

NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 2



CONTENTS

1.	Introduction	3
2.	Project Highlights	4
3.	Update from the Living Labs	12
	Portugal	12
	Denmark	14
	Poland	16
	Norway	18
	Austria	20
4.	Invest4Nature events	22
5.	'At my desk'	24
6.	From the sector	26



1. INTRODUCTION

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

The Invest4Nature journey continued with gaining a lot of insights during the study and conceptual phase. Our team delved into literature analysis and engaged in valuable discussions with our Living Labs partners to identify crucial NbS benefits and costs across various landscapes.

These insights are instrumental in constructing a robust methodological framework for us to build upon. We explored state-of-the-art advances in NbS assessment methods and scrutinized existing approaches of NbS economic and financial performance modelling & assessment. Simultaneously, we are getting ready to launch our collaborative workspace to keep all our stakeholders engaged in the activities most important to them.

Don't forget to explore our website – we will soon be releasing a sneak peek and introduction of our Living Labs and the team behind them through some videos.

Andreas Türk
Joanneum Research

Ingrid Kaltenegger
Joanneum Research



2. PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



Living Labs Workshop

Aarhus

Last summer, the Invest4Nature researchers and municipal representatives from the Living Labs, convened in Aarhus for an intensive workshop. The discussions centered on the economic dimensions and valuation approaches of Nature-Based Solutions (NbS).

Aarhus Municipality arranged insightful field trips to showcase innovative NbS implementations, including rainwater collection designs, urban water management projects, lake restorations, and afforestation initiatives.

Important questions were discussed, such as 'What climate, environmental and social benefits are in play for the different NbS cases within I4N Living Labs?' and 'How do Living Labs keep and access information on the costs of planning, implementing and maintaining NbS?'. The lively exchange between practitioners and researchers resulted in an engaging blend of practical insights and academic input which underscored the success of the workshop.





WORK PACKAGE 2

DEVELOPMENT OF A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR VALUING NbS



Nature-based solutions are characterised by delivering multiple benefits to society. For example, in the case of a river renaturation for flood prevention also a recreational value for the people nearby and a positive effect on biodiversity can arise. To build up a methodological framework to capture the total economic value of nature-based solutions, WP2 conducted a comprehensive literature review on benefit and cost categories as well as valuation methods for nature-based solutions. Together with the Living Labs involved in the project, benefits and costs for different types of nature-based solutions within different landscapes and contexts were discussed and mapped to societal challenges, underlying ecological processes and qualitative and quantitative assessment approaches. The results were published in deliverable **D2.1 “Value categories and approaches to assess NbS economic and financial performance”**. In a next step, Invest4Nature will work on an improvement of the total economic value framework especially to better integrate disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation of NbS.

Michael Kernitzkyi
Joanneum Research



WORK PACKAGE 3

EVIDENCE OF NBS ECONOMICS AND FINANCING



The work in WP3 on **‘Evidence of NbS economics and financing’** has a threefold scope. Firstly, it focuses on evaluating the existing evidence related to the financial and economic performance of Nature-based Solutions (NbS). Secondly, it seeks to synthesize insights on the financing mechanisms of NbS and Nature Based Enterprises (NBEs) markets. Finally, taken together, the findings from this work package contribute to informing the development parameterization of the decision support toolbox developed in WP4.

In recent months, our efforts centered on applying NbS typology, cost and benefit categories, as well as a diagnostic frameworks to our Living Labs. Our Aarhus workshop in June 2023 featured visits to local NbS cases – ranging from backyard climate ponds and water management in new inner-city developments to afforestation projects – showcasing innovative collaborations with private investors. In October, Aarhus Municipality hosted an inspirational workshop on NbS for NBEs, municipalities, landscape architects and city planners. By leveraging insights and tools from the Horizon 2020 project REGREEN, discussions were had on market opportunities, barriers, and strategies for increasing NbS deployment and investments.

Currently, WP3 is gathering evidence on NbS economic and social performance through literature reviews and deep dive analyses within our Living Labs. Next year, our focus will expand to include more NbS demonstration projects, contributing case studies to the Oppla platform. We are also making headway in assessing NbS markets, financing, and incentives through comprehensive reviews, interviews with 50 NBEs across Europe, and a forthcoming survey examining demand and supply dynamics in the NbS market.

Doan Nainggolan

Aarhus University

A scenic mountain landscape with a cyclist in the foreground and a barn in the middle ground. The background features a large, green mountain with patches of snow under a blue sky. The foreground shows a gravel path, a cyclist with a red backpack, and a wooden barn. The image is overlaid with a pattern of white diagonal lines.

WORK PACKAGE 4

UNDERSTANDING STAKEHOLDER NEEDS AND ENABLING NBS READINESS



Stakeholder mapping in Work Package 4 has now generated more than 150 prospective stakeholders and the database will be further expanded during rollout of the Invest4Nature workshop programme, commencing early in 2024. Project partners are encouraged to keep contributing to the database, which will be reviewed and subsequently reported again in June.

Work is now underway in planning and designing the **NbS co-development programme** in Task 4.3, comprising a series of workshops and events, supported by an online workspace. During the recent all-partner meeting in Stuttgart a session was hosted to develop a timeline of project activity around which the workshop programme is now being designed. The programme will focus on supporting stakeholder engagement at local level within the Living Labs, but all partners and Work Packages are encouraged to use this opportunity to engage stakeholders at all levels within the project. A schedule for the workshop programme will be announced soon.

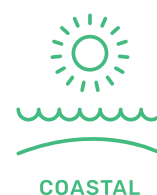
Meanwhile, the **online workspace** – now recently updated – is ready to begin receiving content and supporting interactions with stakeholders during and beyond the event programme. Going forward, the WP2 team will be working with Living Lab and WP leads to onboard content and support use of the workspace for activities such as stakeholder surveys, shared document editing, news on tasks and key milestones, and more.

Paul Mahony
Oppla

3. UPDATE FROM THE LIVING LABS



PORTUGAL



Considering the funding landscape in your Living Lab how did you set up your current NbS implementation?

Our NbS's funding comes from National and European sources. European funds, particularly Horizon Europe, although more geared towards research, allow us to obtain more knowledge. These funds have a strong focus on innovation and practical application, with positive impacts on sites. In our living labs, the implementation of the NbS was achieved through national funds such as the National Strategic Reference Framework, the Environmental Fund and the Operational Programme for Sustainability and Efficiency in the Use of Resources. These funds allow us to be more pragmatic and more effective in our implementation on the ground, such as the renaturalisation of Ribeira das Vinhas and the protection of biodiversity and dune ecosystems.

The main actions funded in Ribeira das Vinhas were the rehabilitation and restoration of the river's protection zones, the creation of ponds and retention basins to control flooding during heavy rainfall and to serve as biodiversity hotspots. The main goals of these actions were flood mitigation, soil erosion control and biodiversity conservation.

In the Cresmina Dune, the actions funded were the recovery of Coastal Habitats and the reconstruction of dunes and reinforcement of coastal morphology near the coast. The main goals of its rehabilitation are to mitigate coastal erosion, recover and protect coastal dune ecosystems and increase biodiversity.

João Dinis

Empresa Municipal de Ambiente de Cascais



DENMARK



COASTAL



URBAN



RURAL



MOUNTAINOUS



FLUVIAL

Considering the funding landscape in your Living Lab how did you set up your current NbS implementation?

Funding new forest landscapes in Aarhus Municipality, Denmark.

In Aarhus, Denmark, the current NbS implementation for afforestation projects on former agricultural land involves an annual municipality investment of about EUR 600,000.



The initiative aims to address multiple needs:

- Offering recreational areas for a growing population in Denmark's second-largest city.
- Safeguarding drinking water resources and surface water quality.
- Sequestering carbon and enhancing biodiversity over time.

Various business models fund these afforestation projects in partnership with private companies, NGOs, the Danish Climate Forest Foundation, water utility companies, and national foundations. For instance, the Hasselager Forest project collaborates between Aarhus Municipality and the Growing Trees Network (GTN). GTN collects donations from private companies using a “pay-per-tree” model, where companies contribute EUR 2.45 per tree, and GTN allocates EUR 1.94 per tree to the afforestation project.

As municipally owned land for tree planting is depleted, Aarhus Municipality is modifying the model, shifting to a “landscape” model. This new model involves the acquisition of land, with 25% covered by the municipality, 25% by private companies (and GTN), and 50% by the water utility company. This strategy ensures environmentally sensitive areas avoid pesticides or fertilizers.

The municipality aims to expand collaborations, looking for new co-financing possibilities to further develop nature-based solutions within the city.

Lone Telling

Aarhus Municipality



POLAND



COASTAL



URBAN



RURAL



MOUNTAINOUS



FLUVIAL



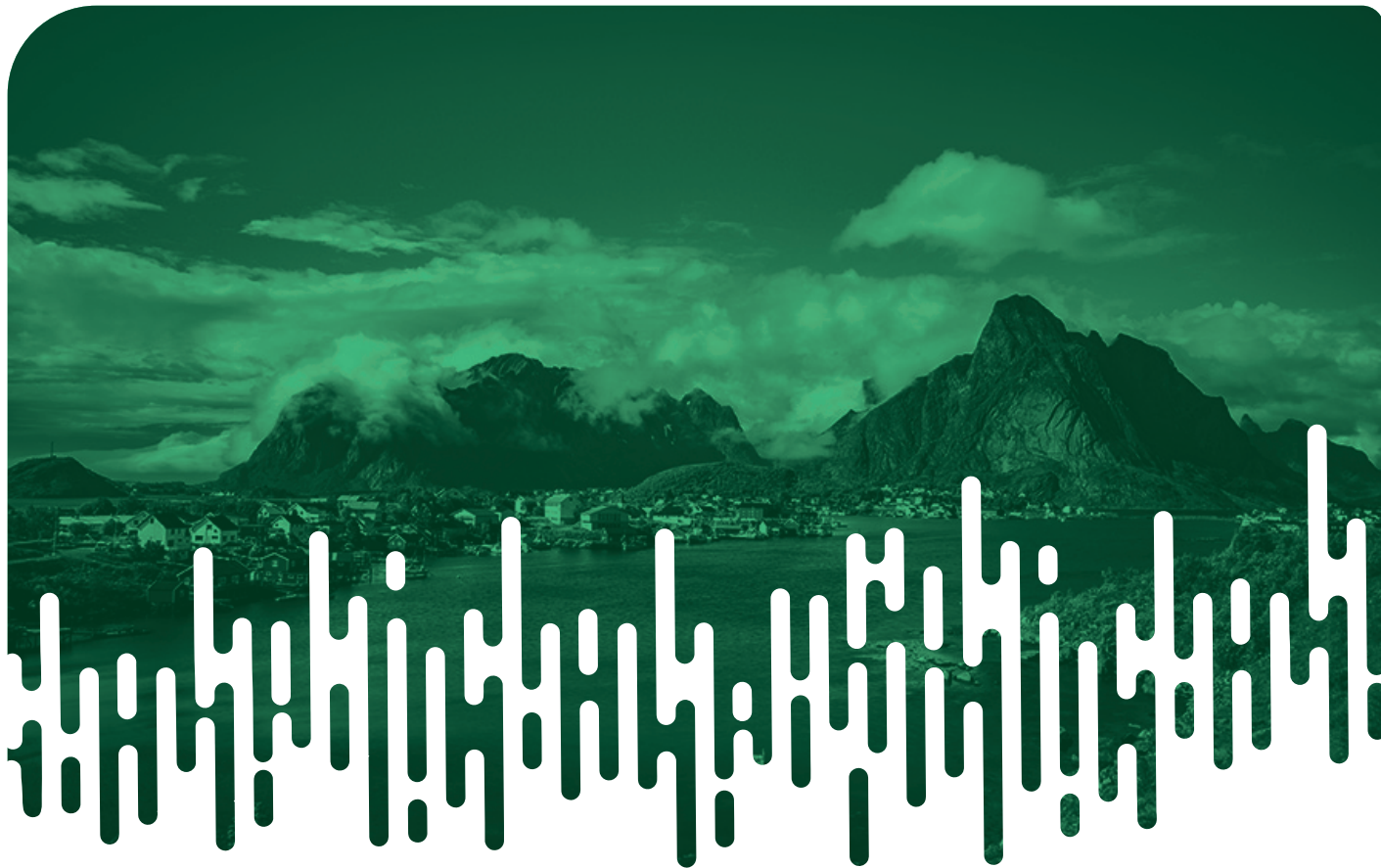
Considering the funding landscape in your Living Lab how did you set up your current NbS implementation?

Obtaining funding for introducing NbS in the city very often requires cross-financing approach, especially when investments are pilot project. City of Poznań actively looks for different funding solution, both from public and private sources.

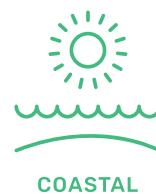
Public finance was secured through Poznań City Hall's "Programme for the Modernization and Extension of Playgrounds" and the Civic Budget initiative, which facilitated the development of natural playgrounds in public kindergartens from 2018 to 2021. Additionally, the Regional Fund for Environmental Protection and Water Management granted funds for ecological demonstrators in 21 kindergartens, highlighting successful fundraising.

Private funding presented challenges due to municipal expenditure perceptions and legislative constraints. However, collaborations with entities like Reforest'Action, certified by B Corp for environmental performance, introduced innovative approaches. Poznań cooperated with Reforest'Action in a trilateral partnership, involving Green-Up for planting leadership, Poznań Municipal Forests, and Poznań City Hall. This collaboration facilitated the planting of 53,000 trees over 8 hectares in 2021 and 2022, a significant stride in urban forest development. The approach circumvented legal barriers and established an effective model for private-public partnerships in NbS initiatives, overcoming prior challenges in public-private collaborations within municipal settings.

Agnieszka Osipiuk
Poznan



NORWAY



COASTAL



URBAN



RURAL



MOUNTAINOUS



FLUVIAL

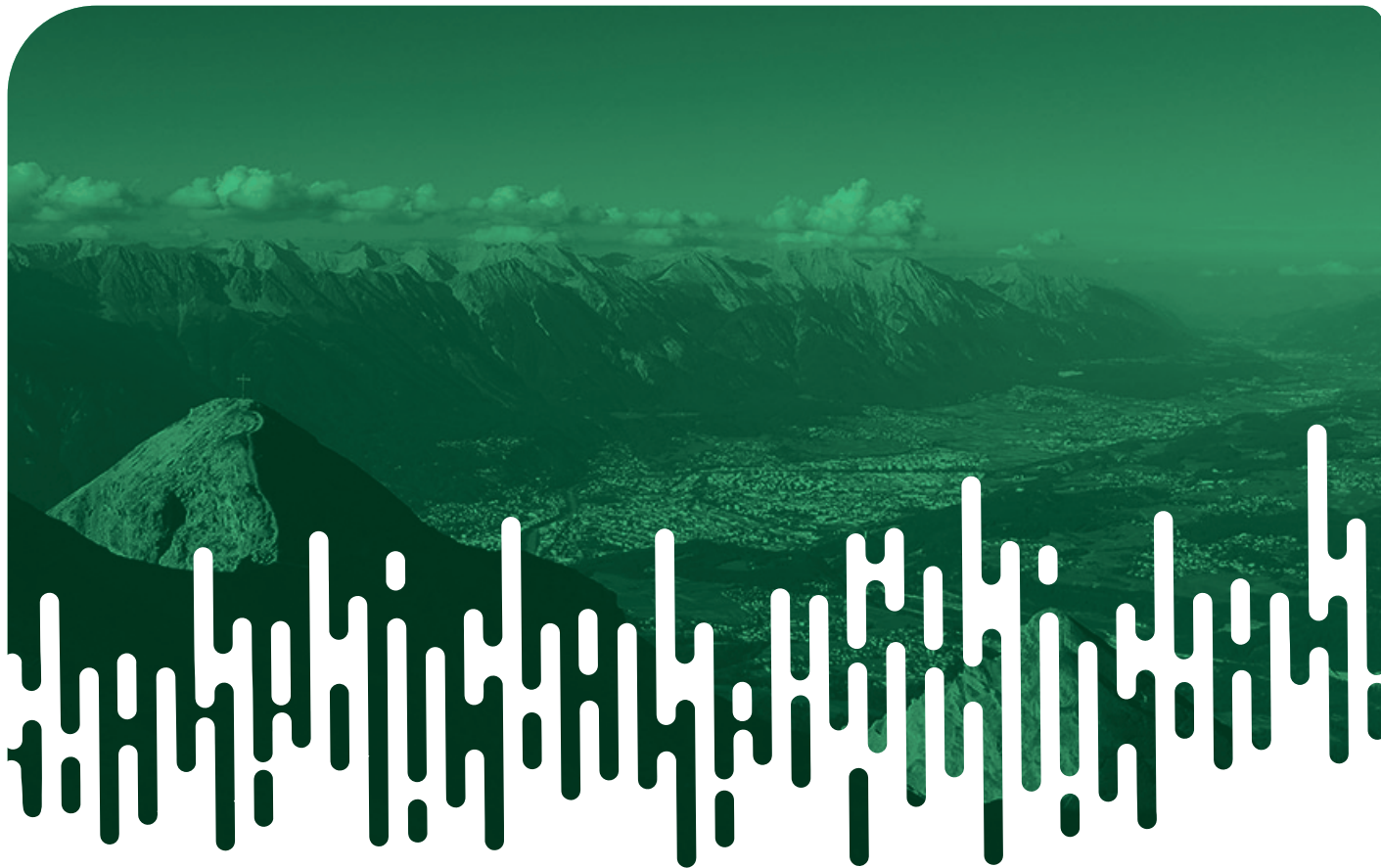
Considering the funding landscape in your Living Lab how did you set up your current NbS implementation?

Kelp restoration projects in the northern Norway have been carried out for more than a decade. Most of the projects are at experimental stage with small scales. Research funding has dominated the funding source. In the last five years, increasing interest has poured in from the private sectors.

For example private companies who are interested in harvesting urchins and making profit from urchins are collaborating with researchers actively. The private company have initiated several small scale projects together with researchers in NIVA and other research institutes in Norway, trying to cull urchins and cultivate them with various methods. The indirect benefits of the projects are kelp recovery. This year one tourist company in the North is working with us on another research project and explore how to embed the urchin harvesting into the tourism program and find out the feasibility of the plans. The restoration activities usually involves many actors including local municipalities, marine protected area management authorities, industries who are interested in harvesting urchin in addition to research institutes.

Availability of public fundings and the willingness of private industry to involve and to pay for the restoration are all challenges we have faced. However, as the awareness of ecosystem restoration is increasing at all levels as well as the Restoration targets 2030, we see the increase in funding source and the willingness of private industries in the field.

Wenting Chen
NIVA



AUSTRIA



COASTAL



URBAN



RURAL



MOUNTAINOUS



FLUVIAL

Considering the funding landscape in your Living Lab how did you set up your current NbS implementation?

The Alpine region of Tyrol is a highly mountainous area with only 12 % habitable area. Thus, as a region vulnerable to the effects of climate change, protective forests play an important and prioritized role in creating a 'green shield' against natural hazards in the local region.

The current NbS implementations for reforestation of the protective forests through sustainable forest management strongly relies on public funding. Given the challenges posed by the extreme conditions of our region, the cost of reforestation is substantial, and timber revenue alone cannot cover these expenses. Therefore, public funding, with significant contributions from the Tyrolean government and municipalities, forms the backbone of our climate-fit protective forest reforestation efforts.

To complement this funding model, the "Climate-Smart Mountain Forest" project was launched by the Tyrolean government in 2019. This project focuses on raising awareness and building capacity for climate-resilient reforestation. One innovative aspect of this project involves private investors sponsoring climate-smart tree islands. This private sponsorship aligns with the principles of sustainable forest management and offers various "sponsor packages" based on the size of the mixed forest islands being sponsored.

Klimbündnis Tirol Team

4. EVENTS





➤ The Nature of Cities Festival 2024

**The Nature of Cities Festival –
The distance between dreams and
reality is ACTION (tnoc-festival.com)**



➤ Nature-based Solutions Conference 2024 “GROWING POSITIVE CHANGE”

**Personal Information – Nature-based
Solutions Conference Oxford (cvent.com)**



CONEXUS

Urban nature connects us
Conectados por la naturaleza urbana
Conectados pela natureza urbana

➤ Accelerating urban nature-based solutions: A Latin American – European collaboration

Barcelona 24 – Conexus (conexusnbs.com)

5. 'AT MY DESK'





Andreas Türk and Ingrid Kaltenegger



Francesca Tedeschini, Michael Kernitzkyi and Viktoria Kofler

Who are you and what is your role in Invest4Nature?

We are **Andreas Türk** and **Ingrid Kaltenegger**, project coordinator and project manager of invest4nature and **Michael Kernitzkyi**, leader of WP 2 and **Viktoria Kofler** and **Francesca Tedeschini**, working in WP 2 and 3. We all work at JOANNEUM RESEARCH Forschungsgesellschaft mbH – LIFE, the Institute for Climate, Energy and Society.

Besides a smooth project management, JR mainly deals with the economics and financing of NbS in Invest4Nature. This includes new evidence of costs and benefits, advance evaluation methods and new financing approaches and value chains. Also new demand and supply channels triggered by an emerging circular economy will be investigated. As academic institution we will engage in high quality publications.

What motivates you in Invest4Nature?

Despite the multiple benefits of nature-based solutions, they are not systematically understood. There is currently no standard method to calculate the economic and financial benefits that can be used to back their investment case. The financial valuation in the various areas of environment, society, or economy is an important indicator for financial stakeholders such as investors and insurances in building support for nature-based solutions.

For us, there are two main motivators in Invest4Nature. Firstly, the content and expected impact: as the only selected project of this HEU call, we will set the benchmark for research in this area. We believe for establishing new sustainably economic structures, preserving biodiversity but also for adapting to the increasingly visible Climate Change NbS will be important solutions. They are the counter vision of resource depletion as well as our attitude towards nature. Secondly, the project team bundles key actors and platforms in this area and the team members are not only highly knowledgeable but also very motivated.

What upcoming activities in Invest4Nature are you most excited about?

In September 2023, WP 5 has finally started. The aim of this work package is to lay the foundation for advancing the NbS market development, taking into account investor' requirements, addressing specificities of supply-side cases, as well as demand and supply chains from other sectors and broader policy framework support, with a focus on the EU Sustainable Finance Framework. A decision support tool will be developed which aims at facilitating the evaluation of the sustainability and effectiveness of NbS compared to the grey/green solutions. The toolbox will support decision-making processes making the users able to check if the NbS chosen is the most adapted for the defined targets via a variety of advanced analysis, including ROI, cost benefits, risks, socio economic impact, business model, sustainability model.

6. FROM THE SECTOR



NETWORK NATURE+

NetworkNature+ Scaling up nature-based solutions to achieve 2030 policy goals

NetworkNature+ is an EU-funded project under HORIZON EUROPE that will continue NetworkNature's legacy as one-stop-shop for nature-based solutions and accelerate upscaling of NbS across science, business, policy and practice in line with the EUs' ambitions to address biodiversity loss, ecosystem degradation and climate change by 2030. The platform's aim is to strengthen partnerships and to foster new relationships around a clear strategic framework for action contributing to the EC's vision of "a stronger Europe in the world" and supporting new investments for NbS. NetworkNature+ will provide scientific NbS insights across selected policy priorities and different European and international contexts. Actions such as: dialogue, stakeholder interactions, knowledge sharing (training and capacity building) and awareness raising are foreseen. The project will result in products, standards and advisory services that support the growing NbS community of innovators, practitioners and developers to a regional and Europe-wide transdisciplinary collaboration.

Target groups are from science, policy, business and society.

Project duration:

August 2023 to July 2027
(48 months)

Partners:

11 partner organisations
from 6 countries

Website:

 networknature.eu

Social Media:

 [@NetworkNatureEU](https://twitter.com/NetworkNatureEU)

 [NetworkNature EU](https://www.linkedin.com/company/networknature-eu)

Coordinator's contact:

 hello@networknature.eu



IB GREEN

Interrelations between Invest4Nature and IB-Green projects:

How a better understanding of nature-based solutions' benefits can inspire public and private stakeholders to take concrete action

As highly sealed surfaces, industrial and business parks are vulnerable to overheating and increasing heat stress in urban areas. Even though industrial and business parks are drivers for economic wealth and that they would gain in being more sustainable, adaptation measures have so far been largely neglected in those areas. As industrial and business parks cover a significant area in Europe, they offer a high potential for implementing nature-based solutions.

This is the goal of the IB-Green project: transform existing industrial and business parks by implementing green-blue infrastructure in order to offer better working and living conditions and reduce heat stress for enterprises and on city level.

The public/private cooperation is of particular importance in the modernisation of industrial and business parks: if we want to implement nature-based solutions on a significant scale (which means not only on public space), private company owners and business parks managers need to be included in the process together with public authorities.

This is where Invest4Nature brings its expertise, as its aim is to develop a better understanding of the economic and financial performance of nature-based solutions and to promote investments in the measures. This understanding is central to convince the public and private stakeholders involved in the planning, management and modernisation of industrial and business parks of the numerous benefits that nature-based solutions would have – on the economic, social, health, monetary levels –, both on their enterprises and at the city level.

And inspire them to action!

IB-Green Lead Partner:

Climate Alliance

 www.climatealliance.org

Contact:

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 ib-green.nweurope.eu



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

Are you part of an organization that
could benefit from Invest4Nations
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!**

Then don't hesitate to contact us at:

info@invest4nature.eu

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www.invest4nature.eu



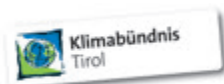
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