

User guide

Contingency planning with specific focus on food security and biodiversity

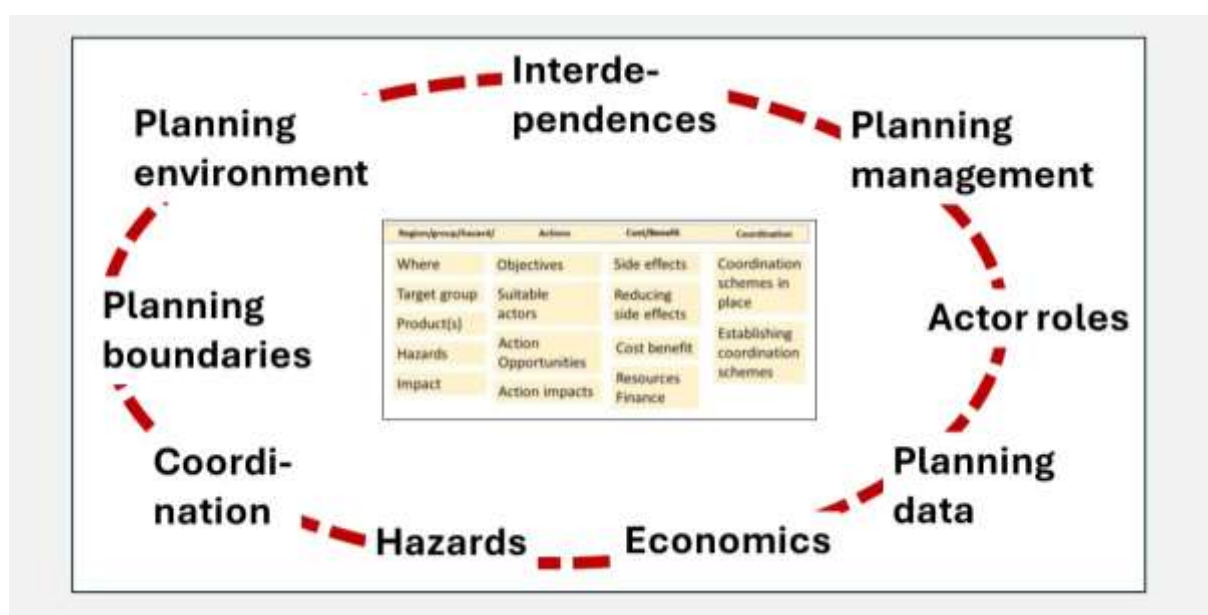


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Contingency planning with specific focus on food security and biodiversity

1. The principal structure of the tool

The tool has two legs,

- a) a *knowledge base* on issues of contingency planning and
- b) a set of *executable functionalities* in support of developing a contingency plan.

The **knowledge base** involves 9 specific issues dealing with

- a) hazards,
- b) interdependencies within the food system and its actors,
- c) coordination activities reducing impacts of hazards,
- d) planning boundaries,
- e) planning environment,
- f) forecasting,
- g) actor roles in case of a crises,
- h) management of contingency plan, and
- i) economic transparency.

The tool has a built-in feature which constantly reminds users to deal with the knowledge in case they have not done it yet.

The **executable functionalities** deal directly with contingency planning. The tool hosts contingency plans (*projects*) that have been developed by users during planning sessions. Each plan builds on a list of issues (*questions*) suitable for contingency planning. A basic list is provided by the tool but users can create own question lists allowing them to adjust planning activities to specific situations at hand. When opening a new project (planning session), users need to specify the question list they intend to use for this specific planning project.

The question lists are structured along four sets of questions, dealing with the following issues:

1. What could go wrong (*problem*)
2. What could be done (*action*)
3. What could be afforded (*economy*)
4. How could it be done (*management*)

They are initially structured in more detail along the following matrix (figure 1):

Problem	Actions	Economy	Managem
Region/group/hazard/	Actions	Cost/Benefit	Coordination
Where	Objectives	Side effects	Coordination schemes in place
Target group	Suitable actors	Reducing side effects	
Product(s)	Action Opportunities	Cost benefit	Establishing coordination schemes
Hazards		Resources	
Impact	Action impacts	Finance	

Figure 1. Basic structure of question list (example),

Of course, it is up to the interest and needs of users to further structure and rename the stages and matrix elements as demonstrated in the example below (figure 2).

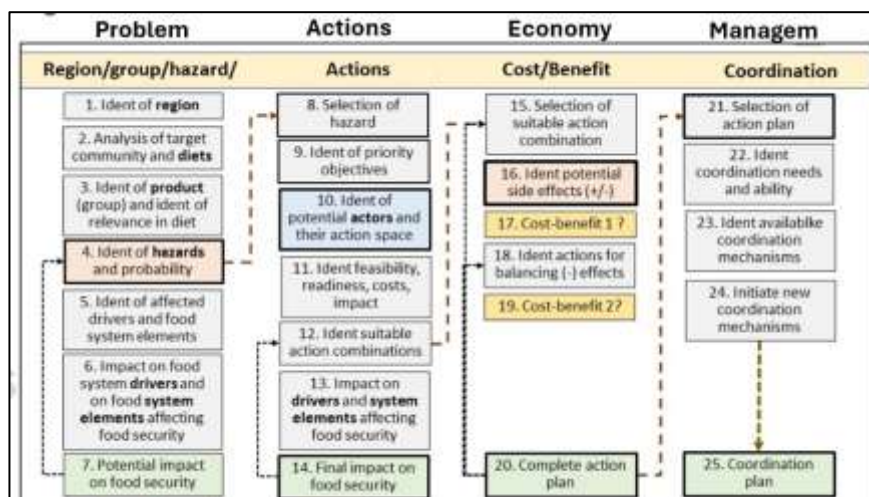


Figure 2. More detailed structured question list (example)

2. Registration

The opening page of the tool provides some basic information about contingency planning and asks interested users to register selecting a *user name*, a *password* and *naming a region* they are concerned with (figure 3). Password and region could be changed later in the tool's settings. By registering, all inputs and activities performed by a user with the tool are linked to this user and will remain available for this user at any later use of the tool. They are not visible to any other user, making the tool a web-based multi-user tool.

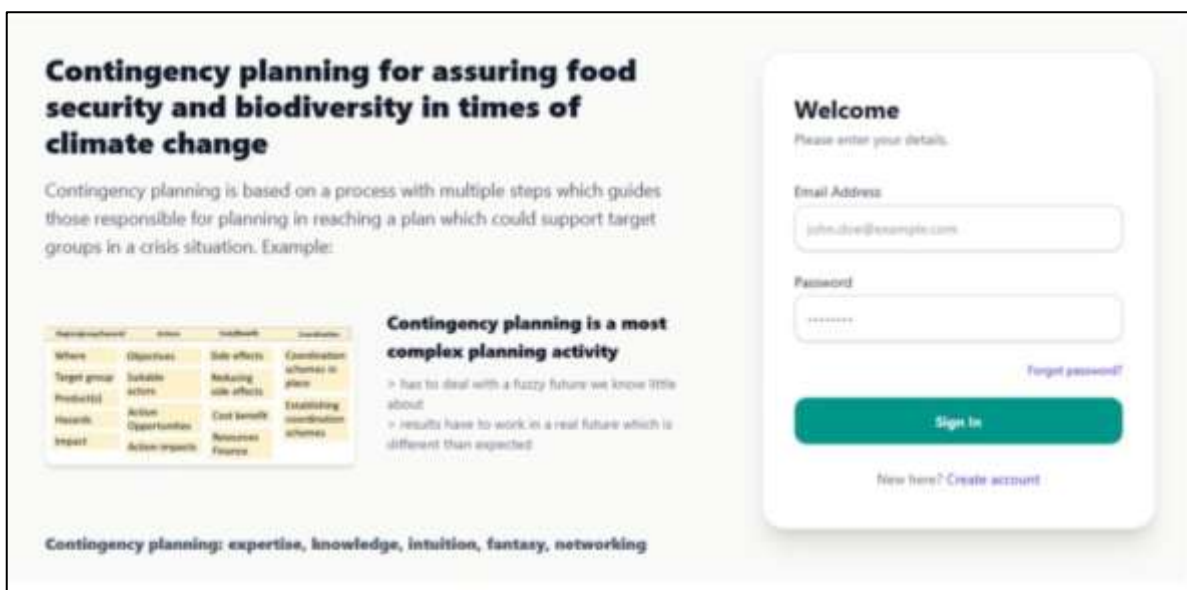


Figure 3. Opening screen

3. The program hub

After entering into the planning tool with user name and password, users reach a *dashboard* which is the central distribution hub to all functionalities of the tool (figure 4).

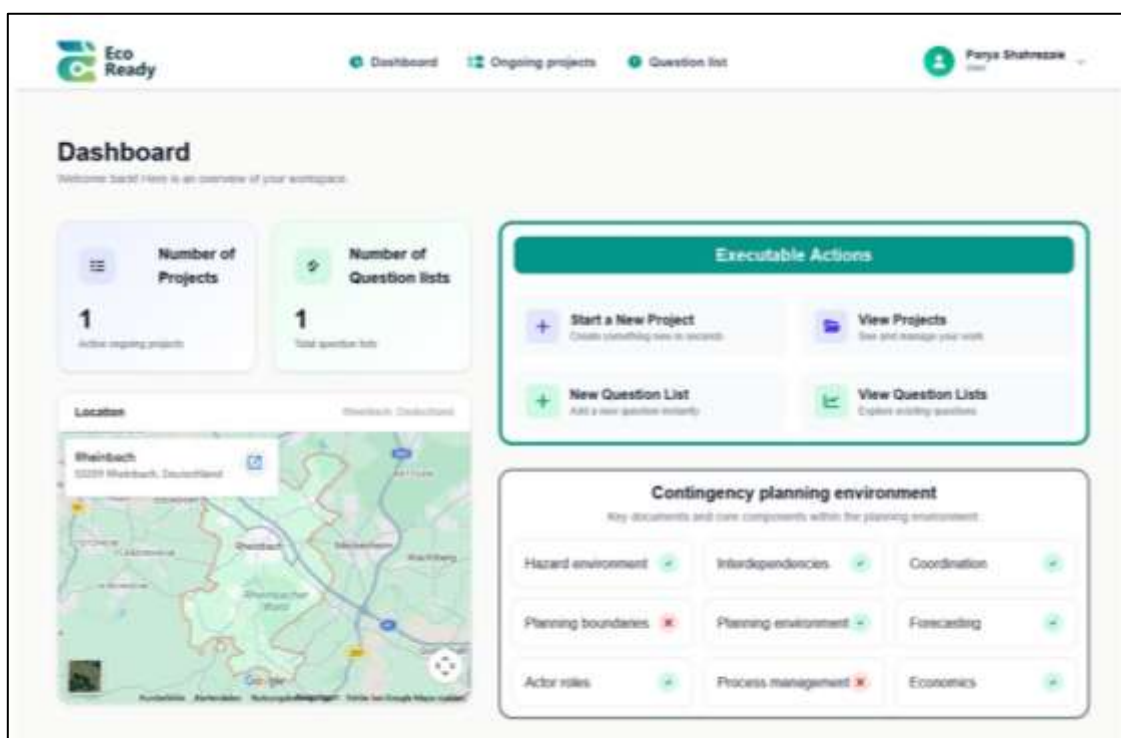


Figure 4. Dashboard as central hub

The dashboard involves 4 major information and activity blocks and a head row with a few menu items. The blocks focus on the following issues:

1. The *upper left block* provides a quick information about the number of projects and question lists available in the user's work room.
2. The *lower left block* displays the region the user deals with.
3. The *lower right block* guides user to the knowledge base (*contingency planning environment*)
4. The *upper right block* provides access to the *executable functionalities*.

The head row is accessible throughout the program and provides a short link back to the dashboard, to a few of the executable functionalities and to project settings (accessible through the user's name).



Figure 5. Head row of dashboard

4. Dealing with the knowledge base

The knowledge base with the issues discussed above builds on a common structure. The menu items show either a red or a green sign. Issues with a red sign have not yet been opened by the respective user (figure 6). It's a constant reminder to deal with the various issues. All menu items open a document in PDF format which introduces in a dense form into the subject needed for a successful contingency planning process.



Figure 6. Knowledgebase issues with reading reminders

Each document involves graphs and a few references accessible through the internet. As an example, the first sentences of one of the subject areas are shown below (figure 6).

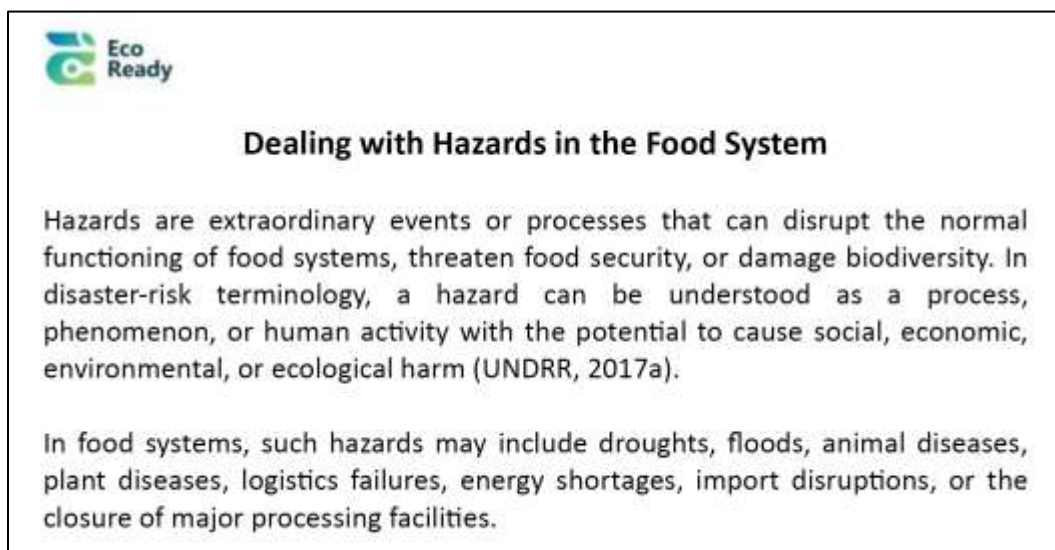


Figure 6. Part of a knowledge base document.

5. Executable functionality: *Start a new project*

The menu box for the executable functionalities opens 4 features (figure 7),

- a) start of a new planning project,
- b) a display of available projects,
- c) initiating a new question list, and
- d) a display of available question lists.

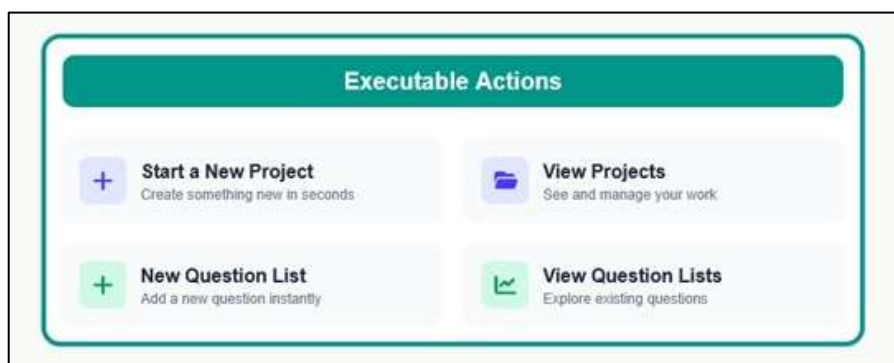


Figure 7. Menu box executable functionalities

Initiating a new contingency planning project (figure 8) asks for

- a) specification of a project name,
- b) selection of the best fitting question list, and
- c) the integration of an image (optional) that could identify a project beyond its name.

If no individual question list has been developed by a user, the project will use the basic question list built into the tool.

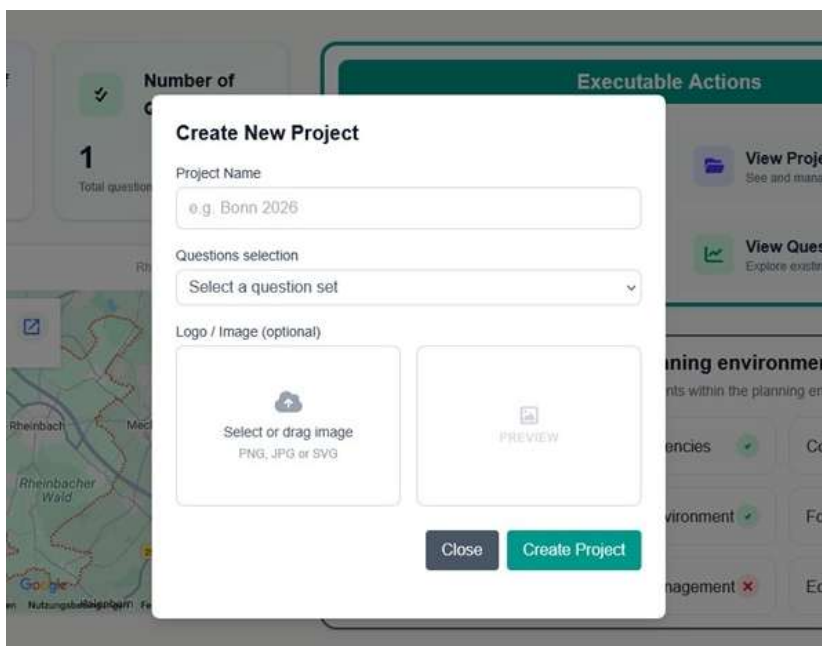


Figure 8. Open a new planning project

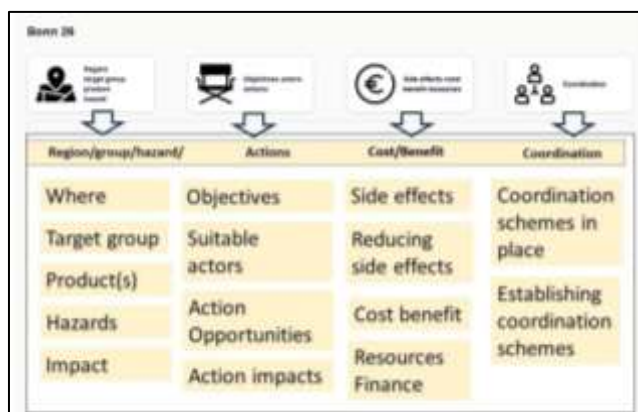
The opening screen of the new project displays basic help information linked to the 4 boxes on top.



Figure 9. Drop-down boxes for display of question groups and questions

They

- a) separate the total question list into 4 groups of questions (figure 10), dealing with the planning *problem* (first box), the *actions* (second box), the *economy* (third box) and the *management* (fourth box) and
- b) integrate drop-down functionalities for planning questions.



Region/group/hazard/	Actions	Cost/Benefit	Coordination
Where	Objectives	Side effects	Coordination schemes in place
Target group	Suitable actors	Reducing side effects	Establishing coordination schemes
Product(s)	Action Opportunities	Cost benefit	
Hazards	Action impacts	Resources	
Impact		Finance	

Figure 10. Drop-down functionality

By clicking on any of the boxes, the tool displays the headings of subgroups of questions (figure 11) which, if clicked on, open detailed questions to be answered to the right of the question and saved for the contingency plan (figure 12).

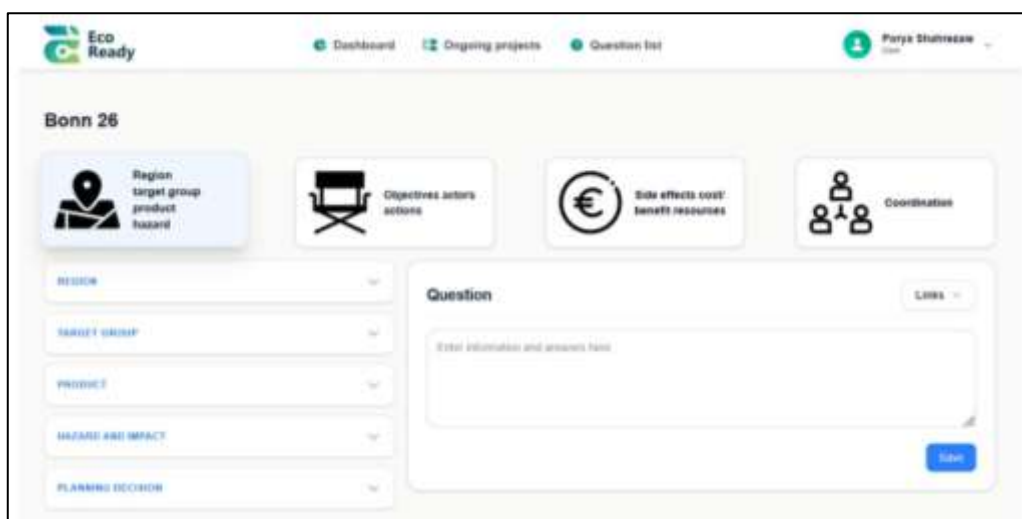


Figure 11. Drop-down of question groups

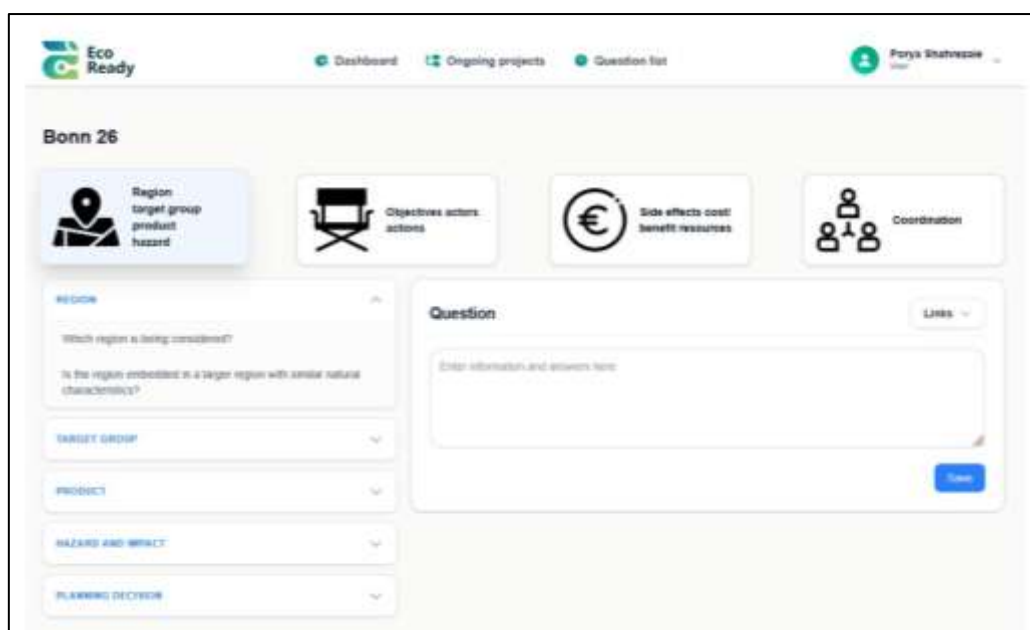


Figure 12. Detailed question display with input box for contingency plan

To the right of the input box is a menu item “Links”. It opens links to databases or web pages identified by the user under “settings” (see later). As a basis, the tool lists links to the Observatory database (“eco-ready dashboard”) and to the AI-tool ChatGPT (figure 13 and 14).

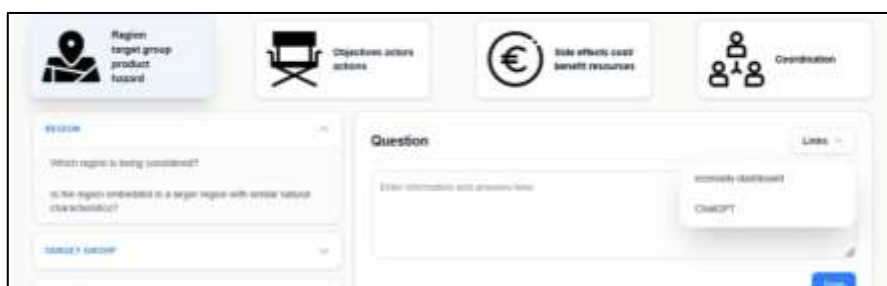


Figure 13. Opening of links (see right) for access of external sources



Figure 14. Sources opened by using the links

The opportunity for users to identify whatever links they are interested in, opens a wide variety of flexibility for connecting local or specific databases or web sources the user would like to consult. Using “copy/paste”, the user can pick up results from consulted sources and integrate them into his input box as outlined in figure 1.

6. Executable functionality: *View projects* (project list of saved projects)

The functionality *View projects* opens a list of previous projects. There are two ways, the projects can be presented, either as a list or as a grid presenting projects with the image that had been provided during the opening of a new project.

6.1 View projects: List view

Figure 15 shows the list view with a single project. The center row shows at the right side the selection buttons for the list view and the grid view. This view has now a few features for dealing with a selected project.

First, by clicking on the project’s name, the project opens with its integrated question list and allows users to change questions and/or answers.

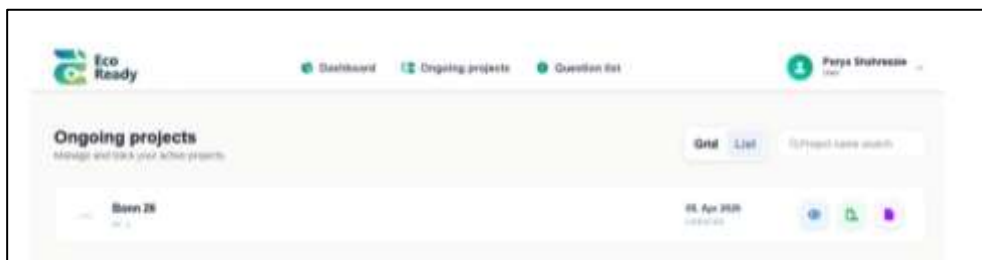


Figure 15. Project list view

Second, the end of each project line displays 3 images, allowing for 3 different outputs of a contingency plan with all questions and answers including

- a) a screen view,
- b) a PDF output (figure 16a), and
- c) a file in RAW format (figure 16b) which the user could transfer into any word processor for appropriate formatting and preparation for distribution.

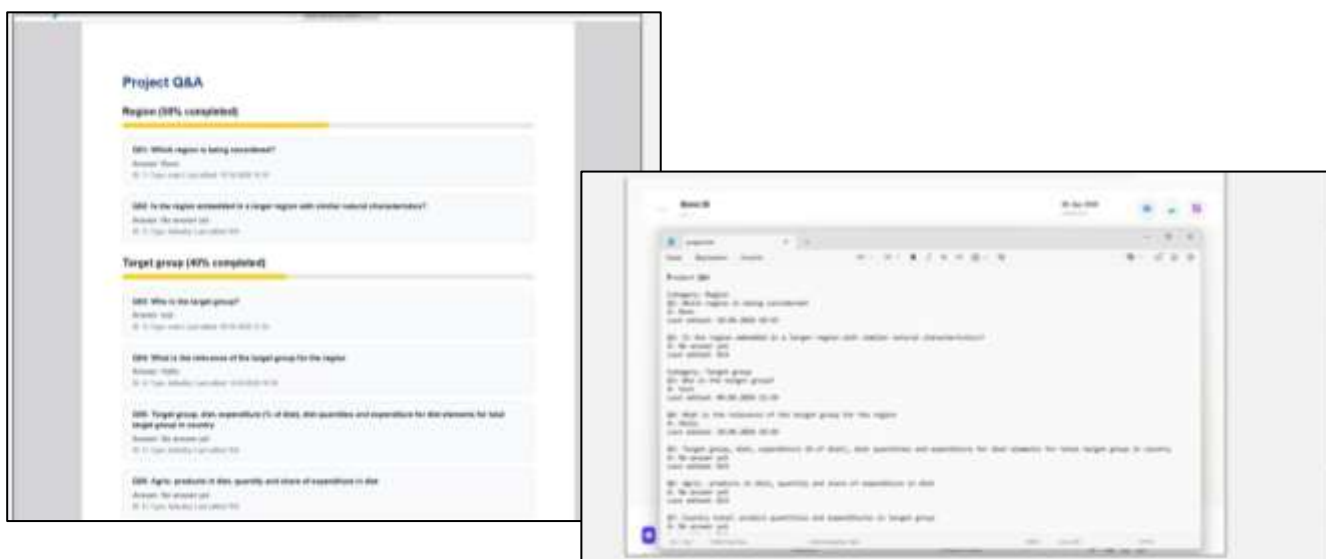


Figure 16. PDF and RAW print formats

In case a user has many projects, a search feature above the output images allows to search for project names.

6.2 View projects: Grid view

The Grid view based on project images employs similar functionalities as the list view (figure 17). The output functionalities are accessible through the image when moving the cursor over the image.

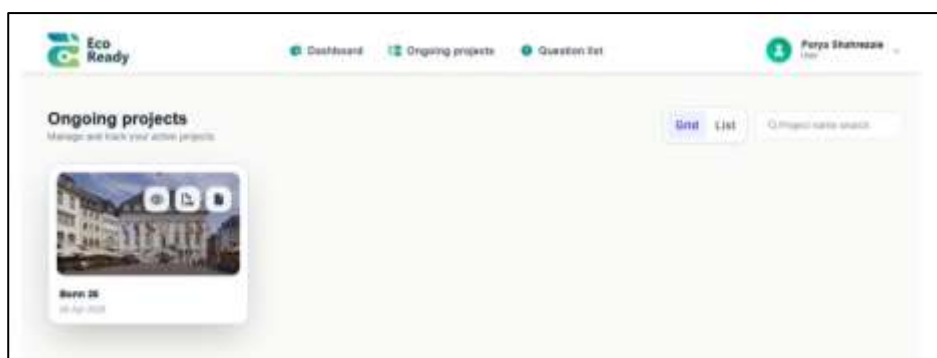


Figure 17. Grid view

7. Executable functionality: *New question list*

The tool has a built-in basic question list which can only be changed by the tool operator. Whenever a user intends to design a new question list, the basic question list is uploaded for change. This facilitates the design of a new question list as users would otherwise be confronted with an empty template.

Otherwise, the development of a new question list follows very much the approach used for generating a new project. It starts with an opening page (figure 18) followed by an information page (figure 19) which allows to open any of the 4 drop-down blocks dealing with problem, action, economy, and management.

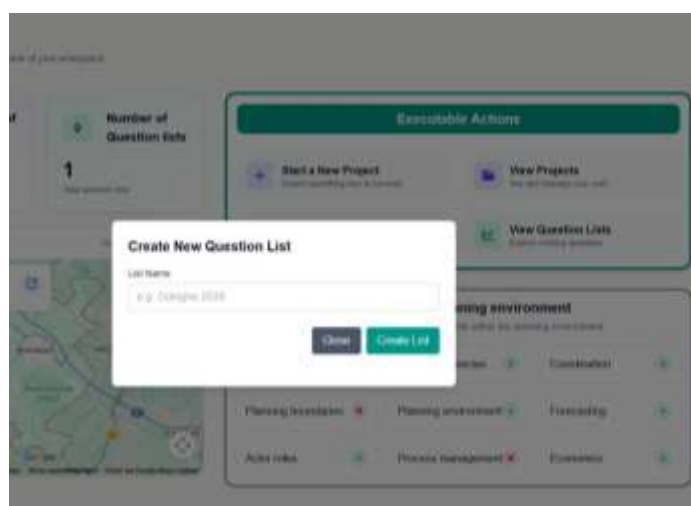


Figure 18. Creating new question list

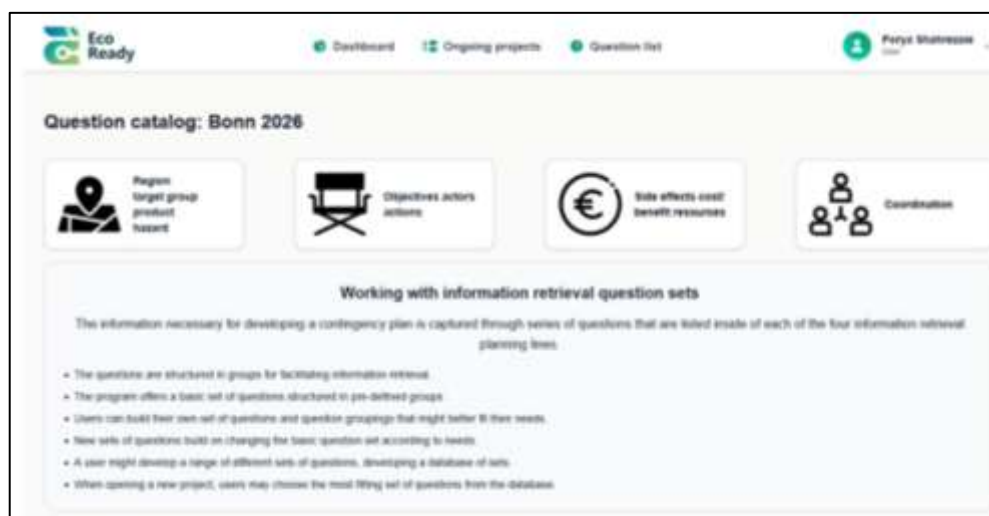


Figure 19. Opening page for new questions with general information

Clicking on any of the drop-down boxes opens the input part for adapting questions and saving them in the new question list. This input part differs, however, from the input part known from the developing of new projects.

It allows for each subgroup (e.g. region) to change questions, to delete questions, and to add questions. In addition, it allows to delete whole subgroups or to add new subgroups providing complete flexibility in adapting a question list to the specific needs of a user in contingency planning (figure 20).

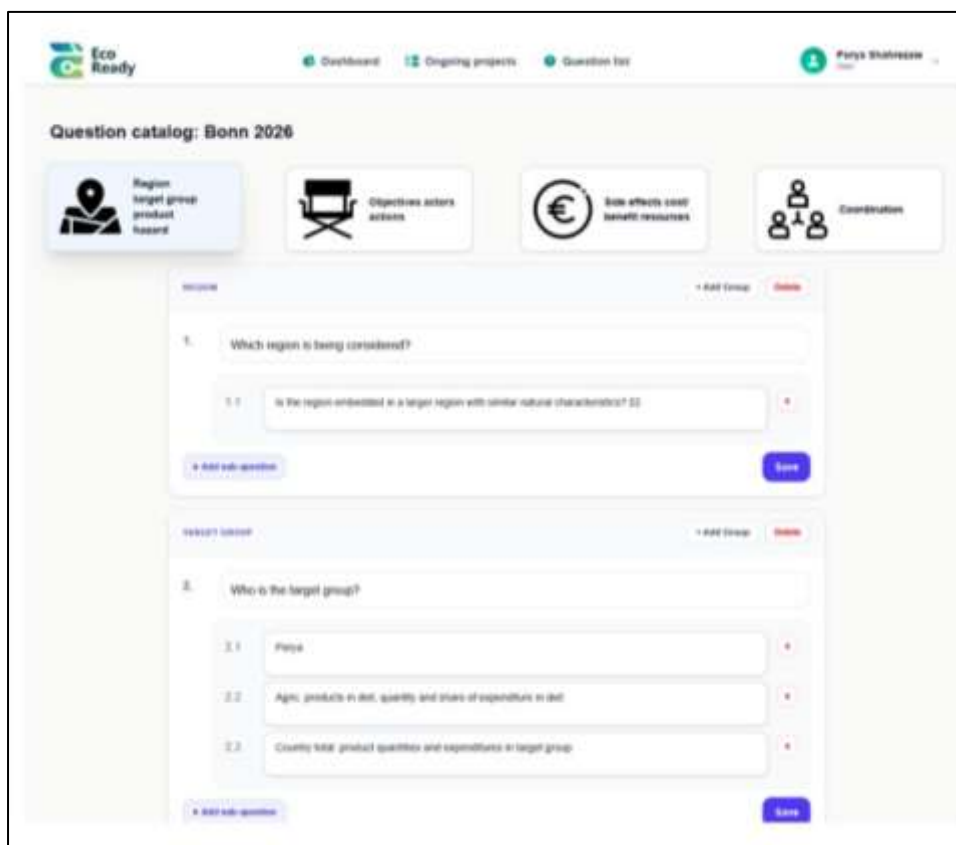


Figure 20. Designing of new question list

8. Executable functionality: *View question lists*

The question lists are displayed in a list format (figure 21). Images to the right allow to view lists, to print them out in PDF format, or to delete them (except the standard list provided by the tool operator). Clicking on the name of a question list opens it for possible changes. As in the project list the page offers a search procedure to the upper right.

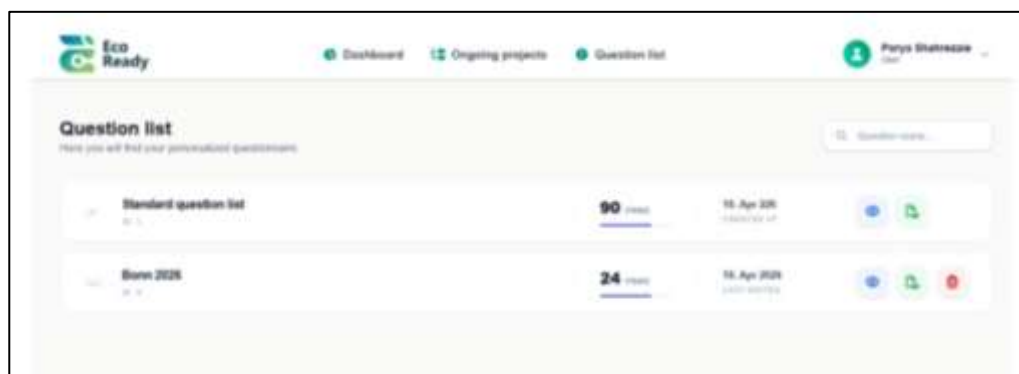


Figure 21. View of question lists

9. Program settings

The program settings are opened by clicking on the name of the user on the right in the top row of all pages. They include three topics, *profile settings*, *links*, and *sign out* (figure 22).

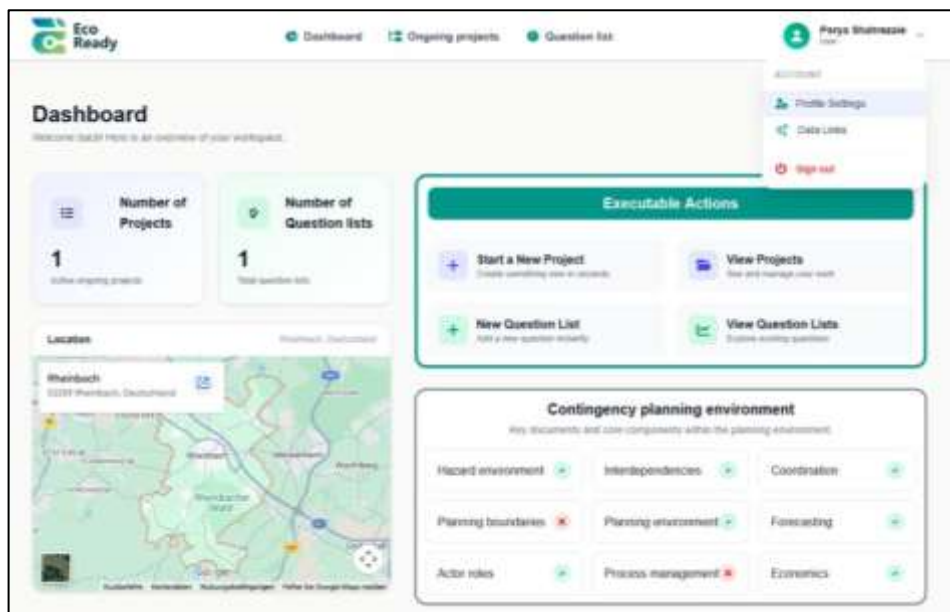


Figure 22: Menu items in program settings (top right)

9.1 Profile settings

The menu item allows to change the location of the user and the password (figure 23).

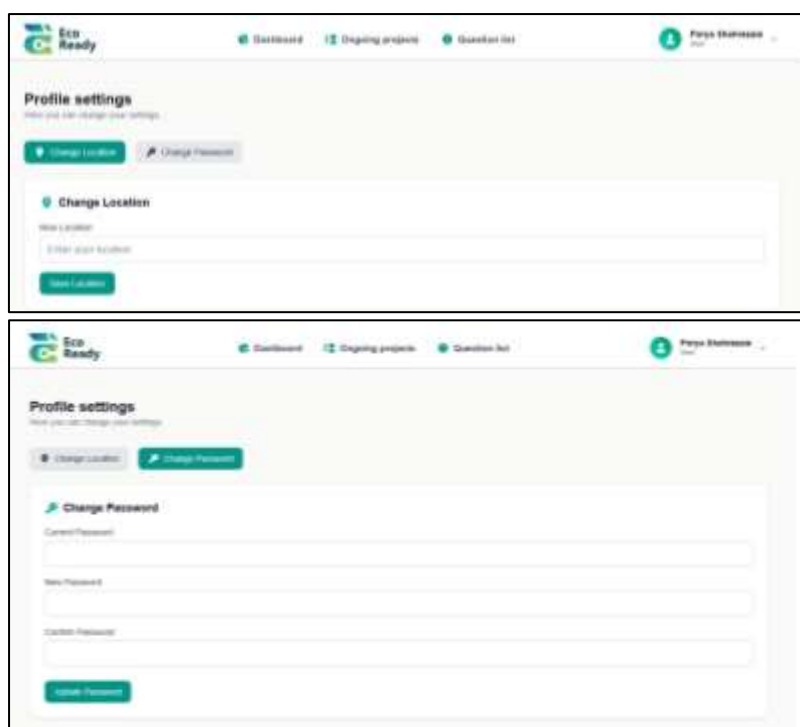


Figure 23. Change of location and of password

9.2 Links

The menu item links in the program settings displays the web links that can be accessed during a contingency planning session. Images to the right of each named link allow to open, change, and to delete a link. The page also offers the possibility for creating new links without limits. *These links are user specific.*

As a standard, the tool provides links to the observatory of the Eco-Ready project and to ChatGPT (figure 24). These standards are not fixed but might be changed by the tool operator any time.



Figure 24. Establishing links to web sources

