



NEWSLETTER

**ISSUE 6
MARCH 2026**

CONTENTS

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Project Highlights	4
3.	Work Package Updates	8
4.	Update from the Living Labs	14
	Tyrol	14
	Denmark	16
	Cascais	18
	Poznan	20
	Norway	22
5.	Events	24
6.	'At my Desk'	26
7.	From the Sector	28

1. INTRODUCTION



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

Moving into the final phase of Invest4Nature, we've reached an exciting moment where years of evidence generation, valuation work, and collaboration come together in tangible ways.

Our Living Labs have done well over the past months and years to strengthen their locally grounded engagement with key stakeholders, while we transition from development to delivery: NbS financial performance evidence and research is maturing into publications and briefs, making sure it is widely usable. We are also excited to be working on Invest4Nature's legacy to bring our Living Lab stories, experience, tools, and results to users and beyond through the Invest4Nature Workspace.

The recent NATURANCE Festival showed how relevant and important robust data and practical tools can be to the nature-positive movement across Europe, and we look forward to strengthening these connections as we bring Invest4Nature to completion!

Andreas Türk
Joanneum Research

Ingrid Kaltenegger
Joanneum Research

2. PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



Invest4Nature at the NATURANCE Festival: Insights, Engagement & Impact

Invest4Nature played an active role at the NATURANCE Finance Innovation Festival in Brussels, joining policymakers, researchers, financial actors and cities to explore how Europe can strengthen investment pathways for nature-based resilience. The second festival day stood out for its highly interactive format, with break-out sessions, workshops and World-Café exchanges that brought diverse perspectives together.

Invest4Nature's contributions at a glance:

- **Marketplace of Results:** Invest4Nature hosted an interactive space where participants explored the Cost-Benefit Analyzer, Performance Assessment tool, the NbS Recommender System, and our Workspace and policy briefs. These concrete tools positioned I4N as one of the few projects offering ready-to-use resources for NbS investment decisions.
- **"Would You Fund This NbS?"** Game: Our hands-on financing game sparked lively discussions on what makes an NbS investable. The insights gathered highlighted where stakeholders need clearer data — directly validating the relevance of our Toolbox and evidence base.



- **Policy Leadership:** Invest4Nature contributed to the high-level policy session Collective Insights, Lasting Impact, presenting recommendations on how to unlock private capital for NbS and strengthen Europe's risk-reduction strategies.
- **Living Lab Perspectives:** Aarhus Living Lab presented a poster of their shortlisted case study on the Aarhus NbS case, demonstrating their local experience and impactful initiative

Key insights from the festival:

Across discussions, it became clear that biodiversity loss and climate impacts are increasingly viewed as material financial risks, shifting how banks and insurers think about exposure. New financing approaches — including nature credits and innovative insurance models — are gaining traction and complements Invest4Nature's work on NbS valuation. There is the need to move from reactive insurance to proactive resilience, while also acknowledging the political and practical challenges of insuring climate-exposed regions. Overall, NbS were repeatedly framed as financially relevant risk-reduction solutions, with Invest4Nature's evidence, tools and Living Lab insights recognised as important contributions to better investment decisions.





▲ The Invest4Nature Decision Support Service

The NbS Decision-Support toolbox: Your turn to test it!

Do you need help in estimating the economic costs and benefits of an NbS initiative? This is your chance to test the toolbox!

Be inspired from different NbS projects and get a clearer picture of what your NbS project can deliver: from financial returns to social and ecological benefits

With all three functionalities now in place:

- the Cost-Benefit Analyzer
- NbS Performance Assessment
- Recommender system its functionalities the Toolbox is moving toward its next major milestone: testing with a wider audience.

Living Labs have already piloted structured stakeholder workshops, and the insights gathered will become valuable input for further improvement of the tool in the future.

Head over to the toolbox at

[Invest4Nature Decision Support Service](#)

and register to gain access and give the tool a run!

Your feedback on the toolbox's functionality will help us continue to support NbS investments to more users that need it!

3. WORK PACKAGE UPDATES

WORK PACKAGE 3

EVIDENCE OF NBS ECONOMICS AND FINANCING





In WP3, we are turning years of research in Invest4Nature and a large body of evidence into scientific papers and accessible summaries.

Earlier in the project, we gathered and analysed existing evidence on the economic, financial, social and health-related performance of NbS. This resulted in three major evidence report built from systematic literature reviews, two of which can be read [here](#) (D3.1) and [here](#) (D3.3).

The set of Invest4Nature Briefs, designed to translate complex analyses into short reads has grown with topics including [Nature-based Enterprises, unlocking private capital for NbS, public sector drivers and hurdles](#) and [demand and supply chains in NbS](#). Building on this foundation, the team is now preparing peer reviewed manuscripts covering these topics. One is already available ([here](#)) as pre print: Demand and Supply of Nature based Solutions in Europe (Lienhart et al., 2026). Furthermore, our deep dive cases show in detail how NbS deliver in the real world, drawing on literature reviews and detailed case studies from our Living Labs Tirol, Cascais, Poznan, Aarhus, and Norway, available [here](#).

We led the preparation of a collaborative Expert Report for the EC, a collaborative report drawing evidence from NbS projects highlighting the necessary change in Europe's financial, regulatory and governance systems to scale NbS (Report: [Policy imperatives for a competitive and resilient nature-positive economy](#)). With these outputs, WP3 concludes having created one of the project's central contributions: a robust, Europe wide evidence base that directly feeds into the Invest4Nature NbS Decision Support Toolbox to inform NbS investment decisions. Look forward to more releases of briefs and select deep dive cases of our Living Labs in English, Polish, German, and Portuguese this spring!

Marianne Zandersen
Aarhus University

WORK PACKAGE 4

UNDERSTANDING STAKEHOLDER NEEDS AND ENABLING NBS READINESS





Work Package 4 (WP4) focuses on making sure Invest4Nature's tools and resources meets the needs of the people who use them and create impact. In these final months of the project, the team is concentrating on sharing results through the Invest4Nature Online Workspace, while highlighting stories, lessons, and local impacts from our Living Labs.

Over the past months, the Living Labs — supported by Climate Alliance and Horizon Nua — completed a full programme of 16 collaborative events across Europe. These sessions were held in both English and local languages and brought together local stakeholders to shape Invest4Nature's results, discuss new business and governance models, and test early versions of the Decision Support (DS) Toolbox.

We are now working closely with each Living Lab to capture the outcomes of these events and the positive changes they have helped generate locally. These insights, along with key project outputs, are being published on the **Invest4Nature Workspace**, which now serves as an open, growing hub where anyone can explore the project's work.

The Workspace is designed to support the “living legacy” of Invest4Nature — ensuring long term access to tools, briefs, case materials, and Living Lab stories even after the project concludes.

It also sits alongside our Zenodo community and has strong potential to connect with the new **EU Science Service for Biodiversity** – also launching on Oppla later this year - which cluster knowledge on the topic of NbS investment.

The team at Oppla are available to support partners in using the Workspace to share and promote the work they have done on Invest4Nature. Get in touch at support@oppla.eu

Visit the Invest4Nature Workspace at www.oppla.eu/invest4nature

Hélène Rizzotti
Climate Alliance



WORK PACKAGE 5

STAKEHOLDER EMPOWERMENT AND NBS MARKET CREATION



Work in WP5 has progressed in the goal of understanding and making sure that NbS can be financed, and integrated into long-term regional strategies.

Living Labs are working on financing actions plans that explore alternatives to traditional public funding. Four regions are progressing with their plans, while another is examining a public-private cooperation model. Coaching guidelines and short case studies were also developed to support regions in designing NbS financing and business models that last beyond the Invest4Nature project.

In parallel, our living lab regions are mapping how they currently work with nature-based enterprises (NbEs) and identifying actions to strengthen their local NbS business ecosystem. Working with Horizon Nua, each Living Lab will nominate local NbEs for a showcase and pitching session, raising visibility for companies delivering NbS and multi-value services.

Recent testing in workshops and Living Labs has led to further refinement of the Decision Support (DS) Toolbox, improving usability and analytical features. The tool is now ready for wider presentation to external stakeholders, whose feedback will guide further improvements in function and user experience.

Drawing on insight from living labs and analysis of the EU Sustainable Finance Framework, CMCC is finalising a review of EU policy frameworks relevant to NbS. This review covers climate adaptation, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity, and sustainable finance - including the EU Taxonomy - to evaluate how NbS are integrated today and where further mainstreaming is needed.

Paul Mahony
Oppla

4. UPDATE FROM THE LIVING LABS

TYROL

What novel techniques or practices have emerged from your Living Lab that could redefine NbS implementation on a broader scale?

The village of Wildermieming encompasses around 1,120 hectares of mountain forest, which has been designated as a protective forest against natural disasters. The forest, however, also requires active management to remain stable under increasing climate pressures and has been undergoing a transition for the past two decades: shifting away from monocultures toward rejuvenation and diversification. This long-term experimentation has positioned the Living Lab as a testing ground for new, scalable NbS practices.



In 2005, mudslides damaged local infrastructure, but the forest prevented even greater losses. Recognizing the critical role of the forest, the municipality, together with stakeholders and citizens, joined the “protective forest communities.” Since then, the forester has pursued a sustainable forest management approach that has generated several innovative techniques now informing broader NbS implementation in Tyrol.

The approach is built on a set of complementary techniques:

1. Small scale rejuvenation and age diversification

Forest regeneration is carried out in small islands instead of clear cuts, creating uneven aged, diverse stands.

2. Conversion to climate resilient mixed forests

Spruce dominated stands are gradually replaced with site specific tree islands to improve resilience .

3. Selective maintenance and thinning

Maintenance and regular thinning, retaining biomass on the forest floor, enhance biodiversity, nutrient cycling, and the microclimate.

4. Protection of young trees

Regeneration is safeguarded through fencing to protect against browsing and wildlife.

5. Long term engagement of forest owners & citizens

Training, advisory support, and awareness building encourage active implementation.

In 2019, the Tyrolean Regional Government Forest Division launched the Climate Smart Tyrolean Mountain Forests project. The project offers sponsorship for mixed forest islands based on the same principles applied in Wildermieming. Establishing mixed forest islands and raising awareness are key elements .

By embedding these measures into a coordinated framework, Tyrol redefines the NbS as long-term, adaptive forest stewardship, strengthening awareness among 35,000 Tyrolean Forest owners and citizens and building resilience across mountain landscapes. This translates locally tested techniques into a broader model for resilient mountain landscapes.

I4N team in Tyrol
Klimabündnis Tirol

DENMARK

How have local policies either catalyzed or challenged your NbS initiatives, and how have you navigated these influences?

The City of Aarhus, has been working on nature-based solutions (NbS) to solve important challenges for society for many years, both in rural areas and in urban environments. One well-established NbS is the conversion of agricultural land into forest and natural areas, aiming at protecting drinking water from pesticides. This effort has been significantly scaled up in the most recent Climate Strategy and Municipal Plan 2025.



The Climate Strategy sets a goal for changes in land use, giving nature much more space, thereby sequestering more CO₂ in trees and soil, as well as reducing CO₂-equivalent emissions from drained peatlands. The long-term target is to increase the proportion of nature areas from the current 14% to 33%.

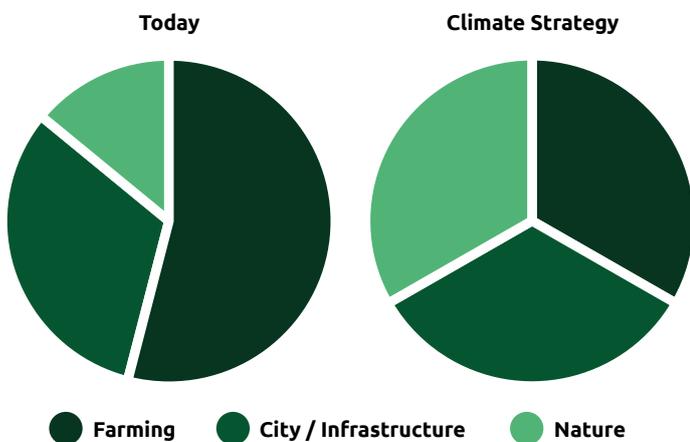
The Climate Strategy is followed up by the Municipal Plan 2025, where specific areas have been identified for conversion into forests and nature areas. These areas are referred to as Water and Nature Parks, as illustrated in the figure below. The Water and Nature Parks are designated with a focus on multifunctionality and are intended to protect drinking water, sequester CO₂, enhance biodiversity, improve water quality by water and nutrient retention, and provide better recreational opportunities for citizens.

The implementation of the Water and Nature Parks is voluntary for landowners, and the City of Aarhus has established a Land Acquisition Fund to strategically acquire agricultural land within the parks, to get the process going.

The City Council's commitment to setting both targets and geographic boundaries for the Water and Nature Parks enables a substantial upscaling of NbS. In addition, the municipal Land Acquisition Fund makes it attractive to enter partnerships with the municipality in the transformation of the landscape.

Lone Telling
Aarhus Municipality

6.000 hectares nature



▲ **Figure 1:** Today, 14% of the land is natural – the goal is to increase this proportion.



▲ **Figure 2:** 11 future Water- and Naturepark designated in the Municipality Plan 2025

CASCAIS

How have local policies either catalyzed or challenged your NbS initiatives, and how have you navigated these influences?

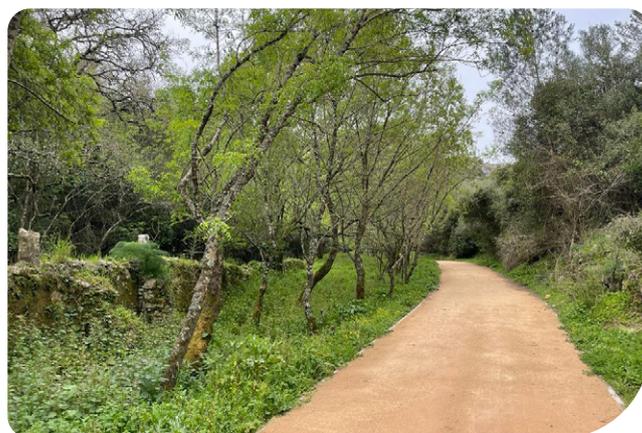
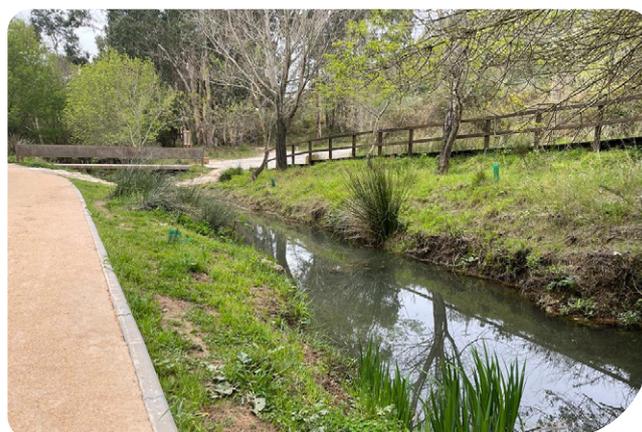
In Cascais, local policies have generally supported the implementation of Nature-based Solutions (NbS), while also posing certain practical challenges. The municipality benefits from a solid strategic framework focused on climate adaptation, biodiversity protection and sustainable urban development, which has enabled NbS to be embedded in planning instruments, municipal strategies and pilot actions developed within the Invest4Nature project. Policy priorities related to green infrastructure, climate resilience and ecosystem restoration have helped create an enabling environment, providing political backing, institutional commitment and access to municipal land and technical expertise.



Despite this supportive context, some constraints have arisen due to administrative complexity and fragmented governance structures. NbS initiatives frequently involve several municipal departments, including environment, urban planning, public works and finance, each with its own procedures, timelines and regulatory requirements. In addition, existing standards and procurement rules traditionally designed for grey infrastructure have, in some cases, reduced flexibility for innovative or hybrid approaches, leading to delays in implementation.

These challenges have been addressed through enhanced interdepartmental coordination, early alignment of NbS objectives with existing policy frameworks and ongoing dialogue between technical staff and decision-makers. Invest4Nature has contributed to this process by supporting the translation of NbS benefits into economic and financial terms, helping to align environmental objectives with policy and investment priorities. This approach has facilitated the integration of NbS into municipal practice and strengthened their institutional uptake at the local level.

Barbara Coelho
Cascais Ambiente



▲ Snapshot of Cascais's NbS cases Duna de Cresmina and Ribeira das Vinhas

POZNAN

How have local policies either catalyzed or challenged your NbS initiatives, and how have you navigated these influences?

In Poznań, local policies have played a largely catalytic role in advancing nature-based solutions (NbS), while also revealing structural challenges that continue to shape their implementation. Over the years, the City of Poznań has developed strong institutional capacity for planning, delivering, and maintaining NbS, supported by growing political awareness of climate-related risks such as heat stress, flooding, and reduced urban ventilation.





- ◀ - Willow structures, vegetation immature. Primary School No. 20. Green Schools in Poznań
- ◀ - Boules court Primary School No. 20. Green Schools in Poznań
Project Coordination and Urban Regeneration Office, City of Poznań.

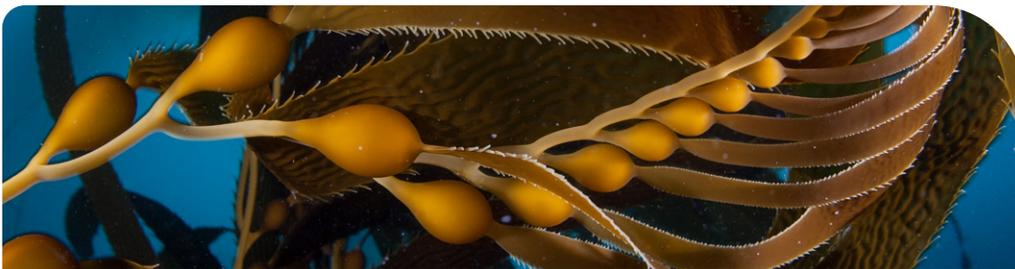
Strategic alignment with EU and national funding instruments – most notably the Integrated Territorial Investments programme – has significantly accelerated NbS implementation. These policy frameworks have enabled the development of green schoolyards, embedding nature-based approaches into educational spaces and strengthening their role in climate adaptation, biodiversity enhancement, and social well-being. Importantly, these funding mechanisms have also encouraged city departments to actively seek external resources, increasing both the scale and institutional visibility of NbS interventions.

At the same time, policy-related challenges remain. NbS are still predominantly perceived as a public-sector responsibility, which can limit private sector engagement and slow the development of effective public-private cooperation models. In addition, while city-wide reporting on green and NbS-related initiatives has improved transparency, gaps persist in monitoring systems and in the availability of indicators that capture the full social, environmental, and economic value of these solutions.

To navigate these influences, Poznań has prioritised co-creation, continuous stakeholder engagement, and environmental education, ensuring that policy frameworks translate into locally supported action. Parallel efforts to strengthen cross-departmental collaboration and improve evaluation tools aim to position NbS as an increasingly integrated, evidence-based element of urban governance.

Agnieszka Dziubala
Poznań Municipality

NORWAY



How have local policies either catalyzed or challenged your NbS initiatives, and how have you navigated these influences?

Local policy has been both a catalyst and a constraint for blue forest (kelp) restoration in Norway due to multi-layer regulations and levels of decision-making.



COASTAL



URBAN



RURAL



MOUNTAINOUS



FLUVIAL



On the enabling side, the Nature Diversity Act (Naturmangfoldloven) provides strong principles—knowledge-based, ecosystem-based management and the precautionary approach—and tools such as marine protected areas, nature reserves, and biotope protection. These designations can justify protecting kelp not only for its own value but also for its role as habitat for fish and seabirds. The Planning and Building Act (Plan- og bygningsloven) can also catalyse action by allowing municipalities to designate “use and protection” sea areas and restrict interventions through coastal zone plans, including inter-municipal plans.

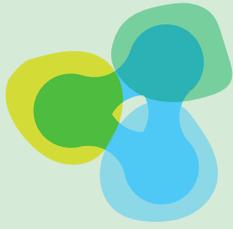
However, local and sectoral policies also create challenges. Area protection is often not matched by limits on industrial harvesting and fishing, which can undermine ecological outcomes. Some protected-area regulations can unintentionally block active restoration (e.g., bans on planting), slowing down pilot projects. In practice, sector regulations—especially the Marine Resources Act and Aquaculture Act—may override or sit parallel to spatial plans, complicating coordination. The Water Management framework has limited leverage because it largely depends on measures implemented through sector authorities and does not consistently treat kelp forests as a dedicated quality element.

These influences can be navigated by (1) aligning restoration initiatives with various policy framework (biodiversity, climate adaptation, water quality), (2) Careful planning across sectors esp. with those authorities are already supportive, (3) donnot focus on restoration only, but instead combining restoration with “ source pressure reduction” measures (harvest/fishing constraints, eutrophication controls), and (4) engaging early with municipalities and all relevante stakeholders.

Wenting Chen
NIVA

5. EVENTS





New European Bauhaus

➤ The Festival of the new European Bauhaus

9-13 June 2026

Brussels, Belgium

[The Festival - New European Bauhaus - European Union](#)



EUROPEAN
URBAN RESILIENCE
FORUM

➤ European Urban Resilience Forum (EURESFO)

17-19 June 2026

Guimaraes, Portugal

[European Urban Resilience Forum](#)



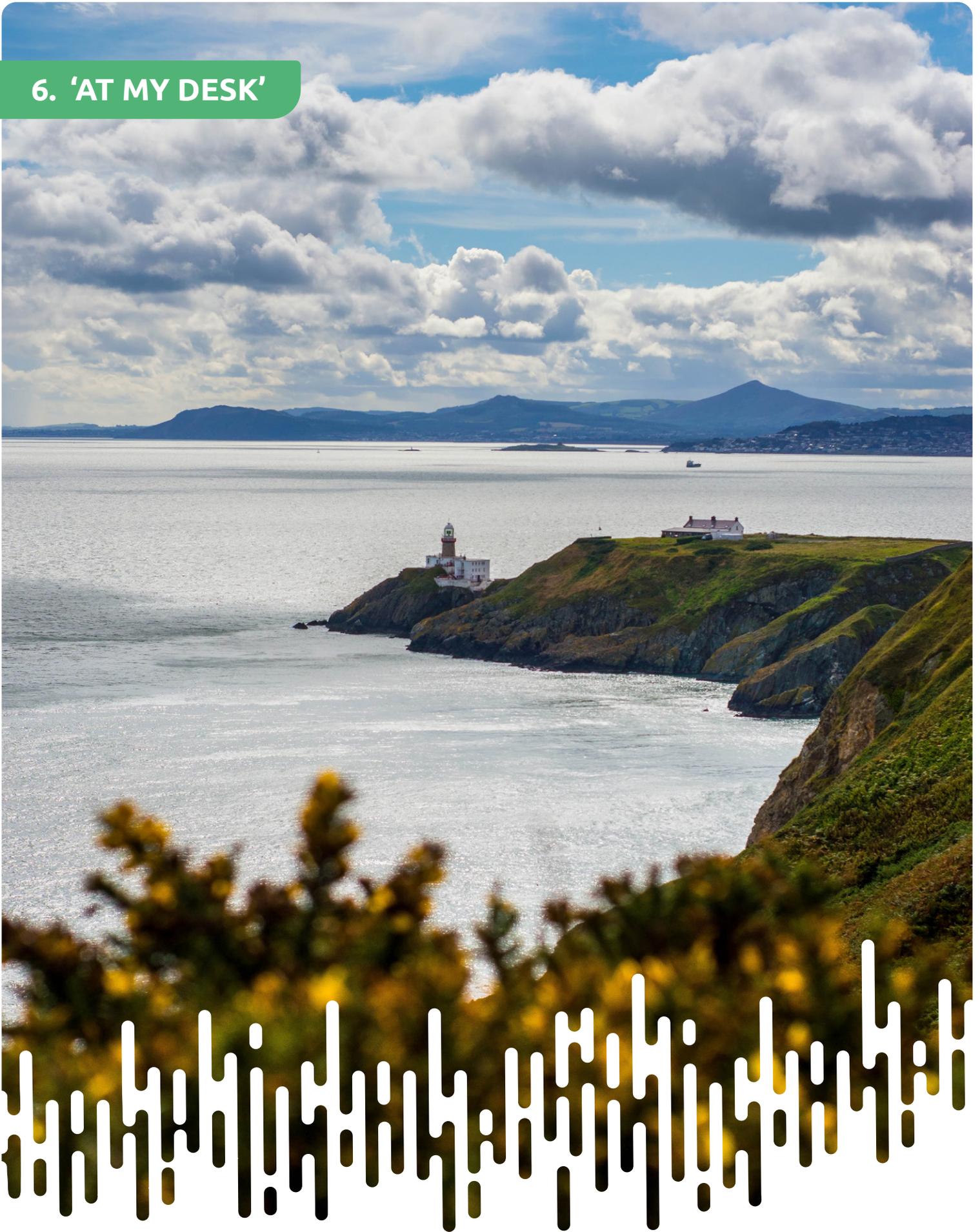
➤ EU Green Week 2026: Investing in a nature-positive economy

3-4 June

Brussels, Belgium

[EU Green Week 2026: Investing in a nature-positive economy](#)

6. 'AT MY DESK'



Who are you and what is your role in Invest4Nature?

We are **Isobel** and **Martina** from Horizon Nua, a non-profit foundation inspiring and enabling people, policymakers and practitioners to make the transition towards a nature-positive economy. We are based in Dublin, Ireland, and work mainly through Horizon Europe projects that pertain to NbS, biodiversity and business topics. We research, promote and advocate for businesses that work with and for nature, known as Nature-based Enterprises, and we host an online community platform for these businesses called the Connecting Nature Enterprise Platform.

Our role in Invest4Nature is to work closely with living lab regions to develop plans and strategies to meet their NbS financing, business model and governance needs. We also help to enhance NbS skills and capacity readiness by advising and supporting living lab regions to develop a nature-based entrepreneurship strategy. We work with other partners on research and dissemination activities, having designed a Nature-based Enterprise survey which gathered some 122 responses, hosted a feedback event for the Decision Support Toolbox, and are currently working on an online directory of the NbS investment community.



▲ **Martina Brophy, EU project manager of Horizon Nua**



▲ **Isobel Fletcher, CEO of Horizon Nua**

What motivates you in Invest4Nature?

We are motivated by the mission of Invest4Nature, and its contribution to the investment landscape for NbS. We see firsthand the structural challenges to growing NbS markets and accessing finance for NbS projects. Working closely with local organisations and municipalities through the I4N project allows us to raise awareness of these barriers and help to put in place practical business modelling solutions that enhance the sustainability of these initiatives. Invest4Nature is among those projects that are driving the transition to a nature-positive economy.

What upcoming activities in Invest4Nature are you most excited about?

We are really looking forward to the Nature-based Enterprise showcase to coincide with the final Invest4Nature AGM. This will be an opportunity for the living lab regions to nominate one or two inspiring NbEs to showcase their offering and pitch before a panel of judges (there may even be a prize!). This will be a great platform for practitioners whose inspiring products and services have been developed, through sectors such as green buildings and smart tech, to address environmental and social or economic challenges.

7. FROM THE SECTOR



The case for a Nature-Positive Economy (NPE) and pathways to achieve it

Policy Imperatives for a Competitive and Resilient Nature-Positive Economy (Oct 2025), is a recent EC independent expert publication developed with the coordination of Invest4Nature under Network Nature's NbS Task Force 3.

The report introduces the key policy concepts behind a Nature-Positive Economy and explains how Nature-based Solutions can help shape Europe's future resilience and competitiveness. It highlights the essential role of businesses and industry in driving this transition and discusses the barriers they face along the way. Drawing on insights from 45 EU-funded R&I projects, it offers a rich set of practical, actionable recommendations, showing how putting nature at the centre of EU policy can create new opportunities and support Europe's shift toward a resilient, nature-positive future.

Read more:

[Policy imperatives for a competitive and resilient nature-positive economy - Publications Office of the EU](#)

Insights to the awareness, role, and uptake of NbS across the South East Asian region

The Technical Assistance Facility to the Green Team Europe Initiative (TAF-GTEI), a regional EU-funded programme, aims to strengthen the use of NbS for climate-resilient economic development in the ASEAN region. Its NbS study includes reports on climate risks and hazards, an inventory and typology of NbS cases across ASEAN member states, an NbS catalogue, and two analyses on NbS policy and finance in the region. Together, these reports provide an overview of current climate challenges and how NbS are being implemented as part of the response.

This work is valuable not only for Southeast Asia but also offers inspiration and comparative insights for NbS implementation in Europe. It shows different approaches to addressing climate risks and building resilience.

Read the reports:

[The Technical Assistance Facility to the Green Team Europe Initiative \(TAF-GTEI\) - EU- ASEAN](#)





Have any remarks, questions, or suggestions?...

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?

Then don't hesitate to contact us at:

info@invest4nature.eu

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

Make sure to subscribe to our Newsletter!

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Invest4Nature



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