



# NEWSLETTER N°1, October 2020

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## Foreword by Michel Boër, AnaEE DG



Dear reader,

Welcome to the newsletter of the AnaEE community. As we are getting closer to becoming an operational research infrastructure, we feel that it is of the utmost importance to further bring the AnaEE community together: the platform operators, the scientific users, and more generally those interested in our activities. AnaEE aims to become the reference infrastructure for experimental ecology: it will be able to accommodate complex experiments and modelling activities in a range of climates, ecosystems, and facility types. We are now working to complete the final steps, i.e. the access procedure, the link between the platforms, and between platforms and users, the quality of the instrumentation and of the data delivered, as these are essential tools for the success of AnaEE. This newsletter intends to be one of the means to inform you about the last developments of AnaEE, but also a way for the platform operators and the users to share their results, opinions, and ideas. Therefore, stay tuned, and we look forward to interacting with you.

# European Landmark

## What is an ERIC?

“ERIC”, meaning *European Research Infrastructure Consortium*, is a legal status delivered by the European Commission in order to establish and operate a research infrastructure recognized in all Member States without requiring transposition into national law. To become an ERIC, the infrastructure must comply with several requirements: carrying out EU research programs, representing an added value in the strengthening of the European Research Area (ERA), granting effective access to the European research community, and contributing to the mobility of knowledge and dissemination of the results of activities.

France, as the leading country, has started, through the French Ministry for Higher Education, Research and Education (MESRI), to request the letters of commitment (LoC) from the members and observers (Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Italy, and CIHEAM-IAMB). As soon as enough members have signed, France will send the formal request to establish the ERIC to the European Commission. This request will include the LoCs, the statutes of the ERIC, and the Scientific and Technical Document (STD). This last document, which will be approved by the final pre-ERIC Assembly of Members in October 2020, describe the vision of AnaEE, its scientific relevance and added value, organization, services provided to the community, training and outreach, etc.

## What is an ESFRI Landmark?

Landmark is a recognition label delivered by the ESFRI (*European Science Forum for Research Infrastructures*) to Research Infrastructures that are implemented or reached the Implementation Phase. It implies that the Research Infrastructure can already deliver science services and grant access, or is in an advanced stage of construction with a clear schedule toward the start of its operations.

Last June, AnaEE replied to the ESFRI questionnaire. We expect to receive the "critical questions" from the ESFRI evaluation committees by the end of the year, followed by hearings, which will take place in February or March 2021. The formal decision for the "Landmark" status will be announced by mid-2021. When all these steps will be completed, AnaEE will be established as a major element of the European Research Area.

In the meantime, AnaEE continues forward toward its implementation. The access procedure has been approved, and is available on the new AnaEE web: <https://www.anaee.eu/>. The catalogue of platforms and a first version of the proposal software are also available in the web.

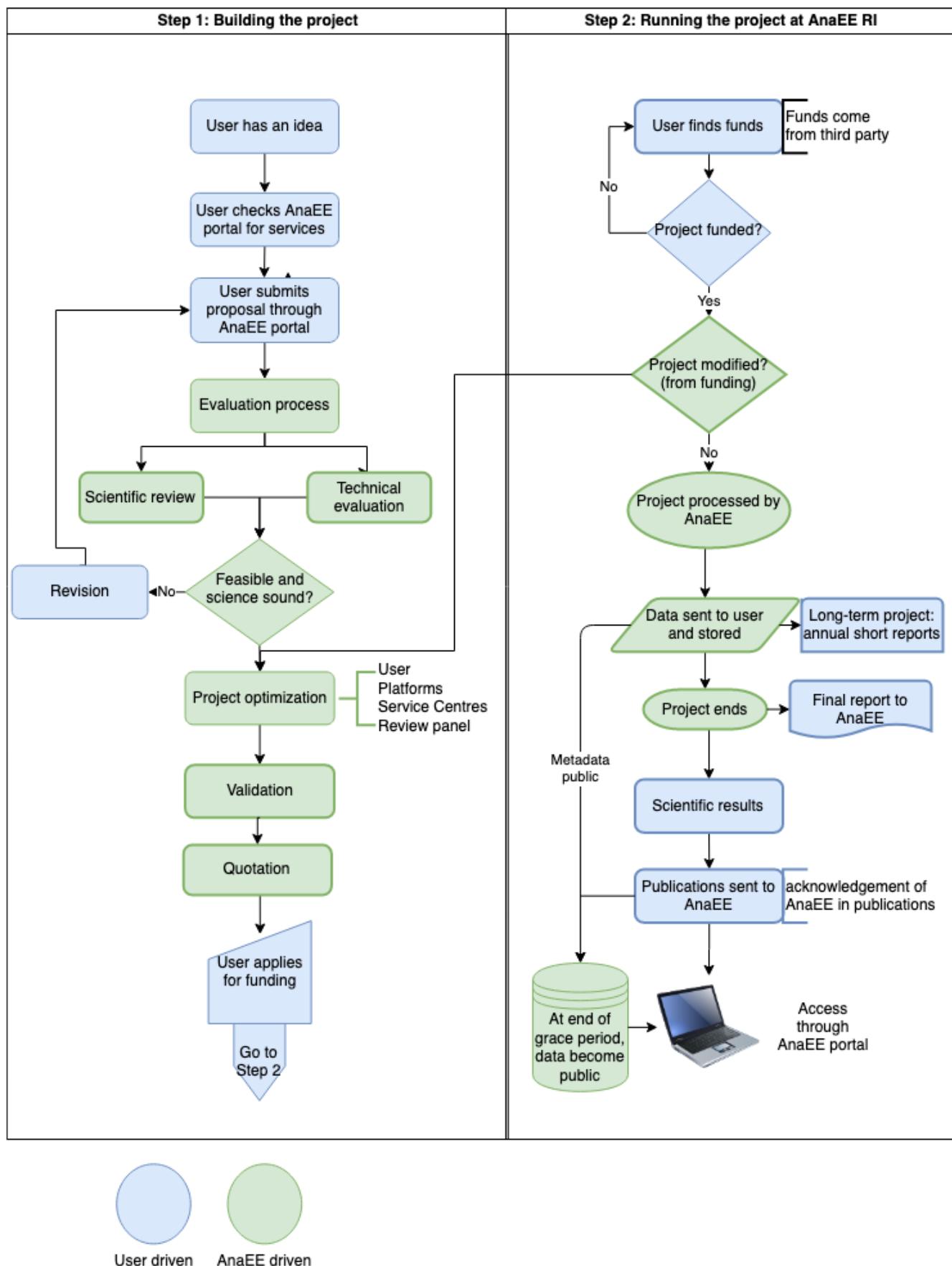
Together with the CIHEAM, AnaEE and its platforms have participated in the EUPHORISC proposal. Several AnaEE sites have also been involved in Holisoils, a proposal that has successfully completed the first step of the evaluation.

We expect to be in position to release the first call for trans-national proposals to AnaEE in 2021.

A web interface is available at the AnaEE web portal to provide a single-entry point for requesting access to the AnaEE infrastructure. The web portal contains a service catalogue, including the main features of each platform and information about on-going research activities as well as the primary results that have been generated. It also contains a search algorithm allowing identification of the relevant platforms for specific research topics according to metadata collected by the Technology Centre.

AnaEE platforms will be open to user projects that comply with the long-term integrity of the on-going experiments in the involved platform(s) (mostly Open-air) and/or to de novo experiments in the involved platform(s) (mostly Enclosed) that comply with the technology and number of replicates available.

Application is based on a short pre-proposal submitted online. The Central Hub will perform a scientific and technical review of each pre-proposal. Scientific review will be implemented with an independent AnaEE Project Review Committee (PRC). Upon a positive review, the Central Hub requests a technical feasibility check at the relevant platforms and Centres as well as their pricing for the suggested service. Projects that succeed with obtaining funding can go into AnaEE processing and scheduling on the relevant platforms. The Central Hub will collect annual reports of longer projects and final project reports when projects end, as well as the scientific results and papers resulting from the user projects.



**Focus: The FATI platform at the University of**

This Free-Air Temperature Increase platform allows researchers to experimentally impose future precipitation regimes, climate warming and especially climate extremes such as intense droughts and heat waves. It does so by using infrared heaters and automated rainout shelters with programmable irrigation. The novelty is that the ensuing wide variety of temperature and precipitation scenarios can be imposed in the open air, in twelve 7 m<sup>2</sup> plots, under natural light and wind conditions. A refined control system for the applied warming was developed by the UAntwerp PLECO research group in the EU FP7 project ExpeER. The system allows users to flexibly select the characteristics of the warming to be applied, while ensuring that naturally occurring feedbacks are integrated. Users could for example target a heat wave with more warming during the day than at night, while any drought occurring would reinforce the ultimate temperature increases imposed. The latter is an important contributor to potential heat wave damage, but was not taken into account in earlier infrared heater set-ups lacking the combination of control and realism.

The FATI-platform became operational in 2019. Currently, a large-scale, multi-disciplinary study is running ('Regime Shift', 2019-2022), in which several Flemish research groups team up with international users to study impacts of newly emerging shifts in weather regimes (longer dry and wet spells) from the sub-cellular level (genomics, metabolomics) up to the ecosystem scale. Expected outcome are an advanced understanding of how stress cascades through plants, soils and ecosystem, leading to improvement of mechanistic models predicting soil biodiversity (Keylink), carbon sequestration (ANAFORE) and grassland fodder quality (PaSim). In the near future, we expect to work together with the agricultural sector to explore management options that could offset or avoid damages to crops in an increasingly extreme and fluctuating climate.



*The FATI-platform at the University of Antwerp: 12 outdoor plots in which precipitation and warming can be controlled to test the impacts of various climate change scenarios (photo credit: Hans De Boeck, U. Antwerp)*

**Save the date: 1st online conference and workshops by AnaEE at the AgroEco conference, December 3rd, 2020**



(Lithuania) will organize online the 3<sup>rd</sup> International Scientific Semi-Virtual Conference on Agroecosystem Sustainability. The conference will tackle links between carbon sequestration in soils, food security and climate change and will address issues related to Horizon Europe Mission Area "Soil Health and Food". The first day will be dedicated to plenary sessions and will gather experts from all over the world to talk about soil health and carbon sequestration for sustainability, soil and crop management for ecological intensification, biodiversity towards sustainable agriculture, food quality and safety and the role of circular bioeconomy in climate change mitigation.

The second day will be dedicated to workshops delivered by AnaEE on data, modelling and access to the platform. AnaEE will also present the services offered by the Research Infrastructure and how it enables to develop multidisciplinary approaches at the frontiers of life sciences, agronomy and environmental sciences, combining experimentation, analysis and modelling services.

Early registrations are opened until October 31<sup>st</sup> (40€), late registrations are opened until November 20<sup>th</sup> (60€). Students fees are respectively 20€ and 40€. To register, please go to AgroEco website, <http://agroeco.vdu.lt/> and for more information please contact Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zita Kriauciūnienė, [agroeco@vdu.lt](mailto:agroeco@vdu.lt)

## NEWS FROM NATIONAL NODES

### @AnaEE Denmark

On 30 September 2020 AnaEE Denmark finishes workshop with GOFAIR ([www.go-fair.org](http://www.go-fair.org)) and DeIC ([www.deic.dk](http://www.deic.dk)) on creating machine-readable metadata and mapping metadata to other communities like ICOS and WMO. This is an important step in the development of FAIR data in AnaEE Denmark - preparing AnaEE Denmark to provide easy and open access to data from Danish research platforms through the up-coming AnaEE Data and Modelling Centre.

## OPEN CALLS

European Green Deal call, H2020. Closing date: 26 January 2021

- [Area 6: From farm to fork](#)
- [Area 7: Restoration of biodiversity](#)
- [Area 9: European Research Infrastructures capacities and services to address European Green Deal challenges](#) (mostly GHG observation and air quality in cities)

[InnovFund LSP](#) (Carbon capture and storage). Closing date: 29 October 2020

[ERC grants](#): Closing dates for Starting Grants 12/01/2021, Consolidator Grants 21/1/2021, Advanced Grants 20/05/2021, POC 14/01/2021

[BiodivERsA](#): Conservation and restoration of degraded ecosystems and their

*Please, if you are aware of any announcement or opportunity, share with us. If you plan to participate to one of these calls and use the AnaEE RI, please, tell us in advance, and follow the AnaEE access rules.*

## EVENTS CALENDAR

**73rd ESFRI Forum**, October 1st & 2nd, 2020.

**ESFRI/EOSC meeting**: October 6th & 7th, 2020

**1st ENRIITC Networking Meeting**: October 15th, 2020

**AnaEE Assembly of Members**: October 29th, 2020

**AgroEco 2020 Conference, featuring the AnaEE Day**, December 2 & 3rd, 2020

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