



Digest

SPRING 2026

Nature-based Solutions: **working together**

An update from NetworkNature
and the NbS Cluster Task Forces





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European Commission

Supporting sustainable farming with nature through EU policy, research and innovation

Biodiversity and healthy soils are increasingly recognised as fundamental pillars of sustainable and resilient agriculture. As the triple planetary crisis of biodiversity loss, climate change and pollution intensify, strengthening the ecological foundations of farming becomes essential for ensuring food security and environmental stability in the long-run.

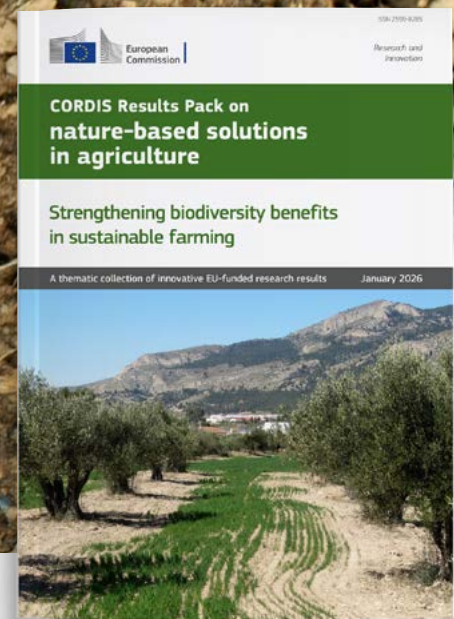
1 Accelerating agroecology and organic farming for a more sustainable agri-food system | Results Pack | CORDIS | European Commission

2 Directive - EU - 2025/2360 - EN - EUR-Lex

3 Delegated regulation - EU - 2025/2188 - EN - EUR-Lex

Sustainable farming approaches¹ such as agroecology, agroforestry and organic farming integrate biodiversity into farm management to varying degrees, enhancing ecosystem services such as nutrient cycling, natural pest control, carbon storage and pollination. As such, they offer the potential to work with nature rather than against it. When scaled up, they offer practical pathways toward more resilient agri-food systems that can better withstand climate shocks and environmental pressures.

Healthy soils are central to this transformation. Soil is a living ecosystem that underpins agricultural productivity while regulating water, storing carbon and supporting biodiversity. Recognising its critical role, the EU has adopted a Soil Monitoring Law² aimed at restoring soil health across Europe by 2050.



It addresses soil degradation and promotes sustainable land management practices, creating a framework to systematically monitor soil conditions and guide restoration efforts. By strengthening soil resilience, so could the ecological base upon which sustainable agriculture depends.

Above ground, pollinators also play a crucial role, but their decline poses serious risks to food production and biodiversity. To address this, the European Commission has established a standardized, science-based monitoring method under the EU Pollinator Monitoring Scheme³. In line with the EU Nature Restoration Regulation, this initiative enables Member States to track pollinator populations consistently and effectively by 2030. By ensuring comparable and reliable data across national territories, the scheme supports evidence-based conservation measures and targeted restoration of degraded ecosystems.

Complementing these recent policy developments, EU research and innovation efforts are also supporting healthy soils and the integration of biodiversity in sustainable agriculture. The [CORDIS Results Pack on nature-based solutions in agriculture](#) highlights how research projects are advancing agroecological practices, agroforestry systems and diversified farming models and showcases the digital tools, innovative business models, networks and knowledge that support the integration of biodiversity into production systems, enhance soil health and strengthen ecosystem functions, with the objective of improving resilience while maintaining productivity.

Together, recent EU policy developments and research initiatives demonstrate a coherent need to shift toward agriculture that values biodiversity and healthy soils as strategic assets, and are laying the groundwork for a more sustainable and climate-resilient agricultural future.

NetworkNature Task Forces

Working together on nature-based solutions



The NetworkNature Team

The NbS Cluster Task Forces (TF) are working with a growing portfolio of EU Horizon projects that focus on nature-based solutions.

We collaborate on six impactful areas of nature-based solutions, seeking to share best practice, learn from each other and co-create new tools and resources to help our community achieve impact.

Working together through the Task Forces we can:

- Create common messages for NbS and facilitate knowledge sharing, development and synthesis to amplify project findings, dissemination and exploitation.
- Build long-lasting collaborations and strengthen networks between diverse EU NbS projects, partners and other stakeholders across a wide range of disciplines and professions
- Enable meaningful synergies to combine efforts and save resources around common areas of interests and work to address gaps for NbS design, creation and implementation.
- Maximise impact for mainstreaming NbS.

Membership to the Task Forces is open to partners of EU Horizon NbS projects (Cluster 6) and selected projects directly funded by the EU Missions.

There are six NbS Task Forces: five coordinated by NetworkNature and one by ENABLS:

→ **Task Force 1: Data and Knowledge Sharing.**

Helping projects with data-related challenges and working to improve how data on NbS and biodiversity is collected, standardised and shared.

→ **Task Force 2: Integrated Assessment Framework.**

Facilitating the exchange of knowledge and expertise on NbS assessment and evaluation, to promote standardised approaches measuring the multiple benefits of NbS.

→ **Task Force 3: Governance, Business Models and Financial Mechanisms.** Focusing on mobilising finance and investments, creating business models and supporting enterprises and entrepreneurs.

→ **Task Force 4: NbS Communicators.**

Using strategic communication, resource sharing and advocacy efforts to elevate awareness and exchange valuable insights around NbS.

→ **Task Force 5: Education.**

Transforming education into a powerful force for positive environmental action, ensuring a more sustainable and harmonious future.

→ **Task Force 6: Co-creation and Governance.**

Co-creation and co-governance for nature-based solutions.

Read on to learn about what's been happening in the Task Forces over the last six months and what's ahead during the summer and autumn. →

Task Force 1

Data and Knowledge Sharing



Metadata templates for NbS indicators

The TF1 team has now finished its review of nature-based solutions (NbS) indicators, using the evaluation handbook previously developed by Task Force 2. NbS indicators are

measurable variables used to evaluate the performance and impacts of NbS; and are important for providing evidence of effectiveness, supporting decision-making and policy, and helping to justify investments by showing the real benefits of NbS.

More than 80 priority indicators have been shortlisted to a working set of 11 through a process of collaborative review, involving Task Forces 2, 3 and 6. These 11 indicators and the societal challenge areas they align with are summarised below:

Challenge Areas	Selected Indicators
Biodiversity enhancement	Number of species (native, non-native, invasive)
Climate resilience	Carbon stored/sequestered
Air quality	Number of days above thresholds, EU Air Quality Index
New economic opportunities	Number of new jobs created
Water management	Surface runoff / water quality / scarcity / autonomy / pollutants
Green space management	Total green and blue space within a defined area
Participatory planning and governance	Openness of participatory processes
Climate resilience	Heat (TXx, TNn), heatwave incidence, human comfort
Social justice and cohesion	Availability and equitable distribution of blue-green space
Health and wellbeing	Level of outdoor physical activity
Natural and climate hazards	Mean annual losses due to natural and climate hazards

Each indicator has been considered in terms of its impact potential, implementation requirements, applicability and scalability, and ease of standardisation.

The metadata templates will provide standardised formats for collecting monitoring data for reporting on these indicators at local level – for example, by municipalities, catchment managers and other EU Horizon Europe case studies. The aim is to improve the consistency and compatibility of data on NbS impacts, supporting an evidence base for policy and decision-making.

Development of the templates is underway during Q2-Q3 2026, and testing with NbS project case studies is expected to commence during autumn this year.

Get involved: Are you working on any of the indicator topic areas? Would you be interested in testing the metadata templates in your own NbS project? Contact Task Force 1 if you'd like to know more about this work:

TF1@networknature.eu

Artificial intelligence in research and innovation

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly shaping how research and innovation are conducted, particularly by accelerating data-intensive tasks and enabling new forms of analysis. Across NbS projects, AI is already being used to process large datasets, analyse satellite and sensor imagery, model environmental outcomes and support decision-making. It is also automating repetitive tasks such as data cleaning, species identification and report summarisation. While many applications are still in pilot stages, AI is rapidly moving from experimental use toward operational integration.

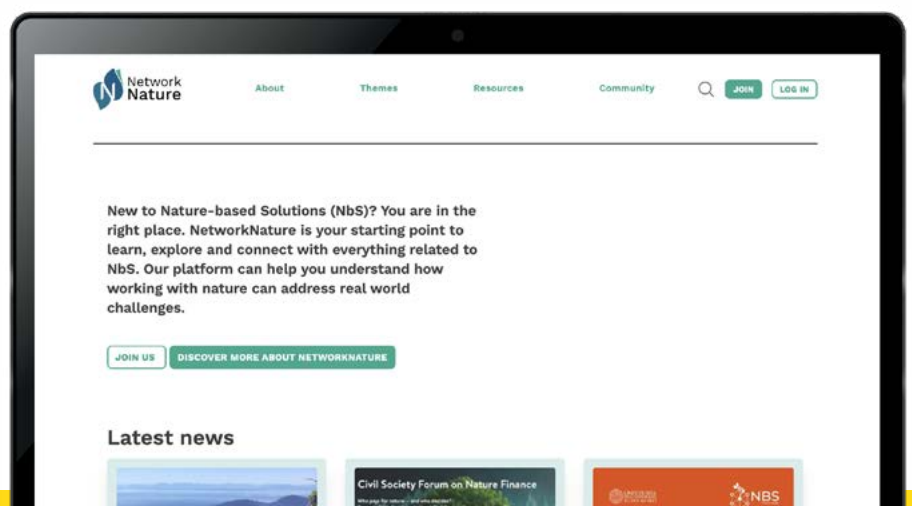
For NbS projects, this shift potentially means a rebalancing of roles: AI augments technical tasks, while human expertise becomes more important in interpretation, critical thinking, stakeholder engagement and ensuring ethical and responsible use. At the same time, AI introduces new challenges around data quality, transparency, bias, regulatory compliance and environmental impact, which projects must actively manage.

Task Force 1 is actively exploring these and other issues in relation to AI. We explored this topic at last year's Hackathon event, and with input from other EU Horizon Europe projects, are producing a non-technical briefing note for to help guide effective and responsible use of AI by the NbS community.

Get involved: Are you working with or otherwise interested in AI? Join us in exploring this topic by contacting TF1@networknature.eu

New API available for sharing NetworkNature content

A new API software tool (application programming interface) is available for sharing NetworkNature and Oppla content with other websites. If you'd like to feature relevant resources and case studies from other NbS projects on your website, contact the team at Oppla who can support you in using the API for this purpose: support@oppla.eu





Task Force 2

Integrated Assessment Framework

Task force 2 focuses on the co-creation of an integrated assessment framework.

Overall, a dedicated core group of stakeholders actively shares ideas and presents recent project updates. Over the past six months, the taskforce has hosted presentations and discussions on the outputs from CLIMA-Gen, ARCADIA, NATUREDEMO, and TRANS-Lighthouse.

This has been a productive year for the task force, which is structured into three priority workstreams.

- **Workstream 1 – Development of a Mini Handbook on Biodiversity Indicators.** The task force has made strong progress on the Mini Handbook over the past six months. Many indicators are now complete, and experts from across NetworkNature and Task force 2 will support the editing, refinement, and final review of the indicators within the Mini Handbook.
- **Workstream 2 – Improving the Usability and Synergy of NbS Indicators.** This workstream is led by partners within the AIM NbS project. Since its kick-off last year, the project has made substantial progress and is now fully underway. An online survey was designed, tested, and received ethical approval, building on discussions from the NetworkNature Annual Event (September 2025). The survey has been widely circulated across NetworkNature, its Hubs, the Task forces, and beyond. It has already received a high number of responses, with analysis and feedback expected in the first half of 2026.



→ **Workstream 3 – Consolidating Evidence to Support the Integrated Assessment Framework.**

This workstream focuses on developing a meta-repository of solutions across the different phases of the integrated assessment framework. This is an ongoing effort, with task force members continuously contributing to and refining the repository. It is expected that this resource will help inform the NetworkNature website.

Summary of Aims

The future of Task force 2 is very promising, with participants highly motivated for 2026. Monthly presentations and discussions are already planned, including contributions from Commit2Green, NATURANCE, NATALTIE, and SpongeScapes.

Task force 2 is benefiting from increased involvement from other task forces. We are continuing to strengthen collaboration, particularly with Task force 1 and Task force 6. In addition, discussions have begun to explore stronger links with NBS4EU who are also exploring the idea of an integrated assessment framework.

In the first half of 2026 it is crucial to support the completion of the AIM NbS project and leverage its results to further improve the usability and synergy of NbS indicators, while feeding into ongoing Task force 2 discussions.

In 2026 the task force plans to review and finalise the mini handbook of urban biodiversity indicators. This will serve as a template for further handbooks.

Continued development of the metadata repository within the MIRO into a usable output with the hopes of trying to integrate it as a tool on the website.

The Task force has also been exploring a variety of highly ambitious potential ideas including the potential of developing a unified project report template and Turning the handbook of indicators into a digital tool that could provide tailored subsets of indicators depending on a stakeholder specific needs and requirements.

There are many projects within the Task force producing a wide variety of work. Therefore, ongoing presentations and updates are scheduled from Commit2Green, Naturance, NATALTIE, and SpongeScapes.

Task Force 3

Governance, Business Models and Financial Mechanisms

Publication: Policy Imperatives for a Competitive and Resilient Nature-Positive Economy

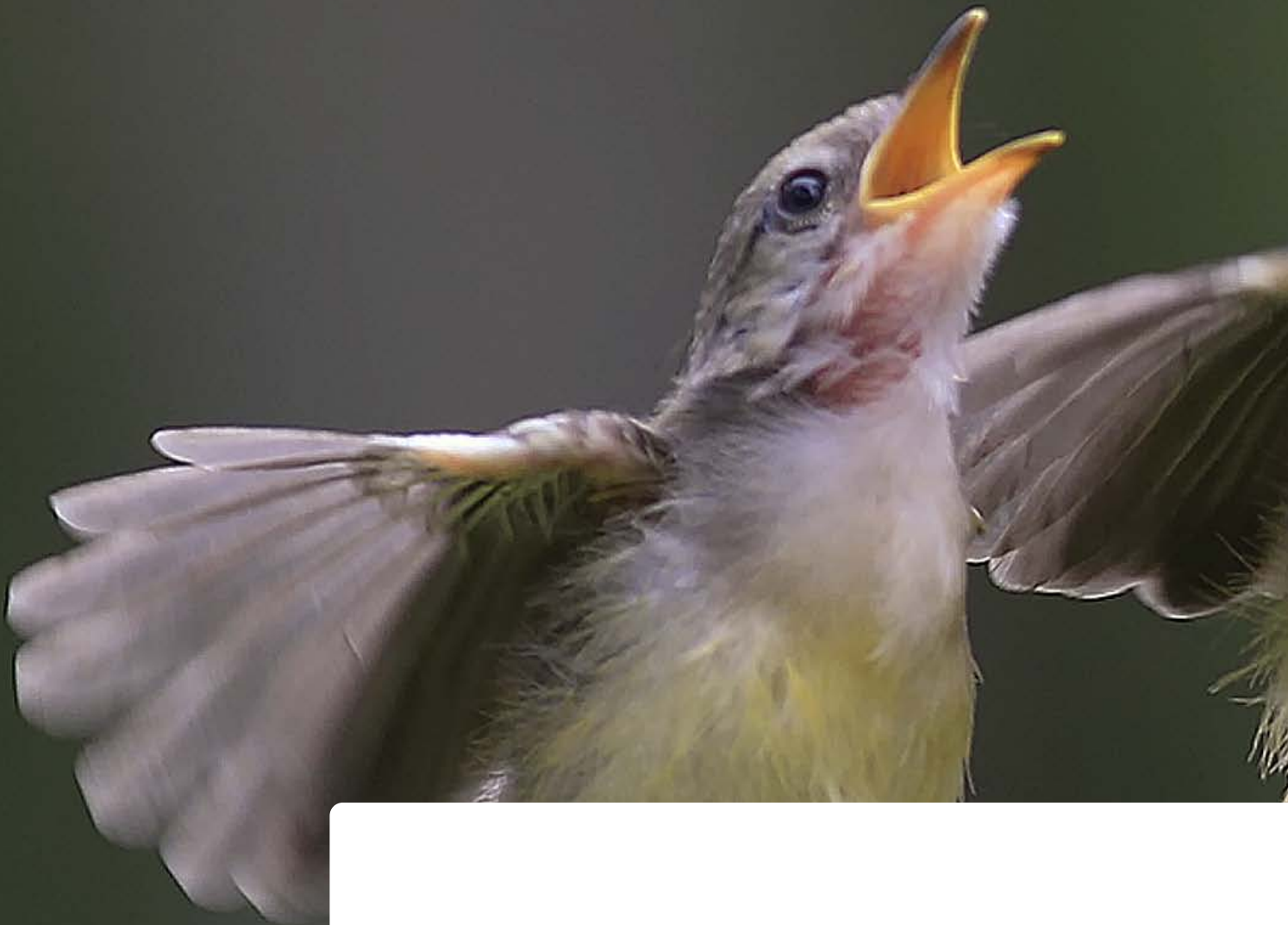
A new publication developed under NetworkNature's NbS Task Force 3 on Finance and Business Models (for NbS) in a Nature-Positive Economy and coordinated by the Invest4Nature project brings together insights from 45 EU-funded research and innovation projects to outline pathways toward a Nature-Positive Economy (NPE).

The report highlights that nature loss is not only an ecological crisis but also a systemic economic risk, with more than two-thirds of the EU's Gross Value Added dependent on nature. At the same time, transitioning to a nature-positive economy offers major opportunities for innovation, resilience, and prosperity.

It shows how placing nature at the core of EU policies through strategic investment, coherent regulation, empowered local action, and systemic reform can help deliver the European Green Deal, the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, while ensuring economic growth within planetary boundaries and restoring nature for future generations.



Discover the publication and explore how Europe can build a competitive, resilient, and nature-positive economy.



Over the next six months, our TF will continue our recurring walk-in meeting, in addition to our general meetings.

These walk-in meetings have created a space for more spontaneous trouble shooting and group work. We will also dedicate more time to shaping the NetworkNature Communications Toolkit for Local and Regional Governments, an output that will highlight case studies and resources from Horizon projects. You can suggest materials to feature [here](#).



A TF4 highlight continues to be the NetworkNature Reads Campaign, to which TF4 members are encouraged to contribute.

Featuring books from [The Golden Spruce](#) to [The Venomous Lumpsucker](#), #NetworkNatureReads is inspired by #ReadingRainbow and the #NewYorkTimes #ByTheBook series, both of which spread a love of reading by highlighting standout books and the people who love them. Our goal is to do the same, but with a #naturebasedsolutions flavor. What is more, this opportunity is open to members of all NetworkNature TFs (and projects), not just those involved in TF4.



Need a reminder of how TF4 is directly supporting project communications?

Look no further, we've got you covered:

- [Vote on the terms](#) to be included in our NbS Lexicon
- Peer2Peer learning opportunities
- TF4 Monthly Digest
- NetworkNature Reads Features
- [Suggest communication resources](#) to be featured in our upcoming toolkit

Task Force 5

Education

Task Force 5 on education launched in January 2024, and focuses on Contributing to the Open Educational Resource possible for all.

Task Force 5 on education launched in January 2024, and focuses on integrating nature-based solutions at all levels of education.

The primary goals of TF5 include: (1) fostering a community of educators, researchers, and policymakers who are committed to incorporating NBS in curricula across Europe, and (2) enhancing environmental awareness and problem-solving among students and teachers alike.

Under the [eNaBLS](#) lead the TF5 continuously meets with NBS projects to discuss education and look what synergies between the projects could arise.

The dissemination of project materials and news of all TF5 partners is fostered by our regular meetings:

- Keep each other informed about existing networks and ongoing work in NBS-related initiatives such as the NetworkNature Task Forces,
- Share and promote existing materials through TF5 members' dissemination channels, so they can feed into future projects,

- Identify the best platforms and methods to share NBS learning materials with the right audiences by fostering communication among projects and with the EU Commission,
- Use TF5 meetings to introduce new projects, share experiences, and learn from one another in a collaborative and synergistic way.

Additionally, we started a collection of Open Educational Resources (OER) on NBS and biodiversity within TF5, where everybody who knows about OERs on NBS and biodiversity can contribute via insertion in the linked [table](#). We extend an existing list of eNaBLS on Open Educational Resources (OER) with the help of all TF5 members and others.

If you would like to join the conversation, become a member, or just to find out more, please get in touch with our Task force Leaders Dr. Ann-Catrin Fender (anncatrin.fender@uni-hohenheim.de) and Dr. Rasa Pakeltienė.



Save the date! NetworkNature Week at the NbS International Congress 2026 2 - 6 November 2026

Shaping a Resilient Future for People and Nature through Knowledge and Action



At a time when urgent transformative change is needed to address the intertwined crises of climate change and biodiversity loss, the **Nature-based Solutions International Congress** will aim to shape a resilient future for people and nature through knowledge and action.

From **November 2 to 6, 2026**, in Paris, France, the event will gather researchers, policymakers, practitioners, local and regional representatives, national and transnational public authorities, businesses, investors, and civil society from around

the world, serving as a global meeting point for those working around nature and people.

Built as a dialogue across sectors and disciplines, and organised by the **French National Research Program on Nature-based Solutions (SOLU-BIOD)** and **NetworkNature**, in collaboration with **UNP+, Biodiversa+, Sorbonne University, and the City of Paris**, the Congress will seek to create a decisive moment for nature, strengthening synergies, bridging communities, and amplifying the international impact of NbS.

NbS International Congress Structure 2026

The Congress is organised as two parallel and interconnected programmes. This design reflects a shared ambition: to build strong **knowledge-to-action and action-to-knowledge pathways**, enabling a two-way exchange between science, policy, and practice, and ensuring that each community informs and strengthens the others.

Scientific Conference (3–6 November)

This dedicated forum, organised by the **French National Research Program on Nature-based Solutions (SOLU-BIOD), Sorbonne University, and Biodiversa+**, will fill a critical gap by providing a space to present and discuss fundamental, interdisciplinary, participatory, and action-oriented research on the design, implementation, and evaluation of NbS, while fostering dialogue across disciplines and sectors.

The conference will be structured around thematic sessions, co-designed with the international NbS community to reflect the **diversity, innovation, and transformative potential of NbS research across continents**. By bringing together perspectives from the natural, human, and social sciences, these sessions will foster genuine transdisciplinary dialogue.

Firmly grounded in science yet open beyond academia, the conference recognises that **transformative change requires the convergence of knowledge, governance, and practice**. Practitioners, businesses, policymakers, investors, and civil society actors are warmly invited to share their experience, contribute their perspectives, and join cross-sectoral dialogues.

A registration fee will apply to participants attending the Scientific Conference.

NetworkNature Week (2 to 5 November)

The week will bring together researchers, policymakers, practitioners, local and regional authorities, national and European representatives, businesses, investors, and civil society actors from around the world. They will explore how public authorities can shape and drive a resilient future for people and nature through knowledge and action. The week, organised by NetworkNature, will be structured around key events:

→ Network Nature Science Policy Dialogue.

Held on **2 November** and organised by NetworkNature, this dialogue will explore the

unprecedented opportunity of the National Restoration Plans to drive change in Europe, and **discuss recommendations** for the future implementation of the National Restoration Plans.

→ NetworkNature Annual Event 2026, *Futures with Nature*.

This event will take place on **3 November**. Organised by NetworkNature, it will **invite different visions of how resilient and thriving futures for nature and people could look — and how to get there**. By sharing brave and forward-looking ideas, initiatives, policies and projects where public authorities at all levels play a key role in shaping a resilient future for both people and nature, participants **will be invited to turn inspiration into action**.

→ Cities Festival

Taking place on **4 November**, organised by UNP+ in collaboration with NetworkNature and the City of Paris, the festival will bring together local and regional governments to address pressing urban socio-ecological challenges. It will focus on **raising awareness, building capacity, sharing best practices, and fostering peer-to-peer exchange** to overcome barriers to implementing nature-based solutions. The development of Urban Nature Plans will be a key component of the agenda.

→ NbS Task Forces Cluster Meeting,

Taking place on 5 November, it will bring together Task Forces members. This event is only open to Task Force members.

In addition to that, the **Future Postcards** exhibition will feature inspiring cases, projects, initiatives and ideas that support the vision of a just, safe and thriving future for all and will invite the audience to share them with local, regional and national authorities.

An open call for projects, ideas, and speakers for the NetworkNature Week and Annual Event will be announced by early-May 2026.

The NetworkNature Week is open access, while some events will require registration upon approval.

More details on the program, registration, and participation opportunities will follow.

We look forward to welcoming you to Paris in November 2026!



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This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 887396 and from Horizon Europe under grant No 101082213.



UK Research and Innovation

This project is funded by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) under the UK government's Horizon Europe funding guarantee



ALTAMIRA
SYSTEMS THINKING FOR REGENERATIVE FINANCE



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The University of Dublin

