

Business Coaching Report - Development of the Value Proposition for a Digital Biodiversity Monitoring Platform

1. Coaching context

The proposed concept involves a digital platform designed to collect and structure biodiversity-related information from local communities, environmental experts, field observations, geolocated photographs, and low-cost sensors. Potential users would report species sightings, document visible signs of habitat degradation, and access visual dashboards presenting changes related to fish, birds, aquatic plants, habitats, and other indicator species.

The initial concept identified several potential user groups, including lake authorities, environmental NGOs, research organisations, tourism operators, and local communities. Although all these groups have an interest in the ecological condition of natural lakes, their needs, responsibilities, and ability to support a viable business model differ significantly.

The coaching assignment therefore focused on strengthening the market orientation of the idea. Particular attention was given to the definition of the priority customer problem, the selection of the most relevant customer segment, the articulation of a convincing value proposition, and the identification of elements that distinguish the solution from existing biodiversity databases and environmental monitoring tools.

2. Coaching objectives

The overall objective of the coaching assignment was to support the participant in moving from a broad technology-oriented concept towards a focused customer-oriented business proposition.

The coaching process pursued five specific objectives. First, it aimed to clarify the main customer problem addressed by the proposed platform. The initial idea included several technical functionalities, although the central customer need was not yet sufficiently defined.

Second, the coaching process sought to identify the customer segment with the strongest need for the proposed solution. The initial concept addressed authorities, NGOs, researchers, tourism operators, and local communities at the same time. A more focused approach was required for the first stage of market development.

Third, the assignment aimed to distinguish between customers, users, beneficiaries, and data contributors. These roles may overlap, although they do not necessarily represent the same actors within the business model.

Fourth, the coaching process supported the development of a clear value proposition that links customer needs with expected outcomes. Particular attention was given to the practical value created for organisations responsible for lake protection and restoration. Fifth, the coaching assignment explored possible sources of differentiation. The participant needed to establish why the proposed platform would offer greater value than a conventional biodiversity database or species reporting application.

3. Coaching methodology

The coaching methodology followed a structured business development process focused on customer value.

The first stage consisted of an initial assessment of the business idea. The concept was reviewed from the perspective of customer relevance, market focus, practical value, feasibility, and differentiation.

The second stage involved customer segmentation. The potential roles of lake authorities, environmental NGOs, research organisations, tourism operators, and local communities were examined separately. The analysis considered the problem faced by each group, the urgency of the need, the relevance of biodiversity information for their activities, and their possible role in the business model.

The third stage focused on problem prioritisation. The discussion moved away from a list of proposed platform features and concentrated on the difficulties faced by organisations responsible for lake management and environmental protection.

The fourth stage used the logic of the Value Proposition Canvas. Customer jobs, pains, and expected gains were matched with the proposed products and services, pain relievers, and gain creators.

The fifth stage addressed competitive positioning. The concept was compared at a strategic level with conventional biodiversity databases, species recording applications, scientific monitoring systems, and other environmental information tools.

The final stage translated the coaching conclusions into practical recommendations related to customer interviews, problem validation, pilot design, minimum viable value proposition, and business model development.

4. Key insights

The business idea responds to a relevant challenge. Biodiversity changes in natural lakes often develop gradually, while formal monitoring may take place only occasionally. Important information may also remain dispersed across research reports, project databases, local observations, photographs, and expert assessments.

The proposed concept addresses a real need for more regular and accessible information about ecological change. The idea also has potential beyond a single lake. Many natural lakes face comparable difficulties related to fragmented information, limited monitoring resources, irregular field surveys, and insufficient stakeholder participation.

The concept therefore presents potential for replication after successful validation in a specific lake ecosystem.

The initial concept included too many customer groups.

Lake authorities, environmental NGOs, research organisations, tourism operators, and local communities do not share the same priorities.

Authorities need information for management decisions and intervention planning.

Environmental NGOs require evidence for conservation projects, funding applications, public engagement, and project evaluation.

Research organisations place greater emphasis on data quality, scientific validation, and methodological consistency.

Tourism operators mainly value information related to destination quality and environmental reputation.

Local communities are particularly relevant as contributors and beneficiaries.

The coaching process therefore concluded that a broad market definition would weaken the value proposition and complicate product development.

The main customer problem is not the total absence of biodiversity data.

Relevant information already exists in many contexts. However, it remains dispersed across experts, projects, local communities, research activities, photographs, field records, and monitoring tools.

The central problem is therefore fragmentation. Lake managers and environmental organisations often lack a continuous and easy-to-interpret view of ecological change.

5. Value Proposition development

The Value Proposition Canvas presented below summarises the main outcomes of the coaching process and illustrates the fit between the needs of lake authorities and environmental organisations and the proposed biodiversity monitoring platform (Figure 1).

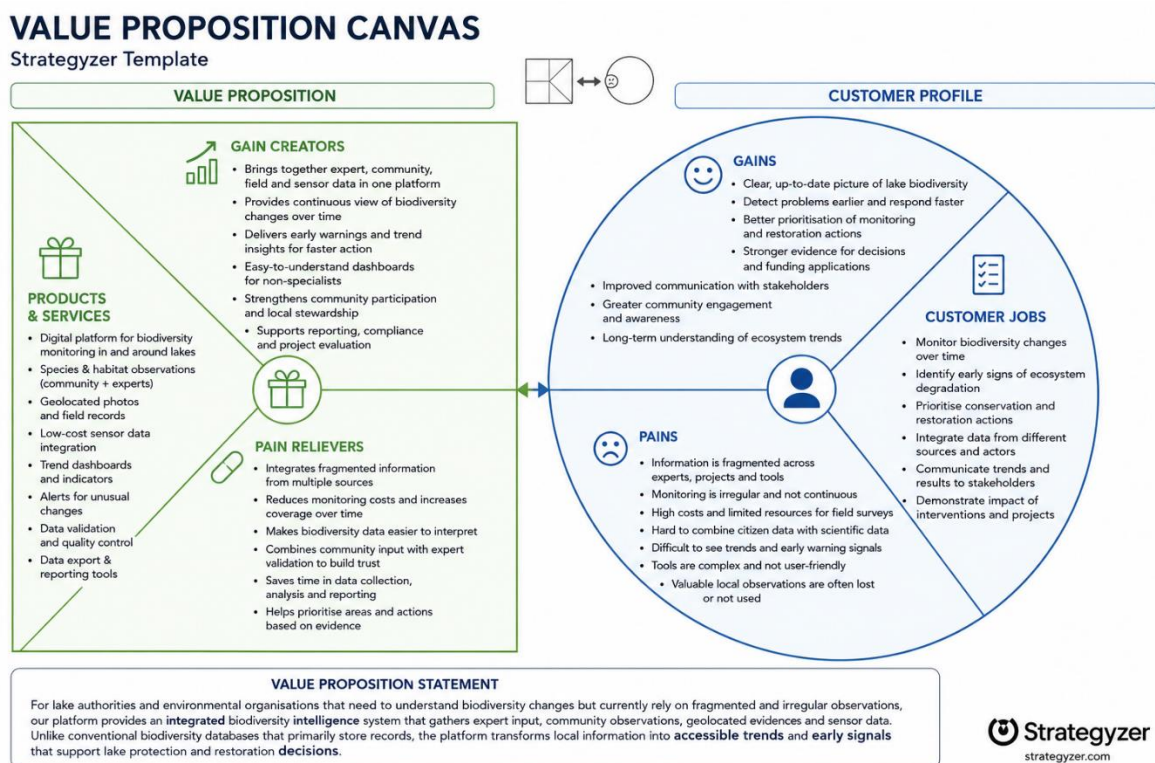


Figure 1 – Value proposition canvas

Source: developed by the business coach – using Strategyzer template

The customer profile highlights the main jobs, pains, and expected gains associated with lake protection and restoration activities. The value proposition side outlines the services, pain relievers, and gain creators that respond directly to those needs. The canvas highlights that the strongest value of the platform lies in transforming fragmented

biodiversity information into accessible trends, early signals, and practical support for environmental decisions. It also provides a clear basis for further customer validation and pilot development.

6. Coaching recommendations

The participant should initially focus on lake authorities and environmental NGOs.

The first version of the solution should not attempt to satisfy all possible users.

A narrow market focus will support stronger customer interviews, clearer product priorities, and a more convincing value proposition.

The participant should interview approximately 8 to 12 representatives from lake authorities, environmental NGOs, and related organisations.

The interviews should explore:

- current monitoring practices;
- major information gaps;
- existing tools;
- delays in obtaining information;
- monitoring costs;
- use of community observations;
- reporting needs;
- decision-making challenges.

The first version of the solution should include only the functions directly linked with the core value proposition.

The recommended initial elements are species and habitat observations; geolocated photographic evidence; simple biodiversity trend dashboards; alerts related to unusual changes; expert validation.

A pilot in one natural lake should provide evidence of practical value. The pilot should examine whether stakeholders contribute useful information, whether relevant trends become visible, and whether users apply the insights in management discussions or field activities.

Potential revenue options include institutional subscriptions; project-based monitoring services; licences for organisations managing several lakes; service agreements with restoration projects.

Coaching requested by: Cristina Blemovici (Romanian demosite)

Business coach: Alexandru Capatina

Signature:



Date: 9th of July 2026