

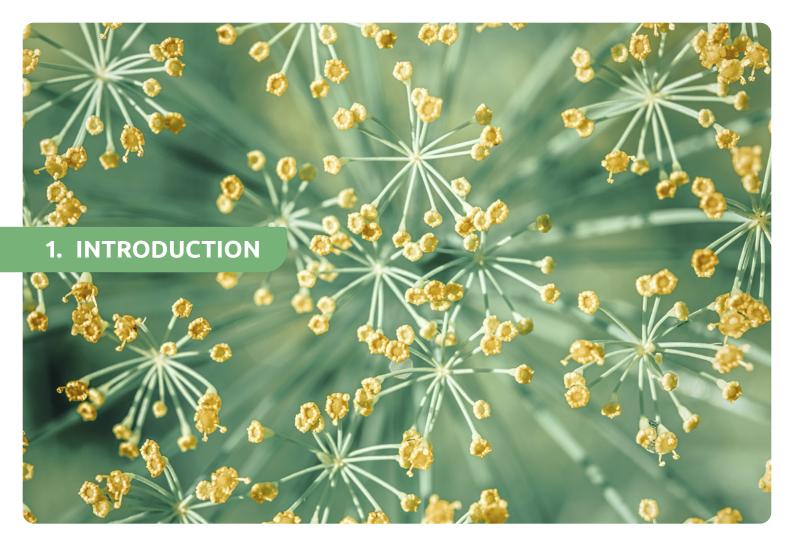
NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 5 JUNE 2025



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Dear reader, welcome to the fifth issue of our newsletter!

Invest4Nature is entering an exciting phase, with tools, insights, and community engagement coming together to shape a resilient, nature-positive future. This issue celebrates the upcoming launch of our Invest4Nature Online Workspace—a hub for collaboration, knowledge sharing, and long-term impact.

Our Work Packages are delivering real progress: from the TEV4Nature framework integrating risk into economic valuation, to stakeholder-driven tools and events that bring nature-based solutions (NbS) to life. Across Europe, our Living Labs—from Aarhus to Cascais, Poznań to Norway—are proving that inclusive, locally rooted approaches are key to successful NbS.

Behind the scenes, partners like Climate Alliance are helping us connect, train, and inspire. Together, we're not just building tools—we're building trust, capacity, and a legacy that will outlast the project.

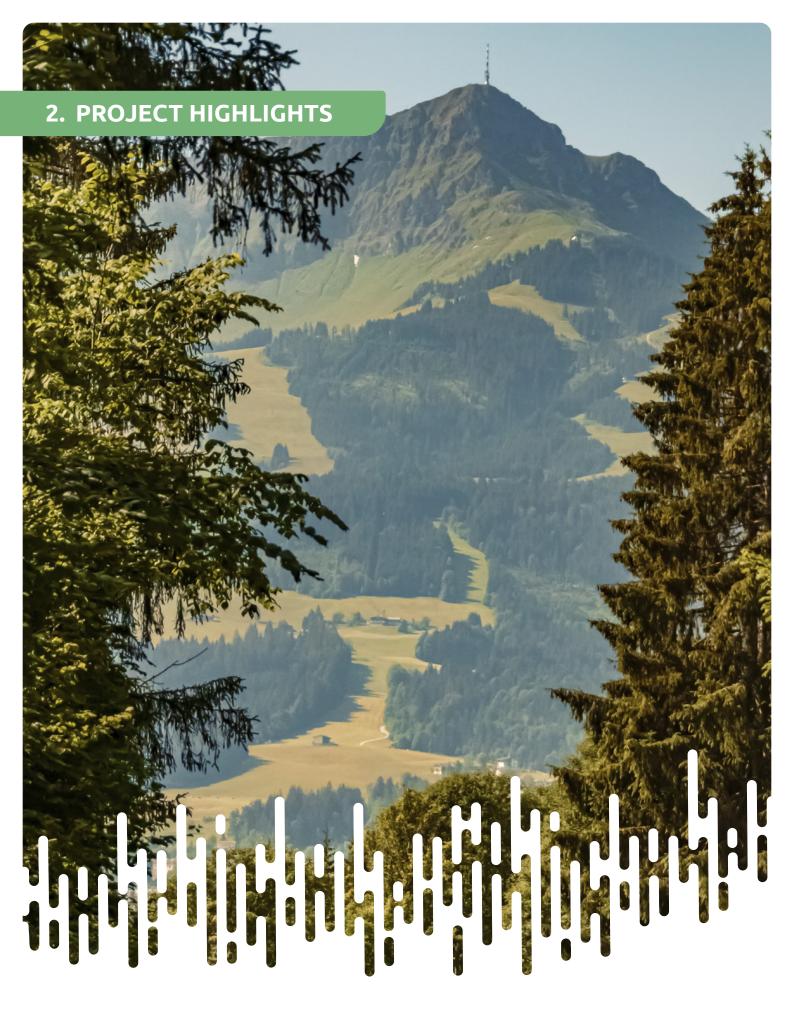
Explore the new Workspace, join the conversation, and help us shape the future of NbS investment!

Andreas Türk

Joanneum Research

Ingrid Kaltenegger

Joanneum Research



More Mission Stories: Cascais and Tyrol Join the EU Adaptation Spotlight

We're proud to share that two more Invest4Nature Living Labs—Cascais and Tyrol—have been featured in the EU Mission on Adaptation's Mission Stories series. This recognition highlights their innovative, community-driven approaches to climate resilience and positions them as models for other regions across Europe.

Cascais, Portugal

"Green Potential with Adaptation" showcases restoration of the Ribeira das Vinhas river extending from the mountains through urban areas to reduce heat, enhance biodiversity, and engage citizens.

"Rehabilitating a Coastal Dune System" highlights efforts to restore natural dunes, protecting the coastline while improving recreational and ecological value.

Tyrol, Austria

<u>"Promoting Protective Forests"</u> demonstrates how forest management reduces climate risks like avalanches and landslides in alpine regions.

<u>"Restoring Wild River Ecosystems"</u> tells the story of revitalizing the Lech River to balance flood protection, biodiversity, and tourism.

Being featured as a Mission Story means these projects are recognized as leading examples of local adaptation in action—helping inspire and guide others across Europe.



The team at Climate Alliance created a walkthrough video to help Living Labs familiarize themselves with the tool

Equipping our Living Labs: DS Toolbox Training Recap

In early 2025, Invest4Nature partners participated in an internal training session focused on the Decision Support (DS) Toolbox. Organised by Climate Alliance and Engineering, the session aimed to prepare Living Lab teams to confidently present the tool to their local stakeholders and collect structured feedback.

The training began with a walkthrough video introducing the Toolbox's features, followed by a hands-on exercise using a case study developed by Aarhus University. Participants worked in breakout groups to explore the tool's practical application and functionality. Two Q&A sessions with Nicola Leonardi from Engineering provided space for discussion and clarification.

The session concluded with the presentation of a feedback questionnaire, marking the start of the Toolbox's second round of stakeholder evaluation. This training was a key step in ensuring the Toolbox is both accessible and effective in supporting nature-based solution planning across diverse local contexts.



Invest4Nature Online Workspace

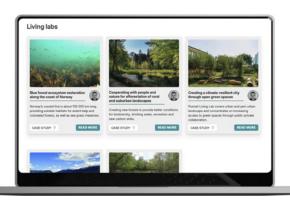
The new Invest4Nature Workspace is now online at www.oppla.eu/invest4nature

The Workspace has been developed as part of the new Oppla platform, also recently relaunched with improved software and functionality supporting Oppla's mission as the EU Repository of Nature-based Solutions.

The Workspace provides a place for stakeholders to interact and share their own knowledge with Invest4Nature, including organisations working in our Living Labs, but also other relevant EU projects and networks on the topic of nature-based solutions finance and investment. The Workspace will also become a permanent repository of Invest4Nature outputs, ensuring these resources remain useful and impactful long after the funding period has ended.

The main functions of the Workspace are to:

- Promote the Invest4Nature event programme
- Tell the stories of our Living Labs
- Provide a repository of project outputs
- Invite stakeholders to feedback on our work
- Build a legacy for Invest4Nature
- Interact with other related projects



▲ The Invest4Nature Workspace will serve as a local hub for Living Labs to share with stakeholders and for stakeholders to share their knowledge and interact with the Living Labs, the Invest4Nature Project, and the wider network of EU projects and networks on the topic of NbS.

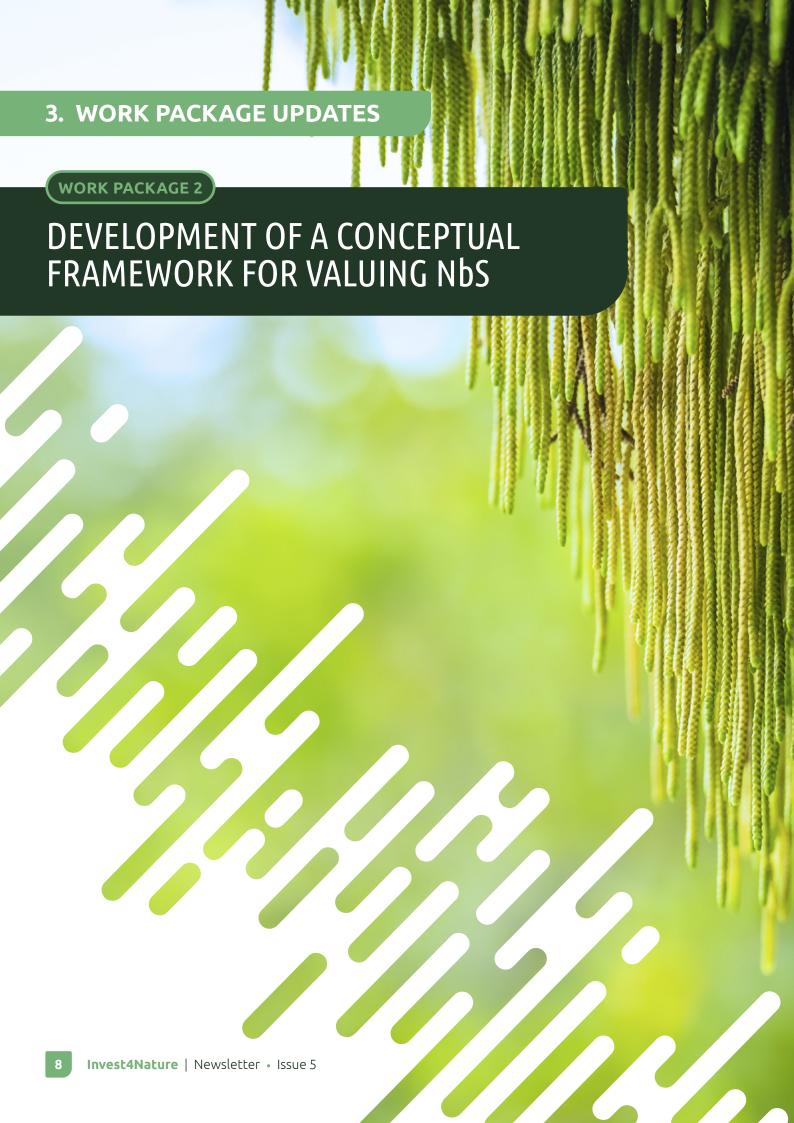
The new features of the Workspace enable project partners to contribute resources, cases studies, news, articles and events. The Workspace also includes a system for showcasing 'related content' from other projects working on similar topics to Invest4Nature, creating a one-stop-shop for users.

Going forwards, the Workspace will be linked to the new EU Science Service for Biodiversity, also being developed on Oppla, which has a mission to foster stronger links between the communities of science and policy. The Science Service is launching in 2026 and this link will contribute to Invest4Nature's legacy and long-term impact.

Visit the new Workspace at

www.oppla.eu/invest4nature

Join Oppla to take part in Workplace activities www.oppla.eu/join





With the finalization of D2.2 "Theory and methods of incorporating risk reduction within the total economic valuation (TEV) framework (TEV4Nature)", the work in WP2 is finished. The developed TEV4Nature framework presents an extension to the traditional TEV framework by systematically integrating different categories of insurance values connected with nature based solutions. The four categories of insurance value of nature associated with NbS are: value of protection OF nature (maintaining ecosystem function and risk reduction), the value of protection BY nature (impact mitigation), social resilience value (community wellbeing), and value of ensuring future (value for future generations). These four categories are mapped to six different types of use values and non-use values, as presented in D2.1.

To operationalize the TEV4Nature framework, a stepwise assessment procedure for the insurance value of NbS is proposed, comprising scoping, methods, data collection, assessing the insurance values, and designing NbS investment strategies. Additionally, different assessment methods to quantify the insurance value of NbS are presented, including both traditional economic valuation methods and the risk assessment methods.

By integrating risk management into TEV, we aim to provide a comprehensive framework for evaluating the insurance value of NbS against climate change and disaster risks, primarily through improving ecosystem function and biodiversity. This framework should support policymakers, financial institutions, companies, and other stakeholders in making informed investment decisions, fostering climate resilience, and ensuring that future generations have access to sustainable ecosystem services.

Michael KernitzkyiJoanneum Research



EVIDENCE OF NbS ECONOMICS AND FINANCING





The work in WP3 on 'Evidence of NbS economics and financing' focuses on evaluating the existing evidence related to the financial and economic performance of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and synthesizing insights on financing mechanisms of NbS and Nature Based Enterprises (NBEs) markets. WP3 uses this evidence and insights to inform the development of the decision support toolbox underway in WP4.

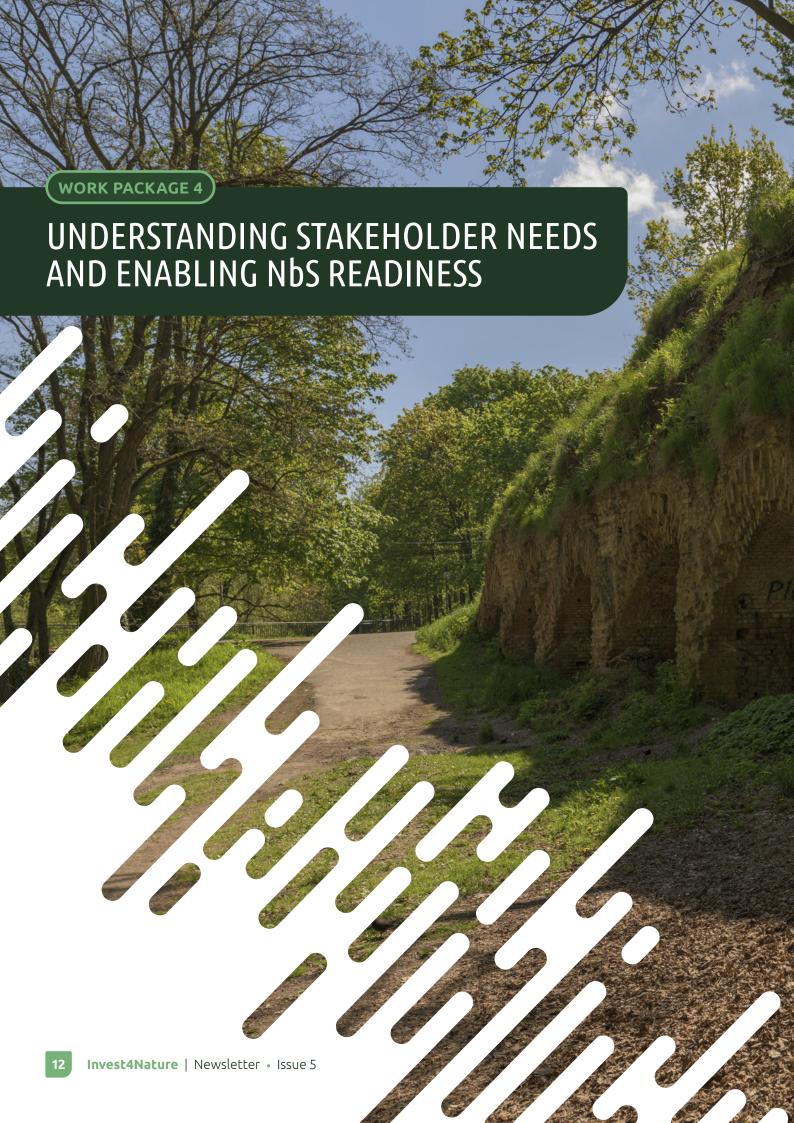
In WP3, we are busy working on two reports due end of June on the evidence of economic, financial and social performance of nature-based solutions including the insurance values across landscapes/thematic areas of agriculture, forestry, coastal, mountains, urban and water management.

The two reports will contain the results of systematic literature reviews of private and social costs and benefits of nature-based solutions including from a health perspective. The reports will also contain results from in-depth analyses of NbS cases from the Living Labs in Tirol (Austria), Cascais (Portugal), Aarhus (Denmark) and the Norwegian west coast covering NbS such as river bed restoration to alleviate flood risks and enhance tourism activities; conversion of agricultural land into nature to protect drinking water, reduce flood risks, enhance biodiversity, sequester carbon and provide recreational opportunities; and marine ecosystem restoration of kelp forests to increase biodiversity, blue carbon sequestration and fish species abundance. The evidence from these reports will later be available in a public and searchable database on Oppla.

WP3 has also recently produced a number of Invest4Nature briefs, providing digestible short reads based on the previous report on NbS markets, financing and incentives.

Marianne Zandersen

Aarhus University





Work Package 4 (WP4) is focused on helping to ensure the tools and resources created by Invest4Nature satisfy the needs of end users and generate impact. We achieve this by working to better understanding stakeholder needs and provide opportunities for them to get involved in our work; and recent progress in WP4 reflects these aims.

Our colleagues at U-Sentric have now completed their report on **Stakeholders' Motivations, Needs and Hurdles** (deliverable D4.1), which provides useful insights from interviews with large and small businesses, undertaken between 2023-2024. The report analyses stakeholder perspectives on investing in nature-based solutions and identifies both challenges and opportunities. In March 2025, U-Sentric held a multi-stakeholder workshop to share insights, discuss key findings from the report, assess the impact of EU sustainability legislation (ESG/CSRD, CSDDD, Taxonomy), gauge expectations for future regulations, and develop actionable solutions to boost private sector investment in NbS. This work is now completed and marks the conclusion of Task 4.2.

Meanwhile, the team at Climate Alliance have been supporting our Living Lab partners in rolling out the **Invest4Nature events programme** under Task 4.3. The programme is now underway throughout 2025. Recent and upcoming highlights include:

- Living Lab Aarhus: workshop on the impact of financial companies on ESG and co-financing of biodiversity.
- Living Lab Poznań: workshop on cooperation models in public and private sectors.
- Living Lab Tyrol: webinar on nature-based solutions for climate change adaptation and strategic cooperation.

We have also recently launched a new and improved version of the Invest4Nature online workspace, available at

www.oppla.eu/invest4nature

See this issue's Project Highlights for details.

Paul Mahony

Oppla





In the past few weeks, the development of the Decision support system has reached a level of maturity that allows it to be used by the living labs and planned workshops. A training phase on its use has also been carried out for internal partners and those responsible for the living labs to ensure they have a good level of familiarity with all the features of the tool. Software development activities are now focused on the functional integration of the project's Evidence Database.

The work package also started to review the policy cases and drivers calling for deployment of NBS across various policy areas and to assess the NBS integration in the current EU Sustainable Finance policy framework. A draft report was started, taking into account the EU taxonomy



DENMARK

What strategies have proven effective in engaging local stakeholders and fostering connection to the communities in the planning and execution of NBS projects?

In Aarhus Municipality, we work with several different types of Nature-based Solutions (NbS), and our approach to involving local stakeholders and citizens varies depending on the type and scale of the project. Below, we present two NbS projects, each with a different approach to engagement.





URBAN



RURAI



MOUNTAINOUS



FLUVIAL

Risvangen Climate Adaptation

In the urban climate adaptation project in Risvangen, both residents, housing associations and local businesses were involved. The project was a climate adaption project with a focus on using green solutions - keeping water above ground - rather than traditional grey infrastructure with underground pipes. Local contractors were invited to assist residents in developing stormwater solutions on their own properties, as required. Residents were also invited on "neighborhood walks" in their own area, to share ideas on how they envisioned a greener, better-designed local environment.

You can read more about the project here: NBS: Affordable and Multifunctional Solutions for Aarhus' Urban Challenges - Invest4Nature

In a rural nature project "300 Hectares of New Nature,", the aim is to boost biodiversity, protect groundwater, and strengthen the community's connection to nature. That's why citizen engagement is a key element, with dialogue, involvement, and communication being essential to building ownership and shared understanding.

The foundation of the project is face-to-face interaction. There is no digital dialogue or communication. Municipal project leaders are present in the project area with our green caravan, engaging directly with residents. As a result of this involvement, the residents have been willing to give space back to nature and supported efforts to ensure that nature gets a strong start. You can read more about the project in the blog:

A Green Caravan and a New Kind of Dialogue - Invest4Nature

A key learning from these projects is that citizen involvement must be carefully planned – and based on the following considerations:

- By the start-up of a new project, efforts must be made to set the clear framework for the involvement. There is no one-solution-fits-all.
- Clarity in communicating the scope of citizen involvement. Avoid overinvolvement and align expectations with the actual level of participation.
- Face-to-face dialogue is timeconsuming, but worthwhile, especially by larger projects dealing with sensitive subjects.
- Keywords: transparency, listening, dialogue at eye level.

Lone Telling

Aarhus Municipality



What strategies have proven effective in engaging local stakeholders and fostering connection to the communities in the planning and execution of NBS projects?

Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) projects succeed when there is strong stakeholder involvement and meaningful community engagement from the start. Inclusive, participatory approaches—such as co-creation workshops, community mapping, and open forums allow local actors like residents, authorities, NGOs, and businesses to shape outcomes together. This fosters trust, ownership, and long-term commitment, making solutions more relevant and sustainable.





URBAN



RURAL





Equally essential is clear and ongoing communication, using accessible language, visuals, and diverse channels to keep communities informed and engaged. Including a wide range of voices, such as schools, youth groups, and underrepresented communities, ensures that NBS interventions respond to varied needs while promoting transparency, social cohesion, and lasting positive impact.

The AdaptCascais Fund, created by the Municipality of Cascais, supports local climate adaptation projects through nature-based interventions. It promotes active participation from citizens, schools, and local entities, fostering innovative and sustainable solutions. In its 1st and 2nd editions (2021 and 2023), 17 projects on carbon neutrality, circular economy, ecosystem regeneration, and sustainable lifestyles engaged over 4 000 participants.

Among the funded projects, the "Our Dream" initiative in Matos Cheirinhos focuses on creating a community orchard and planting native trees, while the "There Are No Birds Here" project raises environmental awareness by establishing a green corridor with tree planting and a community garden. Additionally, initiatives like the Caparide, "Live Ribeira" project, which rehabilitates the Caparide stream, highlight the visible impact of nature-based solutions. As communities witness tangible results, such as greener spaces and increased biodiversity, their engagement grows, reinforcing their commitment to these long-term, sustainable projects.

In short, active participation, clear communication, and adaptability are the cornerstones of successful NBS projects, ensuring that solutions are meaningful, resilient, and sustainable.

Barbara Coelho

Cascais Ambiente

▶ Intervention in the Bosque das Fontainhas, which seeks to restore forested areas of high ecological value, ensuring the safety of visitors and preserving the existing trees. Additionally, an informal trail has been created that connects the forest to the surrounding urban environment, reinforcing the integration of nature and the city, and promoting sustainable access to green spaces.

Cascais Ambiente





What strategies have proven effective in engaging local stakeholders and fostering connection to the communities in the planning and execution of NBS projects?

In Poznań, the Project Coordination and Urban Regeneration Office at City Hall has gained extensive experience in implementing nature-based solutions (NbS), blue-green infrastructure, and small-scale green interventions. Over the years, effective steps for planning, executing, and maintaining these solutions have been developed and refined.



URBAN



RURAL



MOUNTAINOUS



FLUVIAL



Living Lab workshop in Poznań.

H. Bugajny , City of Poznań

Key strategies have emerged through projects such as natural playgrounds and, more recently, green schoolyards. These initiatives rely on a multiphase approach rooted in community and stakeholder engagement. The process begins with co-creation workshops involving the school community – teachers, students, parents, and administrators – alongside landscape architects. These sessions help identify needs, expectations, and potential challenges within the space. In the next stage, architects present initial design concepts, which are then refined through further consultation with users to ensure the designs are truly community-driven.

What has proven particularly effective is embedding co-creation and trust-building into every phase of the project. Stakeholder engagement is not an isolated task but a continuous and essential part of NbS development. Cultivating a well-informed and engaged community helps foster long-term support and ownership of the project.

Additionally, environmental education and awareness-raising play a vital role. The team from Project Coordination and Urban Regeneration Office consistently emphasizes the social, economic, and environmental benefits of NbS, ensuring that both stakeholders and residents understand their value. This holistic and participatory approach underpins the success of Poznań's green transformation.

Agnieszka Dziubala Poznań Municipality



What strategies have proven effective in engaging local stakeholders and fostering connection to the communities in the planning and execution of NBS projects?



■ In the ECOURCHIN project (Sea urchin harvest: Ecosystem recovery, integrated management of social-ecological system, ecosystem service and sustainability), economists and natural scientists work together to find strategies for sustainable sea urchin harvest in Norway. In addition to possible economic benefits, sea urchin harvest has positive consequences for the coastal ecosystems. The **ECOURCHIN** researchers are working on bigger, socioeconomic analysis, where the economic benefits from reestablished kelp forests also are included.

Marco Busdraghi/Wikimedia Commons













Effective stakeholder engagement in nature-based solution (NbS) projects, such as the kelp restoration efforts led by NIVA in northern Norway, relies significantly on close collaboration and active co-creation with local communities. Successful examples highlight the importance of involving various local stakeholders, such as fishermen, divers, Small to Medium Enterprises (SMEs), tourism operators, and municipal authorities, early in both planning and implementation phases. For instance, NIVA actively engaged volunteer divers to harvest sea urchins, cultivating a sense of ownership and responsibility among participants. We are also collaborating with several local businesses, municipalities and Marine Protected Area (MPA) authorities to deploy remote-controlled harvesting technology, integrating commercial interests and environmental objectives. Furthermore, we are recently actively engaging with financial actors such as venture capitalist companies and other financial institutes to support the upscaling of blue forest restoration in Norway. For example, we have established a webinar series under the Invest4Nature project and NetworkNature+ to facilitate dialogue and identify useful financing mechanisms and business models for blue forest restoration and other NbS.

Additionally, NIVA has supported tourist companies to conduct experiments, illustrated by recent initiatives that embed sea urchin harvesting within local tourism experiences. For example, a travel agency near Karlsøy has piloted eco-tourism activities, combining diving for sea urchin removal with cultural and gastronomic experiences, such as boat trips and tastings. These tourism-linked activities not only enhance recreational value but also provide a financial motivation for sustained community involvement. We have also supported voluntary blue carbon markets by verifying carbon storage and sequestration value.

We are working to secure transparency in communication about ecological and economic benefits to further strengthens community ties to restoration projects. In collaboration with Norwegian Blue Forests Network, we continue to present to stakeholders the multiple benefits, such as improved biodiversity, enhanced fish populations, coastal protection, carbon sequestration, and climate resilience, to help recognize the broader value of their participation, facilitating support for nation-wide kelp restoration programs.

Wenting Chen NIVA





What strategies have proven effective in engaging local stakeholders and fostering connection to the communities in the planning and execution of NBS projects?

Every municipality in Tyrol has a publicly funded forest supervisor who is responsible for the management and supervision of public forests. Advising forest owners and communicating and cooperating with citizens and organisations also plays an important role at the local level.



COASTAL



URBAN



RURAI



MOUNTAINOUS



When the reforestation efforts began in Wildermieming in 2011, this was therefore done in collaboration with the municipality, local companies and organisations as the tourism association, and with support from the local population. This process nurtured new ideas.

Initial projects were launched in collaboration with forest owners. A forest management plan was used to determine the sustainable usage quantity under the motto 'Sustainable use and long-term protection'. As a result, the municipality initiated the process of transitioning the fossildependent heating sector, replacing 500,000 liters of heating oil with locally sourced wood.

Another important task was to inform and activate the community's citizens. With the aim of bringing the population closer to nature, the landscape and the protective forest in Wildermieming, an Alpine Park nature trail was also created. Various event formats were used to give the population the opportunity to exchange ideas.

Sustainable forest management of a climate-resilient mountain forest

The conversion and maintenance of a climate-resilient mountain forest is a continuous process and requires long-term support from society and awareness of the importance of a climate-resilient mountain forest. It is therefore also important to inform society about why a climate-resilient mountain forest must be maintained in the long term.

Today, workshops for schools, kindergartens and other associations, as well as forestry training courses, therefor play a strategic role in raising awareness among forest owners and the general public.

Involving interested parties and citizens is therefore an important part of the forest supervisor's work, but also a process. It is a participatory process in which the forest supervisor actively approaches forest owners and organizations and organizes meetings on specific topics in order to promote knowledge about the advantages of sustainable forest management and its implementation in the long term.

I4N team in TyrolKlimabündnis Tirol





Invest4Nature NbS Financing Pitch & Match edition #2

This summer - date to be announced

Watch this space:

NbS Pitch & Match - Invest4Nature



Network Nature Annual Event 2025 | Businesses that choose nature.

16 September 2025

NetworkNature Annual Event 2025
Choose Nature. | NetworkNature

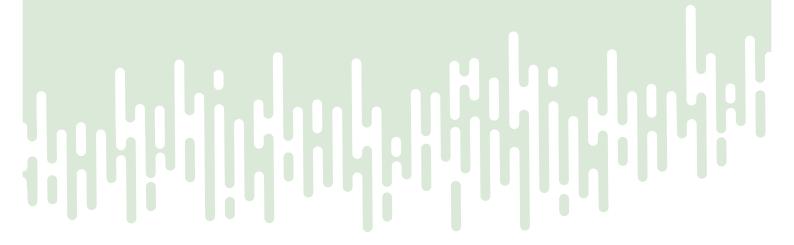


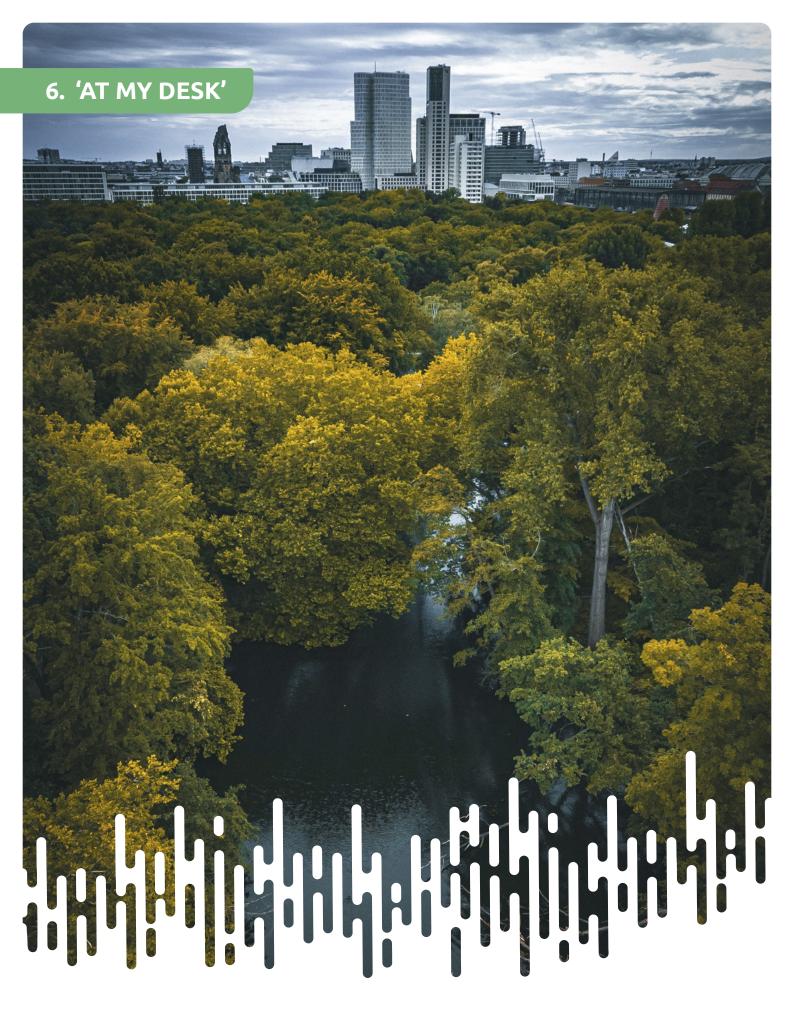
尽 NATURANCE | Innovation Lab Round Three

July - date to be announced

Watch this space:

Innovation Labs - NATURANCE





Who are you and what is your role in Invest4Nature?

We are **Hélène** and **Marie** from Climate Alliance, a European city network dedicated to climate action. We are based in Germany, but we have over 2000 member municipalities and districts from all European countries.

In Invest4Nature, we are involved in activities to better understand the needs of different stakeholders and enable nature-based solutions readiness. For example, we elaborated a stakeholder mapping together with Oppla. We are also coordinating the stakeholder program of events that are organised in the Living Labs in order to reach their local stakeholders and make them aware about the topic of financing naturebased solutions. In this context, we coordinated a training for the project partners on how to use the Invest4Nature's Decision Support Toolbox and we even created a video on how to use it. We are also involved in different communication and exploitation activities, for example by organising thematic events within our Climate Alliance's Working group on adaptation.



▲ Marie Boutin of Climate Alliance. Climate Alliance.



▲ Hélène Rizzotti of Climate Alliance. Climate Alliance.

What motivates you in Invest4Nature?

We are motivated by the impact the project might have and what it contributes to. Financing of innovative and ambitious infrastructures like NbS is a difficult topic for so many municipalities. Invest4Nature has the potential to supports various stakeholders, such as local governments, in developing business models for their projects and finding funding new sources for their NbS projects.

What upcoming activities in Invest4Nature are you most excited about?

The events in the Living Labs of course! After many months of planning for the Living Labs, many of them are finally hosting their events in the next weeks. We are really looking forward to catch up with them and hear about what they learn from their stakeholders and what kind of development the workshops brought in their projects.

7. FROM THE SECTOR



Financing Nature: A Playbook for Restoration

A new resource from UNEP-WCMC, the Restoration Project Developers' Playbook on Private Finance (Europe), offers practical guidance for accessing private finance in ecosystem restoration1. Developed under the Endangered Landscapes and Seascapes Programme, the Playbook helps project developers understand which types of restoration projects are suitable for private investment and how to align with investor motivations.

This is highly relevant for Invest4Nature's mission to bridge the gap between nature-based solutions and finance. As our Living Labs explore innovative funding models, tools like this Playbook can support efforts to scale up investment and build more bankable NbS projects.

The Playbook includes case studies from across Europe and outlines strategies for integrating projects into broader financial mechanisms—insights that can directly inform our work.

Read more:

<u>Unlocking private finance for ecosystem restoration</u>
- UNEP-WCMC

Mapping Policy for a Nature-Positive Economy

A major milestone for the nature-based solutions community: the GoNaturePositive! project has released its first key deliverable—an in-depth assessment of how core EU and global policies align with the principles of a nature-positive economy.

This mapping exercise spans sectors such as agriculture, forestry, tourism, the blue economy, and the built environment, identifying both gaps and leverage points in current policy frameworks. For Invest4Nature, this work is especially timely, as it reinforces the importance of aligning NbS investment strategies with broader systemic policy shifts.

The findings offer valuable insights for policymakers, researchers, and practitioners working to embed nature into economic decision-making.

Read the report:

Mapping policy and co-operate initiative landscapes for systemic change towards a nature-positive economy

Learn more at:

GoNaturePositive! | Home





Are you part of an organization that could benefit from Invest4Nature results or a stakeholder in the field of NbS and you would like to contribute?

Reach out to us and we'll get you involved!

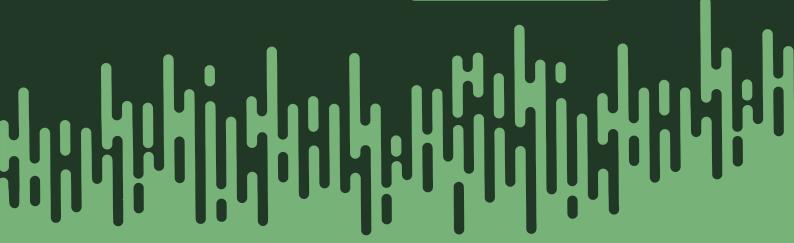
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