ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES FOR SCIENCE AND SOCIETY
ÖKOLOGISCHE PERSPEKTIVEN FÜR WISSENSCHAFT UND GESELLSCHAFT

Design Reports in *GAIA* – guidelines for authors

GAIA offers a unique opportunity for researchers working in teams across disciplines and/or with stakeholders from outside academia: the "Design Report" (DR).

DRs focus on a challenge unique to inter- and transdisciplinary research projects: They deal with the configuration of a project in terms of its research and communication design. They are in no way mere reprints of the proposal or epistemological treatises, but rather they present the decisions that determine the design of the research and communication, offering a critical explanation and discussion of them. In other words, they analyse the project design and the processes shaping it, paying special attention to the question of how partners from scientific and non-scientific cultures communicate, what kind of communication architectures they have, and how they handle the results.

Possible questions to be addressed include, but are not limited to:

- The design of the project proposal writing process: how were stakeholders involved?
- How did the team integrate its interests into a joint research agenda?
- Which challenges were posed by the communication process/the writing process? How were they overcome?
- How does the project design reflect the challenges of integrating disciplines?
- How does the project design reflect the challenges of integrating stakeholders?
- Which lessons did the project team learn?
- Which recommendations for do's and don'ts in research planning and design can the project team offer?

DRs contribute to raising the level of experience in the setting-up and implementation of inter- and transdisciplinary projects with a focus on research and communication. They include recommendations or lessons learnt. As DRs can be published before a project terminates, teams can also learn from reflecting on transdisciplinary project (communication) architectures and processes.

DRs are peer reviewed. DRs can include photographs, charts, tables and other visual material. They should not exceed 25,000 characters (including spaces).

Published Design Reports (selected)[1]:

Lieberherr, E. et al. 2025. Science integration and a participatory scenario process. An inter- and transdisciplinary study from the Alps. *GAIA* 34/1 (2025): 35-41. https://doi.org/10.14512/gaia.34.1.4.

Wiefek, J., E. Nagy, M. Schäfer. 2024. Formative evaluation of transdisciplinary research for systematic impact orientation in real-world laboratories. *GAIA* 33/S1: 94-101. https://doi.org/10.14512/gaia.33.S1.14

Sievers-Glotzbach, S., H. Wolter, B. Siebenhüner. 2023. Harvesting the fruits of transdisciplinary knowledge integration: The *EGON* project on commons-based organic fruit breeding. *GAIA* 32/2: 257-263. https://doi.org/10.14512/gaia.32.2.9

Koland, O., W. Haas. 2023. Managing a special report: Reflections on the genesis of the Austrian assessment on health, demography and climate change. GAIA 32/1: 94-101. https://doi.org/10.14512/gaia.32.1.5

Dreyer, M., M. Bergmann, O. Marg, S. Ober, P. Sellke. 2021. Too big *not* to fail? On the design and execution of inter- and transdisciplinary research using the example of the large-scale project *ENavi*. *GAIA* 30/1: 29-34. https://doi.org/10.14512/gaia.30.1.7

Rose, M., K. Maibaum. 2020. Meeting the challenge of (co-)designing real-world laboratories. Insights from the *Well-Being Transformation Wuppertal* project. *GAIA* 29/3: 154-160. https://doi.org/10.14512/gaia.29.3.5

Robson-Williams, M., B. Small, R. Robson-Williams. 2020. The *Integration and Implementation Sciences* framework as a tool for reflection on transdisciplinary research. Lessons from the *Selwyn Waihora Project*. *GAIA* 29/3: 170-175. https://doi.org/10.14512/gaia.29.3.7

[1] For a list of all published Design Reports see https://gaia.oekom.de/index.php/gaia/design_reports_published