving from the proposed solutions in order to also indicate what positive feedback could be generated from them;
- define **Key stakeholders**, answering the questions: who are the key actors who can significantly contribute to the application of the proposed solutions? And above all, what is their specific role? What actions can they take?

In order to collect information necessary to structure the problem mapping process, the data is collected in modules that follow a precise structure as shown in Figure 5. For each problem category a form will be filled in and represents the reference document for the mapping process.

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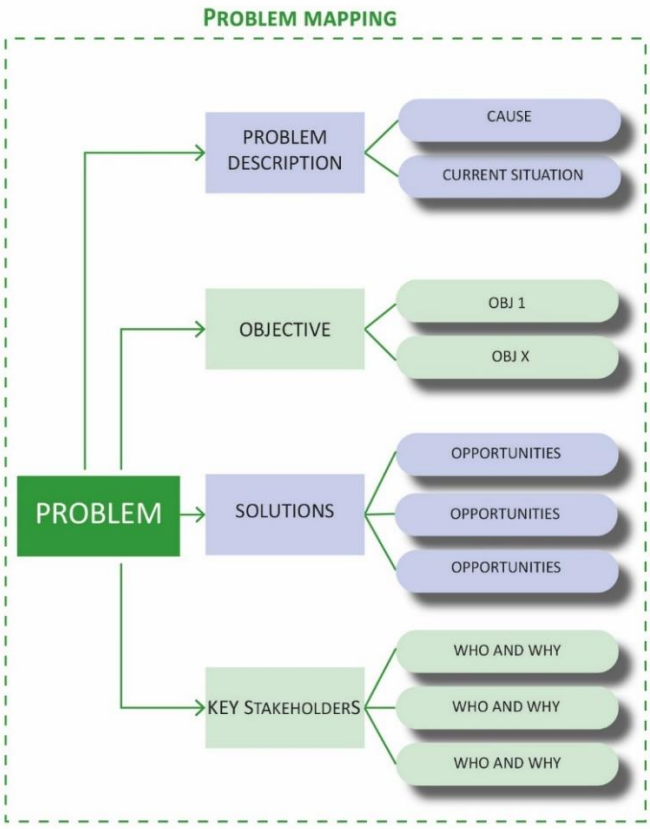

Figure 4 Problem Mapping diagram

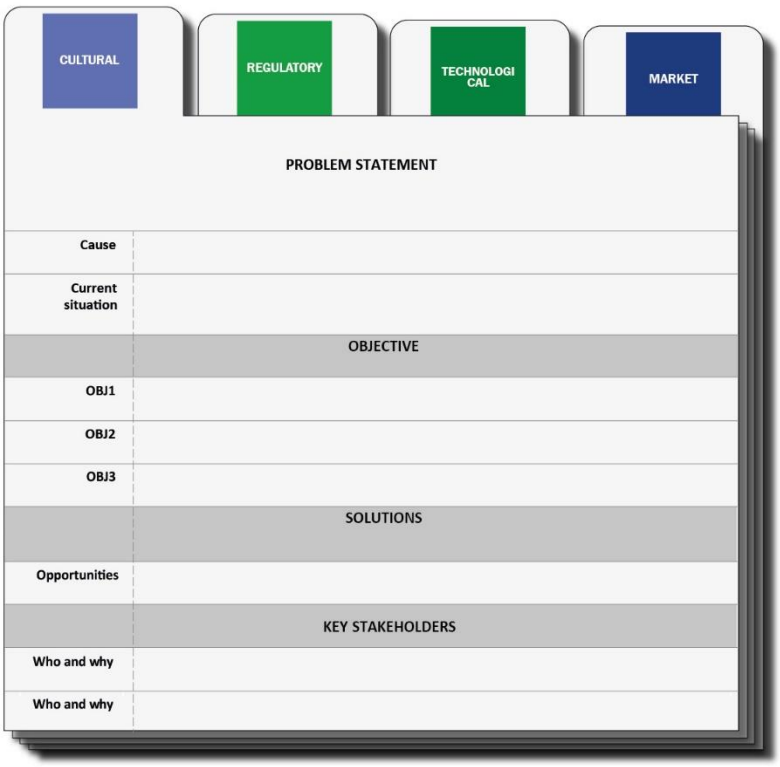

Figure 5 Problem mapping template

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2.3. Action plan (step 3)

The last step of the proposed methodology (step 3) is the definition of actions according to the salient issues and for each actor involved.

This is the essential part of the strategic planning process as it defines the main actions to be implemented to achieve the objectives and identifies which are the main stakeholders who must act for their application. In fact, each action is contextualised within the specific challenges and the contributions that this action can give in relation to the goals declared in the initial phase are detailed. Prioritizing actions means identifying which activities need to be completed first in order to make the next ones possible, and also which ones are more important and fundamental to achieving the final goal. For each action, priorities will be defined both in terms of time and effectiveness in solving the problem. The Figure 5 shows the format used for the classification of actions in relation to specific goals.

Figure 6 Action plan format

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3. Conclusions

The methodology presented was shared and tested in the 5 national contexts of the project partners (Italy, Poland, Hungary, Spain and Slovenia) and guided the development of the "*Roadmap for building ETV market acceptance and recognition*", a document to support the construction of a strategic path for the valorisation of ETV in business scenarios. The roadmap constitutes the basis for developing a valid business case by those interested in the valorisation and diffusion of ETV in relation to particular challenges linked, for example, to the circular economy or to innovation in certain environmental sectors such as water management or the energy sector. Therefore, the approach used to undertake this valorisation path can be used by various interested parties, as political decision makers, technology developers or financial operators and investors, who decide to develop a business case that uses the ETV environmental performance verification tool to support and strengthen new business models or to facilitate the achievement of objectives and challenges dictated by national and EU policies.

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