



Bridging the gap between policy and knowledge
on biodiversity in Europe

CALL FOR EXPERTS (CfE 1/2026) Eklipse – June 2026

Deadline for Call: 3rd of July

Games to connect science and policy

Eklipse is inviting experts to join an Expert Working Group (EWG) to contribute to answering an identified policy-relevant knowledge need that requires an in-depth analysis and assessment at the science-policy interface in response to a “Request on Games to connect science and policy”. This request was initially put forward by the EcoKnowGames project. EcoKnowGames is funded by the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) cross-research-council responsive mode pilot scheme (MR/Z505833/1). For further information about the request, see the Eklipse website under Request > [Games request](#).

The EWG will comprise a group of about 10-15 people across the EU and elsewhere with diverse and complementary skills in knowledge synthesis and/or participatory methods, game design and serious games expertise, public policy and governance, social sciences and behavioural sciences, science communication as key areas (see section 5). The EWG will closely interact with relevant members of the [Eklipse governance bodies](#) to ensure appropriate methodological choices and uptake of outputs, as well as to guide them through the ethical and robust [Eklipse process](#). Selected experts will have to comply with the [Eklipse Code of Ethics](#).

To create this EWG, we are seeking expressions of interest from experts with experience in knowledge synthesis techniques (e.g., rapid evidence reviews, scoping reviews, systematic reviews, and/or participatory methods). Ideally, experts should be working in the area of gaming in a broad sense, including game design and application, media studies, decision-making and/or science-policy interface. Both academic and practice experts are welcome to apply. Please consider the list of disciplines/expertise as non-exhaustive; we are happy to consider others that you may think are relevant to answer the request. Before applying, please consider the following questions:





- **Are you an expert on one or several of the following disciplines?**
 - game design and serious games expertise,
 - public policy and governance (potentially, but not limited to, environment and sustainability),
 - social sciences and behavioural sciences,
 - science communication,
 - media studies/arts and humanities

- **Do you have direct experience in either knowledge synthesis and/or participatory research?**

- **Would you like to contribute directly to a policy-relevant process in your field of expertise?**

- **Would you like to expand your network?**

- **Are you interested in collaborating in a transdisciplinary and multi-cultural setting?**

- **Can you and your employer allow you to devote at least 10% of your time to helping support this project in a voluntary capacity?**

- **Are you able to work on this project over the summer, given the time frame described in Table 2?**

Further information on the criteria can be found in section 5.

Please read the information below to apply to the call.

Important dates and information:

How to apply: <http://eklipse.eu/calls/>

Deadline to apply: **3rd of July** before midnight (CEST).

Expert Working Group (EWG) selection: **Mid July**

Online kick-off meeting and training for the EWG: **2 sessions at the end of July and the beginning of August 2026.**

Expected duration of the process: **approx. 6 months, depending on the selected method(s) (see section 3).**

The participation in this EWG will require approximately 10% of your time (see Eklipse [Guidance note n°6](#)). As in similar science-policy processes, Eklipse activities rely on **in-kind contributions**. Please make sure you can commit this amount of time over the period of June and December before applying.

For further information on the request, please read the Document of Work (DoW) on the Eklipse website under Request > [“Game request”](#).

Should you require any further information or support, please contact the Eklipse Management Body (EMB) at emb@eklipse.eu





1. Request to be addressed by this call

1.1 Background to the request

The Ecological Knowledge Games (EcoKnowGames) project is an interdisciplinary research programme leveraging the technology of games to evaluate sustainable development solutions and share diverse views on human development. How humans collectively respond to environmental change will ultimately determine the degree to which many global challenges of the 21st century are successfully met. Global challenges are reflected across multiple United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including conserving biodiversity, ensuring food and water security, and responding to climate change. Finding effective SDG solutions is critical but often hindered by the undesirable risks, high costs, and long timescales of their implementation. The EcoKnowGames project develops virtual game worlds to address challenges for sustainable development.

EcoKnowGames is funded by the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) cross-research council responsive mode pilot scheme (MR/Z505833/1). The core team includes members from the University of Stirling, the James Hutton Institute, King's College London, and the project partner, Marist College. Game development is in collaboration with the award-winning games studio Glitchers.

Games are a science communication tool that can provide players with opportunities to engage with scientifically informed contexts and situations that would otherwise be inaccessible. They are inherently interdisciplinary, drawing on insights from the arts and humanities, as well as scientific disciplines, including the social sciences.

Considering the broader concept of “games,” they are defined as designed systems of play that may encompass cooperation, learning, competition, and meaning-making, extending beyond a sole focus on winning. This includes categories such as strategy, role-playing, simulation, educational, and participatory games, delivered through formats like board and tabletop, digital and mobile, card-based, and facilitated field exercises—ranging from light gamified tools (e.g., quizzes and interactive dashboards) to participatory role-play and simulation-based policy games for decision support.

Through Eklipse, the aim of this request is to explore what types of games and game features/design choices will support games to become an effective and impactful tool to connect science and policy and lead to an improved science-policy interface, acknowledging the balance between the integrity of science and the fun of playing a game. Also, identifying the enablers and barriers for policymakers to use games to understand and change perspectives, as well as to facilitate knowledge transfer.

Specifically, the request will be working on the following themes:

1. To make explicit the role of games as a way to experience alternative perspectives, put policy-makers (and other stakeholders) in others' shoes.
2. To consider/reflect on the spectrum of games and gamification tools depending on the ambitions of the science-policy connection sought.
3. To consider how scientific data are integrated into game mechanics and how the complexity of a game supports or hinders effective perspective change and policy-making

1.2 First screening of literature/initiatives and Open Call for Knowledge

A literature screening during a preceding Scoping Phase to this call resulted in a compilation of existing relevant literature, projects and initiatives:

- (Non-exhaustive) Literature review collected by the Eklipse Management Body (EMB) and (non-exhaustive) [list of initiatives/projects/networks collected by the EMB](#).

Following this first screening exercise, a Call for Knowledge (CfK) related to this request was launched in May 2026 (for more information, please refer to the Eklipse website under "[Calls](#)" on our website). The CfK 1/2026 was widely disseminated across the Eklipse social media platforms, including LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, as well as through mailing lists and networks. The screening and the call for knowledge aim to gather relevant knowledge to be considered during the selection process and to identify existing or planned initiatives that may (partly) address the requests. Both activities were essential during the Scoping Phase to avoid duplication of ongoing efforts and to ensure that the outputs would be developed in a timely manner. For more details on the literature collected in the Call for Knowledge, see Annexe 4 in the [Document of Work \(DoW\)](#) published on the Eklipse website.





2. Suggested methods

2.1 Methods suggested by the Methods Expert Group.

These methods are to be agreed upon by the Expert Working Group, but are subject to the short time period for the work.

- Option 1: Expert consultation,
- Option 2: Multiple expert consultation with a Delphi Focus group,
- Option 3: Focus group,
- Option 4: Non-systematic literature review,

Table 1. MEG opinion(s) based on MAGICKS tool output (see the [DoW](#) for more information)

MAGICKS TOOL OUTPUT	MEG insight(s)
Expert consultation	Provide opportunities for targeted guidance from specialists/experts
Multiple expert consultations with a Delphi Focus group	More rigorous approach, to be considered if sufficient time is available.
Focus group	For more structured discussions with selected experts to explore diverse perspectives (e.g., game designers, developers, practitioners).
Non-systematic literature review	Integrating diverse perspectives and approaches to generate in-depth insights.

To help the EWG understand what tools might best address the three method pathways outlined above, the MEG recommends collectively using the [MAGICKS](#) tool collectively. This guides a dialogue about the characteristics of the required knowledge synthesis, and prioritisation decisions match these characteristics to the expected attributes of different methods and provide concise guidance on how to conduct each method. An example output is shown below in Figure 1.

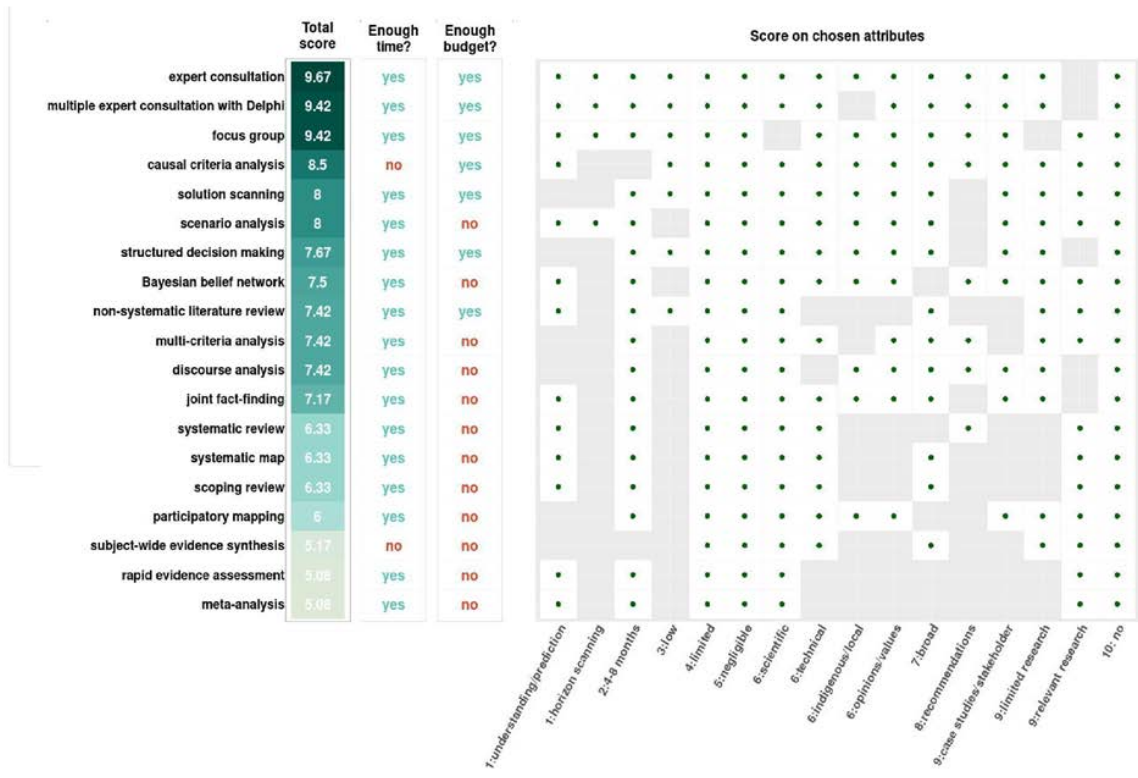


Figure 1. Example of using MAGICKS (Method Application and Guidance in Conducting Knowledge Syntheses) to guide the process of choosing a knowledge synthesis method.





3. Implementation steps and timeline

The work of the EWG is expected to follow the [Eclipse knowledge synthesis process](#). The Eclipse Group scoping this request has developed a provisional timeline to provide an overview of the milestones and the duration of the answering process leading to the final outputs (see Table 2 below). A key component of the method protocol is for the EWG to develop a refined timeline for answering the request, considering the needs of the requesters, the relevant policy process(es), the complexity of the request and the selected tailored methods. Please note that a kick-off dialogue meeting between the EWG and the consortium of the requester(s) will be held in the last week of July and the first week of August (a doodle will be sent to selected experts). This kick-off meeting will be facilitated by the [Eclipse Knowledge Coordination Body \(KCB\)](#) and aims to ensure a common understanding of the request among experts.

Table 2. Suggested timeline

Suggested timeline	Key activities	Actions or feedback from requesters
Last week of July/ first week of August. Two sessions of 2 hours each	Online kick-off meeting of the EWG, including training	Participation in the first part of the meeting to explain the specific interest in the request and answer key questions of clarification from the experts
	Call for Open consultation and Peer Review of the Methodological Protocol	Dissemination of the call Requesters can submit a review
<u><i>Duration of the answering phase of the Eclipse process</i></u>	Call for Open consultation and Peer Review of the synthesis report	Dissemination of the call Requesters can submit a review
Between 4 and 6 months, depending on the selected method(s)	Launch of the final report	Dissemination and contribution to ensure the uptake of the evidence produced by EWG by research and policy, i.e. ensuring the usefulness of the results /evidence

4. Support provided by Eklipse

Eklipse team: The Expert Working Group (EWG) will be supported by the Eklipse Management Body (EMB) at all stages in logistics, communication, documentation (via the Eklipse website), and dissemination of the products required for this request. The working group will be supported thematically and strategically by the [Knowledge Coordination Body](#) (KCB) and the [Methods Expert Group](#) (MEG) on the choice and use of knowledge synthesis methods.

Financial support: Eklipse activities rely on in-kind contributions, as in similar science-policy processes. The benefits for experts and institutions arise from networking within and beyond the group, capacity building, and the visibility of expertise to policy and society through the products. Eklipse will actively support the visibility of experts and their institution's contributions. In addition, travel costs for potential events hosted in person by Eklipse will be covered by Eklipse funds as needed.

Technical support: Access to literature databases will be facilitated if needed. Eklipse will cover the layout, printing, and dissemination of interim and final products.

5. Eligibility and applicant information

5.1 Selection criteria for the composition of the Expert Working Group (EWG)

The EWG is a group of selected experts who will be in charge of responding to the request “Games to connect science and policy” based on the [Eklipse process](#). They are individual experts who will nominate themselves following the call for experts. The final selection of the EWG will be carried out by the Knowledge Coordination Body (KCB), which will ensure the best possible coverage in terms of disciplines, geographic and gender balance (see our [Guidance note 7c. “Preparing and managing Calls for Experts”](#) for more information). The selected EWG will consist of scientists and practitioners and will be supported by dedicated members from the KCB, the MEG and the EMB ([see Guidance Note 6. “Expert working groups \(EWGs\)”](#)). As the request progresses, the KCB may decide to open a follow-up, more tailored Call for Experts to complement the EWG with additional expertise.

The working group is expected to have between 10 and 15 experts.





5.2 Selection criteria for individual experts

- The individual experts who nominate themselves should have demonstrated expertise or experience in one or several of the following disciplines:
 - Game design and serious games expertise
 - Public policy and governance (potentially, but not limited to, environment and sustainability)
 - Social sciences and behavioural sciences
 - Science communication
 - Media studies/arts and humanities

- Some individual experts of the EWG should have either direct experience in knowledge synthesis or experience in qualitative research. Specific techniques/experiences that are especially valued include:
 - Systematic and/or Rapid Evidence Review
 - Systematic mapping
 - Multi-criteria decision analysis
 - Delphi
 - Semi-structured interviews
 - Focus groups
 - Workshops

- The Call for Experts is open worldwide; experience in European policy processes will be regarded during the selection discussion.

- This Call for Experts is intended to be broad and interdisciplinary, with the potential to build or adapt a minigame as part of the output.

- Important information:
 - Eklipse highly encourages all applicants to provide a letter of support from their organisation.
 - Selected Experts will have to comply with the principles and rules of Eklipse, e.g. conflicts of interest policy, Code of Conduct, etc. (for more details, see the Eklipse website under [“Ethical framework”](#)).
 - Invited participants to the Focus Group, as well as Eklipse KCB and EMB members, are not eligible. Please note that two members of Eklipse MEG with relevant knowledge synthesis methods will be selected from the MEG team to integrate the EWG, but will not need to apply to the Call for Experts. Please note that the MEG comprises experts selected for a 3-year mandate to integrate EWGs.

5.3 Data and information policy

All results will be made publicly available through the Eklipse website, and transparent procedures will apply, following the Creative Commons Agreement 4.0¹, which includes the reference to authorship and involvement.

5.4 Information to provide

The Eklipse application form should be completed, including a list of relevant publications outlining relevant experience on the topic and details of experience in previous assessments or knowledge synthesis processes.

Eklipse highly encourages all applicants to provide a letter of support from your organisation.

6. Application and notification of results

6.1 How to apply

The Eklipse application form is available on the website under [“Open calls”](#). The completed form should be completed by midnight on **July 3rd 2026**. Should you require any further information, do not hesitate to contact us at emb@eklipse.eu

6.2 Announcement of the results

Successful applicants will be notified directly by Eklipse Management Body (EMB) during the week of 13th of July, 2026. As soon as they accept the nomination, the names of the selected experts will be made public on the [Eklipse website](#).

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