Task Force Meeting, 27 October 2020

Minutes of Virtual Horizon 2020 Nature-Based Solutions Taskforce Meeting 27th October 2020

This document provides minutes of the virtual Horizon 2020 nature-based solutions taskforce meeting held on 27th October 2020, organised by NetworkNature, European Commission EASME and European Commission Research and Innovation. The purpose of the meeting was to bring together Taskforce members, NetworkNature, EASME and the European Commission for an interactive dialogue to take stock of achievements to date and chart a way forward to further increase the impact that the Horizon 2020 nature-based solutions projects create. Key outputs from the Taskforces were presented, giving greater visibility to their work and expectations for the Taskforces' operations were discussed and clarified. Taskforces discussed their strategic plans and upcoming activities and explored new ideas for future cooperation. New Horizon 2020 nature-based solutions projects introduced themselves. Panelists from different walks shared their perspective on how the Taskforces contribute to generating opportunities for implementing nature-based solutions across Europe.

Follow up from the meeting will take place through the work of the Taskforces and an annual meeting for the Taskforces will be hosted by NetworkNature.

Welcome and aims of the meeting

Phillippe Tulkens, European Commission, DG Research and Innovation highlighted that nature based solutions are at the core of EU policy and essential for a sustainable future. Nature-based solutions are part of the latest LEADERS' PLEDGE FOR NATURE - United to Reverse Biodiversity Loss by 2030 for Sustainable Development. The pledge was endorsed last week by 76 Heads of State and Government at the UN General Assembly, including by our President von der Leyen.

They are present in the Green deal and at the heart of the recovery plan. Covid-19 has highlighted the importance of green spaces. We need to work with nature not against it. We now need to influence investment. To make sure research and innovation influences policy, we want to help disseminate information quickly. Three issues we are waiting for: task force handbook for evaluating the impact of nature-based solutions, complete the case studies on Oppla, the output of business cases.

The European Commission has invested heavily in research and innovation in nature-based solutions and will continue to do so through the Green Deal and Horizon Europe, building on the more than 200 mln euro the EU has invested in NBS projects over the last 4 years. Hence, your work, our work, are very timely. To make the most of it – to contribute to a sustainable future through R&I, it is necessary that we all work together, that you as projects work together with each other, that we as policy work closely with you.

Sofie Vandewoestijne, European Commission, EASME added that the current context is highlighting the need:

- For a larger number, and more effective NBS,
- For more connections between the public, practice, policy and research communities
- For more concrete sustainable solutions that can be used in the EU Green Deal and similar stimulus packages and recovery plans

This is where project partners come in, and we thank you for your participation today, but even more so for full engagement in the NBS projects and TF. It is by working together – by binding forces – and disseminating clear and consistent messages - that your project outputs will be heard, will be taken up into policy guidelines and stimulus packages.

That is why we encourage the TF work. The main idea behind is that they have the possibility to:

- exchange knowledge, develop synergies, and build on each other's results,
- enlarge networks
- have a critical mass to have more impact when they communicate their results.

We would really like to insist that the diversity and uniqueness of each projects is maintained and valorized.

During this day, we will highlight the success stories of the TFs that could not have been possible by any project by itself, together assess the governance of the TFs, in particular with the CSA NetworkNature now thoroughly running and involved and define future directions and opportunities of the TFs

The team of the European Commission was introduced:

EASME Alberto Pozza (R&I Nerea Aizpurua) - TF1 on the Data Management and EU NBS Knowledge Repository … the goal is to find common solutions. Knowledge repository via Oppla.

EASME Laura Palomo (R&I Tiago Freitas) - TF2 NBS Impact Evaluation Framework. We need to collaborate projects and establish indicators for quality. We aim to work on integrating this into a handbook, to help guide practitioners.

EASME Victoria Beaz (R&I Julie Delcroix/Kasia Drabicka) - TF 3 Governance, Business Models and Financial Mechanisms. We need to advance in increasing supply and demand of NBS by focusing on three things 1) financing approaches 2) procuring NBS 3)business models

EASME Sofie Vandewoestijne (R&I Josefina Enfedaque) - TF4 NBS Communicators. Although not much has been done with this task force, I hope today will provide some clarification on where we need to go next.

EASME Piret Noukas (R&I Dessy Kadinova) - TF6 – We aim to create Inclusive urban regeneration.

Introduction to NetworkNature and Taskforces

With the relaunch of the Horizon 2020 NBS Cluster Taskforces the aim is to strengthen networking, knowledge sharing, and collaboration to foster synergies between projects. In doing so, it aims to increase the projects' impact on mainstreaming NBS, while saving resources around common areas of work. Ultimately, this should lead to a strong evidence base for NBS at EU level.

Interviews with several project coordinators and a survey of TaskForce members over the past weeks resulted in the following findings:

Added value:

- 1) Collaborating, exchanging, discussing and networking with others working on NBS;
- 2) Sharing, integrating and deepening knowledge on key aspects of NBS; and
- 3) Harmonising approaches and building synergies between the projects.

Criteria for success:

- Good leadership with adequate resources
- Active involvement of projects and inclusion of their inputs, with equitable sharing of workload
- Clear objectives, roles and obligations
- Regular meetings with clear agendas and concrete topics
- Space for discussion and knowledge sharing
- Funding for participation

What NetworkNature can do to overcome obstacles, such as lack of time, lack of resource allocation in projects, lack of focus or sense of purpose for taskforces, unclear communication:

- Strengthen synergies and information sharing among projects
- Synthesise and disseminate project outputs and create visibility with relevant target audiences
- Present an overview of the main achievements of the projects and TFs on the website
- Promote NBS for various EU policy areas
- Provide updates on relevant knowledge, tools, resources, policy developments and financing opportunities
- Ensure online access to the information materials shared during the TF meetings

NetworkNature is a new H2020 service for the NBS community far and wide. It gathers NBS communities, resources, projects, best practices and tools under one roof. The pioneering European platform with a global reach creates opportunities for local, regional and international cooperation to make NBS the new normal. An online platform for everything NBS related - networknature.eu

NetworkNature has the following objectives:

Consolidate, expand and support a community of practice for NBS across science, business, policy and practice from subnational to global level, city to regional level;

Upscale the use of NBS across science, business, policy and practice:

- *Provide guidance and capacity building*
- *Creating and operating new European NBS regional hubs*
- *Networking with practitioners, business, investors and policymakers*

Raise awareness

- *Communicate the latest findings and news in the NBS field*
- *Engage existing stakeholders and reaching out to new audiences*
- *Educate younger generations to become future NBS leaders*

NetworkNature has 4 key target audiences:

- *Water/forest/land/agricultural management: Managers, public and private owners, civil society organisations, etc.;*
- *Infrastructure planning & implementation: Urban and regional planners, developers/landowners, engineers, companies providing construction products and services;*
- *Finance and investment: Finance institutions, insurance companies, investors;*
- *General public: including schools, universities, civil society networks, community champions*

And the following pathways for impact:

- *Pathway 1: Increase understanding of and confidence in potential benefits and risks of NBS*
- *Pathway 2: Enhance attractiveness of NBS for business*
- *Pathway 3: Improve the capacities of NBS innovators and practitioners*
- *Pathway 4: Support mainstreaming of NBS across policy sectors*
- *Pathway 5: Strengthening NBS connections between Europe and the world*
- *Pathway 6: Raise societal awareness of the benefits of NBS*

More details can be found in the presentation attached.

Reflecting on nature-based solutions – live polls

A series of online polls encouraged participants to reflect on the work done the Taskforces to date and how NetworkNature can support their activities. Several ideas were raised as to how NetworkNature can increase the impact of projects and activities, which were centred around compiling or pool knowledge developed, creating toolkits and a one stop shop for nature-based solutions, supporting dissemination and connecting to stakeholders (Figure 1).
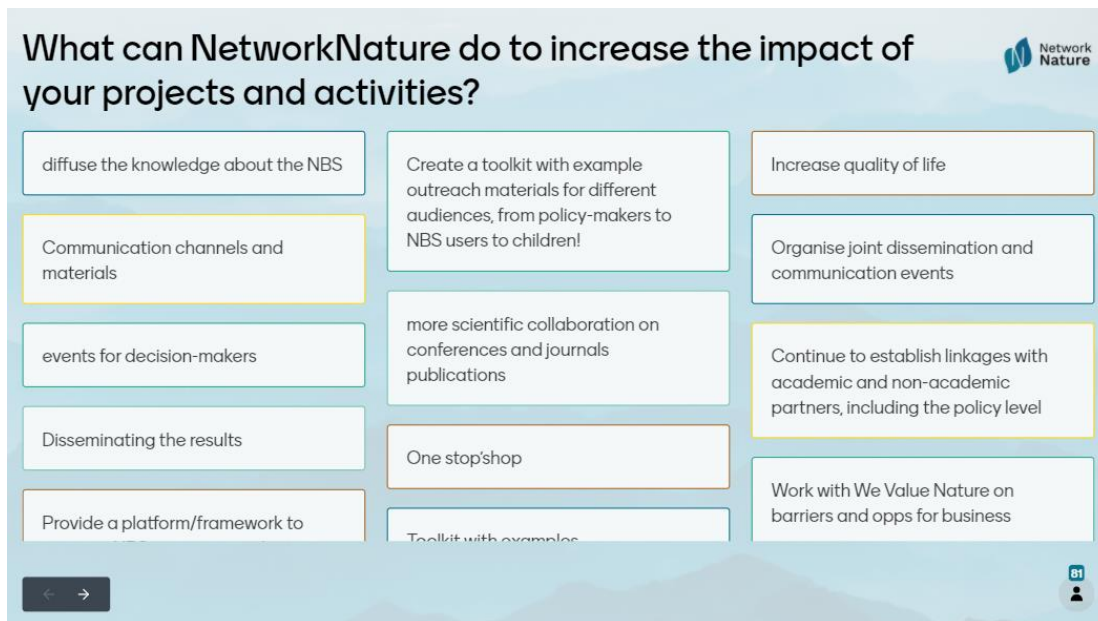

Figure 1. Example outcomes of poll on NetworkNature's support for projects and activities.

When asked which stakeholders the participants would like to reach more effectively, politicians and policy makers was the most frequent response (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Outcomes of poll on which audiences should be reached more effectively.

Responses to the question of what was the most valuable thing that the Taskforces have given you included (Figure 3):

- *Connections comparison;*
- *Network peers;*
- *Knowledge and contacts within the NBS ecosystem and likeminded people: community collaboration;*
- *Benchmarking;*
- *Higher impact;*
- *Opportunities to avoid duplication across projects;*
- *Turn friendly competitors into competing friends.*

Some participants also mentioned that they had not received much benefit yet from the Taskforces.

Figure 3. Example responses of poll on what Taskforces have given participants.

Introduction of new Horizon 2020 NBS projects

Videos of the following projects were shown and are being made available on the NetworkNature YouTube channel: CONEXUS - INTERLACE - Go Green Routes - In-HABIT - Future MARES - Ponderful - MaCoBioS

We Value Nature is not a new project, but was introduced as well by the project coordinator, Guy Duke. We Value Nature is an EU Horizon 2020-funded three-year campaign (November 2018 – October 2021).
The campaign is supporting businesses and the natural capital community to make valuing nature the new normal for businesses across Europe. The project is:

- Supporting the natural capital community and sharing research, resources and best practice.
- Helping businesses improve their risk management, communication with investors, stakeholder engagement and anticipation of future legislation.
- Making a difference by targeting businesses and barriers where we expect to make the greatest impact.

Presentations

Taskforce 2: Handbook on indicators on nature-based solutions performance and impacts - Laura Wendling (VTT Technical Research Centre of Finland)

The objective of the handbook developed by Taskforce 2 is to contribute to the evidence base for NBS and allow all projects to collaboratively work within a coherent and inclusive framework, building on the EKLIPSE framework.

It is promoted as a reference for EU policies and activities and it supports end users by providing the appropriateness and advantages and disadvantages of different methodological approaches.

It guides users into developing their own monitoring strategy, providing advice on indicator selection, data requirements and methods. The indicators have been road-tested by projects in their partner cities and case studies.

The handbook is currently under internal review and then will pass to external review. The aim is to publish it by the end of 2020.

The handbook provides and array of options for selection of indicators to monitor and evaluation impacts of NBS, provides guidance to end-users for development of holistic plans for impact evaluation that assess multiple benefits and supports efforts for science-based evaluation of NBS that leads to accumulation of evidence.

There are a few principles, which guide the indicator selection such as:

- *Comparability and standardisation*
- *Scientifically robust design*
- *Differentiating processes and outcomes*
- *Seeking a holistic picture including trade offs*
- *Evaluating the multiple benefits of NBS*
- *Indicators to quantify both positive and negative outcomes*
- *Indicators from a range of methodologies as mentioned above*
- *Impact on different social groups*
- *Allow multi-scale and where possible long term monitoring/evaluation*

What is next for Taskforce 2 – after the handbook will be published by the end of 2020, potential refinement of indicators will follow additional use experience. Future work will likely include joint preparation of NBS impact assessment reports based on outcomes of H2020 funded NBS projects.

Taskforce 3: Guidance on public procurement for nature-based solutions- Elsa Durieux (ICLEI), **Ernesta Maciulyte** (Fraunhofer IAO)

The guidance produced by Taskforce 3 discusses barriers identified in public procurement of NBS, potential solutions to those barriers and a series of case studies.

Identified barriers include lack of knowledge and experience with NBS, difficulty in finding skilled suppliers, and limited access to funding.

Potential solutions include raising awareness and providing knowledge, adjusting tender requirements and using pilot projects to demonstrate short-term success.

A case study from the Thamesmead South Estate in London demonstrated large-scale NBS procurement. Key lessons learnt included ensuring short-term wins to keep the community engaged, procuring a project manager to run complex and multi-disciplinary projects, and using pilot projects to test and replicate.

A case study from Turin for procuring green walls learnt that easy maintenance is key and to encourage suppliers to think creatively about it. Grouping contracts can help increase value and gain interest from suppliers. Successful pilots can reduce institutional barriers for NBS projects and building on successes can support the development of alternative NBS delivery models, e.g. Tax incentives for green walls.

The way forward for this Taskforce work stream on procuring NBS evolves around the following questions:

- *What new EU funding opportunities exist for NBS projects?*
- *How do we help cities adopt the right policy framework to support NBS?*
- *How can we share best practices with NBS procurers?*

Panel discussion

Annika Malm, Head of Department of Water & Waste in the Swedish municipality 'Kungsbacka kommun'

- Important barriers to using outputs of projects like these in municipalities are that the materials are in English, that they come from research and thus are not easy to translate to practice, and that a change from normal practice is needed.
- It is critical to ensure that the outputs reach people in municipalities and to ensure that people know where to find case studies and key products – the work done should be compiled in one platform and communicated to stakeholders.

Oliver Schelske, SRI Exploratory Research Swiss Re Institute

- The majority of small projects are funded with public or donated money – evaluation of their impacts is critical to understand the impact made by the NBS. Investors may be interested in larger, bankable projects – for these benchmarks and clear standards are needed.
- The biodiversity and climate change problems must be addressed jointly – NBS are inspired by nature, build resilience, provide many benefits and incorporate multiple stakeholders.
- Swiss Re launched the first nature-based insurance system to protect the barrier reef in Mexico with local governments, universities, the tourism sector and The Nature Conservancy. Examples like this require knowledge of the ecosystem services provided, a funding mechanism and maintenance to ensure the ecosystem remains in good condition.

Karin Zaunberger, Policy Officer, Biodiversity Unit European Commission, DG Environment

- The multiple benefits that NBS provide and the job creation they offer will be an important asset during the recovery, which needs to be sustainable.
- NBS are the 'red thread' connecting several EU initiatives, including the EU Green Deal, the new Biodiversity Strategy and the Farm to Fork Strategy. They will also be key to the next climate change CoP and in the new EU Climate Change Adaptation Strategy.
- Bottom up approaches at local, city and regional levels need to be complemented by top-down initiatives from international conventions and EU policies to create the systemic change that is needed.

Marco Fritz, Lead of the biodiversity and NBS team European Commission, DG Research and Innovation

- The community of NBS projects figures as ambassador for NBS (more than the sum of the single projects, using the strength of the whole portfolio), showing the added value of EU funding.
- The core list of indicators produced by Taskforce 2 can be proposed for inclusion in EU policies and can be linked to workstreams such as the EU ecosystem assessment. This would not have been possible if the projects had not been working together.

- Changing public procurement is key for facilitating transformative change that is beneficial for biodiversity – the Taskforce 3 report is also very important.

Break-out sessions

Taskforce 1: Data management and EU NBS Knowledge Repository

Facilitator: Jonathan Porter, Oppla (NetworkNature, Connecting Nature, CONEXUS, INTERLACE, We Value Nature)

Note taker: Verónica Ruiz, IUCN (NetworkNature)

Participants

Alberto Pozza - EC EASME (Following TF1)
Amir Alamo (URBiNAT)
Andreas Littkopf, Environment Agency Austria, (Clever Cities, GoGreenRoutes)
Carolina Cantergiani, TECNALIA (Clever Cities)
Cécile Mandon (BiodivERsA Secretariat)
Dimitra MAVRAKI, Hellenic Centre for Marine Research (FutureMARES)
Guido Ferilli, IULM University (URBINAT)
Gundula Prokop, Environment Agency Austria (GoGreenRoutes)
Mamuka Gvilava, Geographic GSI (Connecting Nature)
Michele Mattioni, CNR (proGIreg)
Milan Kalas (OPERANDUM)
Mireia Bartrons, UVic-UCC (PONDERFUL)
Momme Butenschön
Nerea Aizpurua. DG R&I (Following TF1)
Nuria Bachiller, UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (REGREEN)
Piersaverio Spinnato, Engineering I.I. SpA (UNaLab)
Quim Comas, Catalan Institute for Water Research (ICRA), (EdiCitNet, HYDROUSA)
Sandra Brucet, University of Vic (PONDERFUL)
Susana Martín, Fundación CARTIF (Nature4Cities)

Introduction

Jonathan Porter introduced the session and its aim to reflect on activities and progress to this point and to work together to identify future priorities. He welcomed existing members of the group and welcomed new members, stressing that the group is open to all to help shape its future activities.

Piersaverio Spinnato gave a presentation of past activities of Taskforce 1 including the shared database of case studies and metadata on the Oppla platform and the development of the API to provide a shared access to the platforms. He described the different use cases for creating and searching the shared database.

How would you like to contribute to the future development of Taskforce 1?

Mentimeter results:

- *Cross assessment of use cases*
- *Organizing transversal events to generate discussion on those matters*
- *Interoperability with other EC platforms*
- *Explore exchange of models, equations etc. (not just data) for NBS impact evaluation*
- *Link to Connecting Nature Enterprise Platform community for Smart Technologies*
- *Discussing further concept development ideas regarding KPIs benchmarking*
- *By creating data standards and best practice guides to data documentation*
- *Yes, but more clarification may be needed in the role of the projects*

Quim Comas described development in the EdiCitNet of a 1) database including successful case studies, 2) tools to promote and facilitate the implementation of NBS in cities for food production and, 3) serious games to develop participative planning.

Alberto Pozza asked what the relationship is between the Oppla and NetworkNature platforms. Jonathan Porter confirmed that the NetworkNature platform is being built on Oppla so information will be available via both platforms and users will use their Oppla ID to access the Network Nature platform.

Susana Martín outlined the [platform under development by Nature4Cities,](#) which includes scenarios for NBS implementation, rather than actual case studies can be incorporated in the shared database. Jonathan Porter state that these would not fit with the current templates but that he would investigate how this tool could be shared.

To add case studies to Oppla follow these steps: log in to Oppla; on your account page click on 'My Case Studies' and then 'Add Case Study'; you can then access the case study form to add the case study; choose the type of case study at the top of the form. When you have completed the form it will be published on Oppla within the next 2 working days. The case study will also appear on the NetworkNature platform, which will be launching soon. Case studies can also be added via the Oppla API. An instruction manual for achieving this will be circulated to members of Task Force 1 and made available on Oppla and NetworkNature.

What ideas do you have for the shared data management plan that will be produced by Task Force 1?

Mentimeter results:

- With the diversity of projects involved I think it can't be very detailed and specific but would focus on general concepts...
- Should be a high level document with general principles
- The principles and a draft template, where you have must and can areas
- Make reference to FAIRness of data (findability, accessibility, interoperability, reusability)
- Review it and check their effective application in current and future NBS projects
- Consider a budget addressed for testing, in the context of the projects
- Facilitate data sharing, strategies for future accessibility of data when project is finished, how to ensure data and database do not become obsolete, continuity of databases and platforms and tools
- Common NBS metadata standardisation activity (e.g. leading towards NBS INSPIRE theme)

- I think that to be able to make data interoperable the DMPs should include requirements for data formats and description so that any user could, at least, known the pros and cons of each dataset is produced.
- Sharing platforms rather than developing new platforms in each project
- Need to develop standard classification of NBS
- Reuse data generated in other projects. Homogenize them and generate a common ontology
- To develop an exhaustive preliminary analysis on the existing experiences, considering the good (and bad) practices, also beyond EU
- Joint work on elements of specific tools and platform so that common tools and platforms are developed. Some projects are very advanced with tasks and would be better to share effort

Susana Martín stressed the importance of using common taxonomies for societal challenges and NBS. A single taxonomy for the description of NBS would be crucial to avoid data replication. Jonathan Porter agreed that this should be a priority and that there is potential to develop a shared taxonomy that is updated in official versions, similar to the way in which the CICES classification of ecosystem services has developed.

Andreas Littkopf suggest that advice on what is mandatory and voluntary to develop in project data management plans would be very welcome for new projects. It will be very helpful to have a more comprehensive and structured development process, this will also ease the compilation of data and datasets.

Piersaverio Spinnato suggested that the issue of how the data will be managed once the project finishes needs to be addressed. Metadata will be stored in Oppla but not the raw data. TF1 to follow up on this in the data management plan.

Nerea Aizpurua asked how the data will be updated in the future. Due to divergence of local centres it would be more convenient to have a central centre that allows the update and inclusion of new data. She also highlighted the need to interface with the two knowledge centres that are relevant to NBS: Knowledge Centre for Biodiversity and Disaster Risk Management Knowledge Centre. Jonathan Porter highlighted that the API already allows easy sharing of information with these knowledge centres and data management plan needs to consider how data can be shared in the other direction.

What should be the priority for task force 1 in the next 6 months

Mentimeter results:

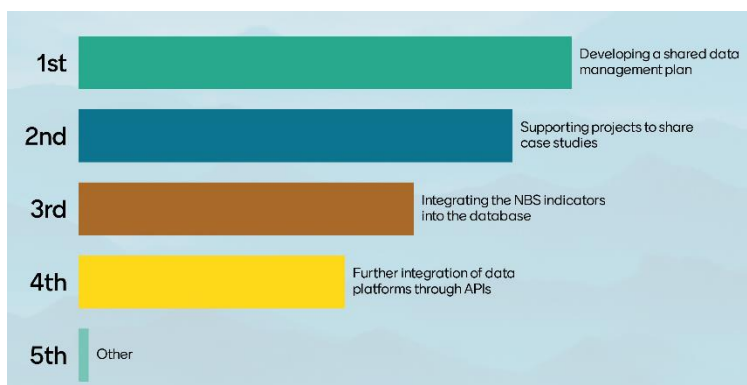TF1 members used Mentimeter to rank the priorities for the next 6 months (Figure 4).

Figure 4. TF1 priorities for next six months.

What other priorities do you think TF1 should focus on?

Mentimeter results:

- Maybe some sort of interactive crosslinks between projects that put together needs or requirements from one project that may be supplied by another
- Common data representation. Feasible due big diversity?
- Create an area in NetworkNature for TF1 where documents are stored / shared?
- Ensure all projects are participating
- Coordinate common tasks between projects so that common product is produced.
- Sharing data with other EC platforms

Quim Comas – sharing data models, e.g. for carbon sequestration would help be very useful and would save new projects from starting from scratch with developing new models.

Very important to coordinate common tasks between projects so that common products can be produced.

Taskforce 2 NBS Impact Evaluation Framework

Facilitator: Laura Wendling, UnaLab

Note taker: Frederic Lemaitre, (Biodiversa, NetworkNature)

Participants: Adina Dumitru, Andreas Littkopf, Arantza Murillas Maza, Barnabás Körmöndi, Başak Avcıoğlu, Beat Oertli, Bernhard Scharf, Carlo Calfapietra, Chiara Baldacchini, Cindy Cornet, Elena Comino, Eli Rinde, Esther San José, Ewan Tregarot, Fabrice Renaud, Farrokh Nadim, Florian Kraus, Grazia Zulian, Gregorio Sgrigna, Igone Garcia, Jinfeng Du, Jose Fernandes, Jose Fermoso, José Miguel Lameiras, Julita Skodra, Katerina Lilli, Laura Leo, Laura Palomo Rios, Laura Wendling, Laurence Jones, luis Gargori, Marcel Cardinali, Mari Carmen Garcia Mateo, Maria Dubovik, Max Manderscheid, Myron Peck, Payam Dadvand, Raul San, Tadhg MacIntyre, Milan Kalas, Joanne Schanté, Gundula Prokop, Maria Dubonik.

Discussions were organized around the three following topics:
- Lessons learnt from the task force activities implemented so far, highlighting what worked or not, lessons learnt and potential ways forward.
- Ideas for potential future work that the task force could implement in the coming years
- Activities that would be prioritized by the task force for 2021

LESSONS LEARNT

Contributions from all members were captured in Figure 5.

Discussions in the session concentrated on the following topics:

Figure 5: Contributions of TF2 break out group participants under the topic of lessons learnt

Coordination with other task forces: discussions highlighted a positive and useful coordination in the past with task force 1 in particular, by i) task force sharing activities and timelines and ii) integrating the list of common indicators within the metadata catalogue.

Sub-group organization: the sub-group approach implemented per chapter for the handbook development was seen as positive, allowing to work efficiently and for members to focus their investment.

Technical issues with communications: there were issues with having to work via different channels (ThinkNature platform, email threads, Teams) in the past, with issues in access for some members. It was agreed that a single channel should be chosen collectively, for instance through the NetworkNature platform.

Mobilizing projects: although members highlighted how much they learnt from exchanging with other projects, they also raised some challenges in managing their mobilization, linked to:
- A regular turnover of members with people leaving and arriving
- Different timings of different projects
- Difficulties to see how/where projects can contribute, a lack of clear messages weakens mobilization to contribute to the TF outputs.

Expertise in the task force: discussions touched upon potential lacks of expertise in the task force, e.g. in relation to valuation, and that it could be useful to promote the ad hoc involvement of project partners with specific expertise on relevant occasions. Linkages with other TF (in particular for TF3 on the economic valuation) will be also useful to deal with this.

Resources dedicated to task force work: members highlighted that outputs from the task force are also outputs from individual projects, thus there is not an issue concerning the use of projects' resources.

IDEAS FOR FUTURE WORK

The shared rationale for the task force, i.e. developing a common framework for the common understanding of projects' impacts, helped guide the discussion. Contributions from all members under this topic were captured in Figure 6.

The discussion focused on:

Implementing a trial of TF2 indicators: members converged on the need to test out indicators of the

Figure 6: Contributions of TF2 break out group participants under the topic of ideas for future work

handbook and the handbook itself and learn lessons based on their implementation in projects. The discussion highlighted in particular:

- Members would like to further structure task force responsibilities in doing so to organize work most efficiently (e.g. related to integrating different contributions, challenges and lessons learnt, coordinating the identification of gaps, etc.)
- There would be a need for developing spreadsheets for data collection from monitoring activities (linked to TF1 work on database of project outputs)

Links to the international scale: discussions highlighted that there is a potentially relevant area of work in linking the EU and international efforts, in terms of:

- Reviewing NBS monitoring in other cities/regions, for sharing experience and inspiration
- Linking the EU framework to relevant global on-going initiatives (e.g. IUCN NBS Standard, SDGs)

Further development of specific themes: throughout the discussion, several areas for further work on the indicator framework were identified, in relation to health and NBS, marine environments and most recurrently (economic) valuation of NBS performance, linked to the need for such arguments in support of NBS. It was highlighted however that costs vary strongly per region, in particular linked to labour, which is why these were not included so far in the handbook.

Further contribution from new projects: it was highlighted that the handbook will be a living-document, which will give new projects opportunity to further contribute to it .

PRIORITIES IN 2021

Contributions from all members under this topic were captured in Figure 7. Main discussion points focused on:

Explore potential development of specific themes

- Economic cost/benefit valuation: additional work on such indicators was seen as complementary to work undergoing on the evidence base (TF1) and the financing of NBS (TF3), and relates to points made on mobilizing further related fields of expertise in the task force. The country/region specific nature of costs of NBS in particular could be overcome by making use of regional dialogues/hubs in NetworkNature.
- Health and NBS, role in pandemic preparedness: this is an area of particular importance for 2021, and could especially link to projects funded under the call SC5-14-2019.
- Marine environment: discussing on the opportunity to link indicators to specific environments, members highlighted a potential area if further development of the handbook in terms of specific indicators for marine and coastal environments.
- Coordination of international dimensions: discussions touched on how to best capture lessons learnt and expertise gained in international collaborations (e.g. EU-China, EU-CELAC projects) and how to best coordinate with ongoing initiatives on the monitoring and evaluation of NBS.
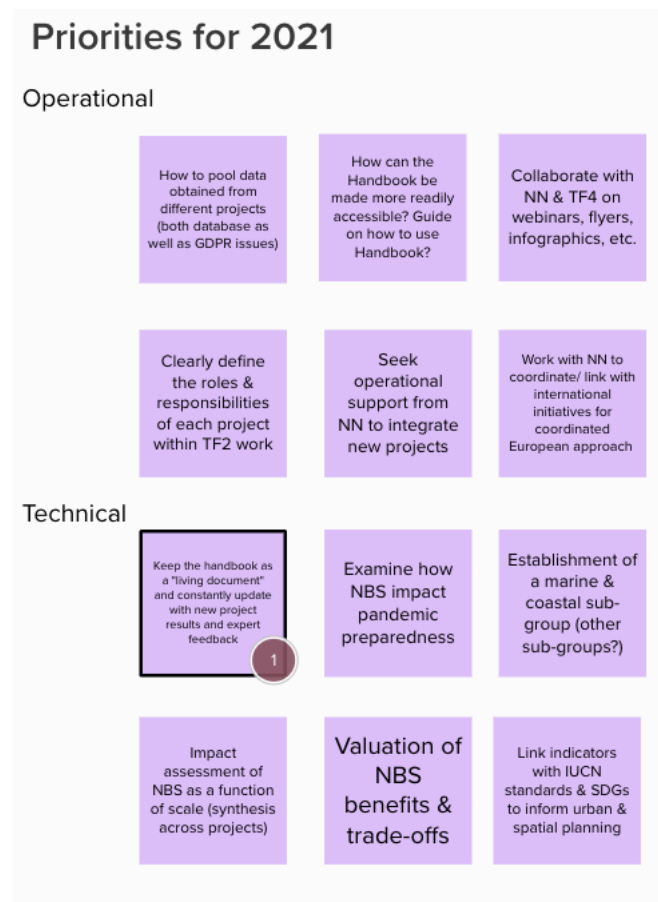

Figure 7: Contributions of TF2 break out group participants under the topic of priorities for 2021

Handbook dissemination to user groups: this was commonly agreed as the natural next step now that the handbook is ready, and that this should be done in close collaboration with TF4 on communication and NetworkNature. Discussions and ideas from the TF acknowledged the current length of the handbook, especially as it details methodologies. These touched upon:
- Developing executive summary and/or specific (sectoral) digests,
- Developing further the handbook as an online interactive resource,
- Preparing an introductory guide on how to use the handbook, tailored according to different audiences/objectives of the reader (e.g. different if for strategic policy planning, or precise NBS evaluation)
- Develop handbook promotion materials, and/or organize webinars for specific audiences (e.g. practitioners)

Implement indicators' trial run: members agreed that a key activity at this stage for the further development and use of the handbook is to implement a trial run of these indicators with ongoing projects (with a good opportunity here to integrate new projects on this line of work). The discussion did highlight the need to focus/narrow down the indicators to be tracked by projects, to allow for feasibility but also coherence depending on NBS types of challenges addressed. Foreseen activities discussed included:
i) Implementing a trial of indicators with current NBS projects is seen as key to test the applicability of indicators recommended by the TF. This will require additional organization, in particular, setting precise objectives and responsibilities among TF members for specific tasks/sub-groups (e.g. collating contributions, coordinating lessons learnt or identification of gaps, etc.). Some of the new projects stated their interest on contributing to this.
ii) Conducting a meta-data analysis based on received feedbacks, touching on i) how indicators were used, accessibility and potential challenges/areas for refinement and ii) the impact of NBS developed in projects, synthesizing evidence from projects at different scales

Technical support to the TF:
- Set up of collaborative tool/platform: members highlighted the need for unique shared work space for the TF activities, for instance through NetworkNature, noting that key features for members are i) easy (non-restricted) access, ii) online document editing functionalities and iii) virtual meeting functionalities.
- Mobilizing expertise in the TF: although ongoing, it was highlighted that TF members can relay relevant TF activities and meetings to members of their project with specific expertise, to help completing the current set of expertise of the TF as appropriate.
- Managing arrivals/departures: the task force suggested a role for NetworkNature in coordinating departures (finishing projects) and arrivals (new projects) in planning the TF activities. New projects in particular could be supported in catching up on the task force(s) work (which highlighted the need for a record of TF2 decisions to be set up, avoiding to reopen discussions), and in collecting timelines and potentially relevant areas of contributions of newcomers to plan out more efficiently their engagement in activities. NetworkNature could especially help clarify and reassure on concerns linked to ownership and fair recognition of results contributed in TF outputs, which has been an issue in the past.

Taskforce 3: Governance, Business Models and Financial Mechanisms

Facilitators: Bettina Wilk

Note Takers: Roger Roca Vallejo, Matthieu Grosjean

List of participants: Aitziber Egusquiza (N4C), Anastasia Walter (FutureMARES), Beatriz Mayor (NAIAD), Benedetta Lucchitta (Urban GreenUP), Claire Kwiatkowski, Claudia Muzzati (UnaLab), Clive Davies (Clearing House), Efrén Feliu (N4C, GROW GREEN, CLEVER Cities), Elena López Gunn (NAIAD), Elsa Durieux (CLEVER Cities), Ernesta Maciulyte (UnaLab), Gemma Garcia (GrowGreen, INTERLACE, SHELTER), Guy Duke (WeValueNature), Julie Delcroix, Juliette Martin (PHUSICOS), Karla Hurtado (CLEVER Cities), Katarzyna Drabicka, Lamiaa Biaz (Clearing House), Liesbeth Casier (ThinkNature), Louise

Laub (Urbinat), Marco Acri (Urbinat), Marie-Christin Rische (CLEVER Cities), Matthieu Grosjean (NetworkNature), Monica Altamirano (NAIAD), Philippe Tulkens, Sean Bradley (Connecting Nature), Siobhan McQuaid (Connecting Nature), Victoria Beaz Hidalgo, Wenting Chen (FutureMares), Suhana Elisabeth Reddy (EdiCitNet)

Projects represented:
ThinkNature, N4C, GrowGreen, Connecting Nature, NAIAD, Urban GreenUp, UNaLab, CLEVER Cities, URBiNAT, EdiCitNet, Clearing House, WeValueNature, NetworkNature, INTERLACE, FutureMARES

Short round of introductions of new participants in TF3

Brief recap of the work done to date by moderator (Bettina Wilk):

Working group 1: mapping landscape of financing mechanisms
=> Deliverable about Financing NBS in H2020 mainly developed by GrowGreen project with other H2020 projects' case studies included in the document.

Working group 2: public procurement of NBS
=> Procurement Guidelines (as presented in the morning)

Working group 3: Elements of an NBS Business Case
=> paper (a special issue on business models) will be prepared and shared quite soon (joint paper between projects) desire to capture the knowledge developed in the NBS projects on this topic;
=> a meeting is planned next week for discussing the paper and inputs from other projects (Doodle was sent out)

Participants were asked to **define priority topics** on the Mural Board (Figure 8).

Not all of the topics that came up during this brainstorming formed part of the discussion. A main part of the latter focused on the creation of a **new working group focussing on Nature-based Economy**:

Nature-based Enterprises (NBE), the focus of the Connecting Nature Project, are the starting point of this discussion (has been put forward in previous TF3 meetings). Siobhan McQuaid suggested to see Nature-based Enterprises (NBE) as one element of a wider Nature-based economy TF3 should promote. Thus, TF3 should look at the concept of Nature-based Economy which unites demand and supply side of NBS (NBS enterprises). Guy Duke proposed the overall objective to support accelerate private sector/business uptake of NBS, meaning that that businesses integrate NBS in their work. Economic valuation of the NBS and their co-benefits forms an important base for supporting this movement.

There is also a **strong link to the work of TF2** through the **valuation/monetization of NBS co-benefits and determining qualitative and quantitative values** as a base for incentives for private sector investment, identifying revenue streams related to NBS and thus, stimulate private sector investment and business uptake of NBS.

Tom Wild pointed out that monetary valuation of co-benefits is also of relevance to the public sector, both in terms of stimulating new ways of thinking about both benefits and costs (the public sector is also interested in income streams and ways of delivering NBS co-benefits more cheaply than conventional (grey) infrastructures.

The involvement of the insurance sector in the implementation of NBS was also touched upon, such as the work of NAIAD project.

Wenting Chen refers to the missing market value of NBS as the cause of the problem of NBS value perception. It is important to find financing mechanisms that promote value-related thinking of NBS. There are a few studies on marine areas, would be great to work on this. Bettina Wilk refers to work already undertaken by WG1 with regards to mapping different financing mechanisms which is dormant at the moment. Victoria Beaz-Hidalgo mentions that Katarzyna Drabicka from DG R&I could help reinvigorate WG1 workstreamswith connections to the EIB and establishing closerlinks and contacts with the investment and finance sector. The current study on assessment of access-to-finance conditions for NBS to be undertaken by the EIB (which TF3 will be asked to provide their input to) will help open some doors. Katarzyna adds that so far grant funding is a strong focus, better to widen it to loans, such as the NCFF. She suggests to get in touch with external actors, such as the EIB, to set up workshops so that these actors could explain from the perspective of the bank what the different possibilities are and what is needed.
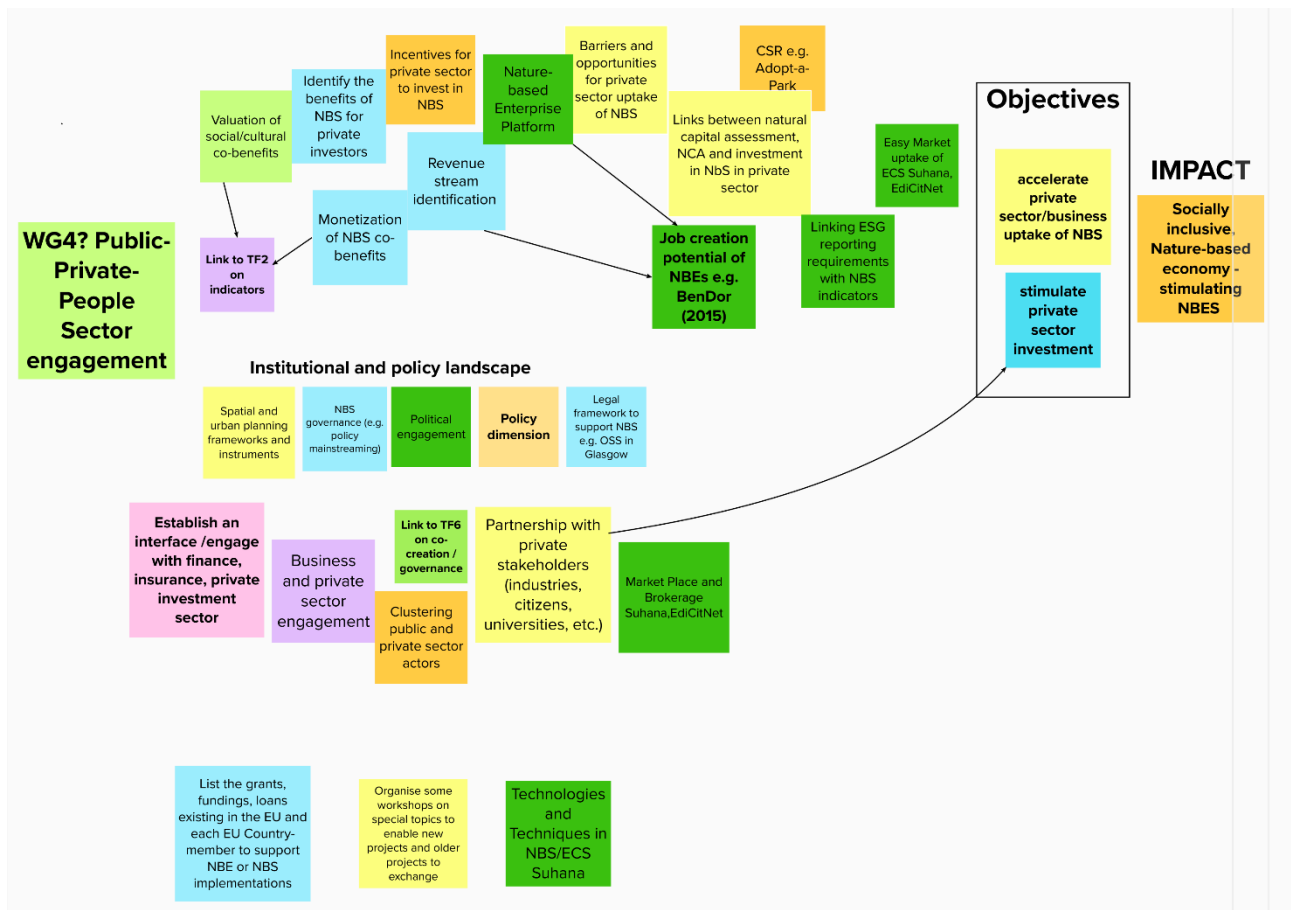

Figure 8. Consolidated Mural from TF3 breakout session

Governance and policy are important topics brought up by Elena Lopez Gunn and confirmed by Victoria Beaz-Hidalgo and the other participants, both in terms of strengthening the people's element (bottom-up) in NBS, as well as concerning the institutional setting and regulations. These were aspects so far left out in TF3. Even if governance is to be moved to TF6, it should still be a prevalent topic in TF3, strong links to be built with TF6 also with regards to co-creative aspects.

Another very important point is **job creation and green economy**, especially during times of COVID where we are facing another wave of unemployment. TF3 should bring forward the argument of NBS as a job creator. Victoria Beaz-Hidalgo points out that job creation is a very important, highly politically relevant topic with links to social fairness. Katarzyna adds that job creation and social fairness are important topics in the policy discussions, especially in face of COVID recovery plans. Victoria Beaz-Hidalgo mentions it is important to have linkages between TFs, looking at green-jobs from the respective TFs angles. Elena Lopez Gunn furthers that when green-jobs are created this will trigger a positive movement and will also help the engagement with political actors.

Guy Duke points to a study by Bendor (2015) on jobs potential of restoration economy. According to Siobhan McQuaid, the latter forms only one part of the Nature-based economy, there are other sectors related to NBS, such as the green building sector, or the water management sector. If you combine them, they become a very powerful sector. If we channel them altogether, we can create a great impact.

Based on the discussion, the **objective of this TF** new workstream or working area can be summarized as:

- *support and accelerate private sector/business uptake of NBS, and*
- *stimulate private sector investment to*
- *develop a Nature-based Economy with a strong focus on inclusiveness and PPP (Public-Private-People-Partnerships). This could help make the link with the private sector and move away from public sector investment dependence. Dominance of public investment in NBS is contradicted by evidence from Connecting Nature (mentioned by Siobhan McQuaid) which showed that the private sector is much more involved in NBS than the public one.*

Efren Feliu would like to bring in the angle the underlying legal framework of urban planning instruments behind spatial planning as a key enabler for NBS, value creation, job creation, urban development and greening approaches. This is a key component to be addressed by TF3 (Tecnalia is currently developing a deliverable on this topic), they would also like to participate in the forthcoming meeting of WG3. Victoria Beaz-Hidalgo mentions that this topic is tentatively picked up by TF6 on co-creation, but can be further looked into as TF6 is just starting. The idea to include governance-related aspects in TF6 was more for practical reasons and sharing workload. Indeed there is a need for closer cooperation across TFs, if for example the spatial/urban planning and governance is taken up by TF6. The input from TF3 in this area on urban/spatial planning was seen as essential by various TF3 members. Some TF3 members also said work on governance has taken place in TF3 but is not that visible as not reflected in the working groups structure.

With regards to the **future operation of the TFs**, the idea was brought up in an exchange with TF3 members to have joint meetings with the other TF members for example on policy updates relevant for all TFs and general issues. TF3 frequency of meetings was discussed and should be adjusted to bi-monthly or quarterly, where subgroups will report back about their work, and alternate with more specialized meetings, where the focus is on specific topics and there is time to go deeper (i.e. webinar on topics identified by TF3 members, not necessarily project results-related, etc.).

TF 4 NBS Communicators

Facilitator: Nea Pakkarinen

Note taker: Chantal van Ham

Participants: Sofie Vandewoestijne, Josefina Enfedaque, Chantal van Ham, James Atkinson, Catherine Fallon, Okyu Dogan, Tom MacKenzie, Giulio Mazzolo, Anastasia Walter, Heidi Johansson, Isobel Fletcher, Clara Marrone, Edi Emilov, Julia Grunnill, Elisabeth Schmid, Mathilde Elie, Fintan Burke, Rebecca McLoughlin, Stephanie Decker, Sara Botto

Projects represented: Inhabit, ThinkNature, GrowGreen, WeValueNature, NetworkNature, Conexus, Interlace, Connecting Nature, Nature4Cities, FutureMares, Urbinat, EdiCitNet, UrbanGreenUp

This TF was not active so far, how can it maximise impact, and strengthen international cooperation?

Opportunities of TF4 and the role of NetworkNature

NetworkNature will be responsible for meetings, agenda, hosting it together with project partners, coordinate TF work, share outcomes, and act as contact point wicth DG RTD and EASME and other TF leads. TF4 will also communicate content of other TFs and discuss how we can support them in disseminating results to wider audiences.

Miro exercise on the scope of TF 4 (within NetworkNature lifetime) (Figure 9)

Figure 9. MIRO board from Taskforce 4 breakout session.

- Strategy development
    - Create a mailing list of communication focal points across the different projects to share information and to promote events and results of the different projects
    - Ensure a good communication flow between communication contact points and project coordinators
    - Scoping out areas for collaboration
    - NetworkNature will support in creating engagement with stakeholders that are more challenging to engage, making the connection with non-conventional audiences
- Joint outreach and activities
    - Create cooperation for joint co-organised events, publications (and peer reviewing), podcasts
    - International cooperation will benefit from using existing connections of the project partners (e.g. Cities with Nature (ICLEI), Cities4Forests (WRI), IUCN Urban Alliance, Science Based Targets for Nature, C40, UrbanbyNature) – exploring how to create a joint message for key international fora such as the CBD and Climate COP as well as with key target audience platforms
- One stop shop – a single place for accessing information
    - On the NetworkNature website there will be a list of relevant events (in Europe and internationally) that all projects can contribute to
    - Create a shared space for internal and external purposes to collect all outputs according to thematic areas and that is easy to search
    - Knowledge and best practice sharing
- Communicating with target audiences and specific needs
    - A glossary of common terms – NBS is a concept that still needs to be defined. However, all EU Horizon 2020 projects comply with the definition of nature-based solutions by the European Commission. Therefore this is not a topic for this TF as there has been a lot of discussion on this already. The challenge of interpretation of NBS remains and the translation into other languages is problematic – highlighting the differences may help.
    - It would be good to have guidelines to educate project partners and scientists on how to communicate better with different target audiences, starting early in the process with the writing up of outcomes or reports – sharing lessons learned and practical experiences of what worked well and what can be improved – avoid reinventing the wheel and making sure that outputs are understandable
    - A training for consortium partners on how to communicate efffectively with target audiences can be offered by NetworkNature

Workplan – priorities

- Regular meetings will be planned, the next one before the end of the year to make a planning for the first joint activities, define scope and focus
- Liaise with NN & Oppla to establish a source on the platform for upcoming communications/products and activities where projects and TF members can see/add what is coming up (internal repository)
- Create a platform or communication channel for TF to share information

Taskforce 6 Co-creation and Governance

Facilitators: Nathalie Nunes, Ingrid Andersson, Knud Erik Hilding-Hamann

Participants: Axel Timpe, Alessandro Arlati, Amy Oen, Ana Mitix-Radulovic, Anne Rödl, Dessy Kadinova, Ina Säumel, Gerd Lupp, Gianluca Ferraro, Iliriana Sedjullahu, Israa Mahmoud, Joanna Schanté, Marco Acri, Marcus Collier, Margot Olbertz, Maria del Mar Delgado, Piret Noukas, Riccardo Saraco, Sean Bradley, Spela Zalokar, Gonçalo Canto Moniz, Vera Köpsel and Zsuzsanna Bodi.

Note taker: Kate Reilly, IUCN (NetworkNature)

The session began with a snapshot of the projects represented in the Taskforce session. Participants were asked to add a picture and some statements to represent co-creation in their project in the MURAL board, to ultimately create a poster showing the cooperating EU projects. During the session Connecting Nature, Clearing House, UnaLAB, CLEVER Cities, EdiCitNet, ProGIReg, Future MARES, URBINAT, Phusicos and IN-HABIT contributed to the snapshot.

The next section of the session focused on general and specific objectives for the Taskforce, building on a series of discussions with the sister projects working on nature-based solutions for inclusive urban regeneration held between March 2020 and now.

The general objective that was originally defined was to promote co-creation for an inclusive urban regeneration. Some projects requested that the focus be broadened to include rural regeneration and marine and coastal ecosystems. Feedback on specific objectives includes:

- Objective: showcase the plurality of models and strategies adopted by the sister projects in co-creation processes. Suggestions included the need to be aware of these strategies, develop more systemic encounters between co-creators to share models, co-create between projects and between cities within a project, develop a toolkit/repository of different co-creation processes, and organise a single entry point to provide a speaker from one project to speak for the group.
- Objective: foster mutual learning by sharing advances, challenges, lessons learned and best practices. Suggestions included the need to foster mutual learning at all levels (such as within a consortium, in the demo cases, and with stakeholders), the need to develop ownership of interventions for their maintenance and operation, learning retrospectively from already-developed cases, reducing 'expert' dominance, and some suggestions of frameworks and platforms that can be used for sharing.
- Objective: develop critical analysis on the co-creation processes with citizens, stakeholders, experts and authorities. Suggestions included the need for monitoring and assessment of co-creation processes to assess their impact with respect to different target groups, the need to define key performance indicators for this assessment and the need to consider benefits for citizens. It was suggested to explore how different stakeholders should be targeted and different techniques should be used for the different stages of co-creation and to compare co-creation in different settings (e.g. urban compared to rural). The influence of culture and institutional history on NBS policy design could also be assessed.
- Objective: rethink/adapt co-creation processes before, during and after pandemics. This was seen as very important and relevant. A key issue raised under this topic was the need to adapt local co-design workshops in an inclusive way. Several projects had found it easy to move engagement events for organised stakeholders and those used to digital working to online formats. It was more difficult to reach occasional participants (passersby, etc.), non-digital stakeholders, and stakeholders suffering psychological effects of COVID-19 and its restrictions. Some projects have conducted surveys during COVID and there was interest in sharing them.

- Objective: disseminate co-created NBS aimed at urban regeneration and resilience. There was a request to broaden this scope to include rural settings with different types of stakeholders. It was suggested that efforts to reach local authorities should be increased, and suggestions were made to produce guidance/standards or a common repository of these tools to make replication easier. A special issue in Urban Transformations was also suggested.

The operating mode and working structure was discussed next. Key points mentioned here were:

- The need for clear outputs from the Taskforce so that meetings and exchanges have a clear purpose, and to avoid replicating work already done in the projects. Suggestions made included joint guidelines, principles or best practices that should be accompanied by a dissemination plan to reach end uses. Key considerations for these guidelines included the need to consider appropriate moments in the policy cycle for co-creation, bridging the gap between theoretical frameworks and reality, defining impact indicators, how to evaluate success and failure when they are context-dependent, and ensuring the continuity of co-creation. The need to balance collection of data for the co-creation process and the meta-data about the process was mentioned.
- Joint webinars can tackle specific barriers, invite experts, and potentially include confidential peer coaching. A clear workplan for these would be needed.
- The idea of co-hosted open events was broadly supported, for example to feed results from projects into policy.
- A face-to-face meeting in 2023 was generally considered too late, with preference for 2021 or early 2022 to include projects that will have ended by 2023.
- Online preparatory work meetings were also generally supported, although a preference was expressed for two-monthly or quarterly meetings instead of monthly. Ideas included presenting a project methodology to enrich ideas and planning meetings to ensure outputs are produced. There was some concern that these meetings would take too much time and divert attention from project work.
- Several suggestions were made to share best practices, including learning from non-H2020 projects, such as Interreg, common teaching/training programmes and peer-teaching.

The last discussion was on priority topics for the Taskforce. Ideas raised included:

- *Digital solutions and adaptation to COVID-19;*
- *Evaluation of co-creation;*
- *Assessing relationships between urban and rural contexts;*
- *Equity and power relationships;*
- *Co-creation and cultural differences;*
- *Reaching the 'unusual suspects'*
- *Governance issues;*
- *Building capacities of municipalities to facilitate co-design processes and increasing understanding of co-design amongst researchers;*
- *Development of joint case studies or methodologies.*

The breakout session ended with agreement to keep the MURAL board open to allow participants to gather inputs from colleagues, and then to devise next steps based on the inputs during the meeting.

Reflections on new Taskforces - results of polls

The session on the Taskforces closed with two final polls to assess which topics are missing from the current Taskforce set up (Figure 10) and which themes should be priority for the coming year (Figure 11).

Figure 10. Outcomes of topics currently missing from thematic focus areas of the Taskforces.

Figure 11. Outcome of poll on main priority topics.

Closing remarks – the way forward

Tiago Freitas provided the closing remarks for the European Commission DG Research and Innovation. He noted that the ongoing crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and COVID-19 cannot be addressed separately. Nature-based solutions allow them to be tackled simultaneously while providing many other benefits. He welcomed the meeting and the Taskforces' outputs to support the policy agenda on nature-based solutions. Specifically, he noted that nature-based solutions are increasingly central in many policy

areas at EU level and internationally. Thanks to the Horizon 2020 nature-based solutiosm projects, a critical mass of knowledge is building, allowing the EU to promote nature-based solutions. As new projects are funded under Horizon Europe and the Green Deal call, it will be important to integrate the new themes and welcome the projects within the Taskforces. He finished by noting his support for the Taskforces and their work.

Sofie Vandewoestijne, EASME, thanked the participants for the interesting conversations and active participation through the day. She highlighted that Taskforces should explore the flexibility and potential to work with new themes and projects, and to build on what already exists. She noted the interest in joint work and exchange between the Taskforces, which is essential to enhance their impact. It is important for the Taskforces to get policy input from different policy levels and to distribute information to the right stakeholders; NetworkNature can support Taskforces with that dissemination. Lastly, she noted the need to simplify, providing a one stop shop for projects and external stakeholders to easily access and interpret the information produced.

Chantal van Ham, IUCN, closed by highlighting that NetworkNature appreciated the active contributions during the meeting, which will shape the next steps for NetworkNature to support the Taskforces to make sure outputs reach stakeholders and deliver impact.