# Digest

MARCH 2024

Nature-based Solutions: **working together**

An update from NetworkNature
and the NBS Cluster Task Forces

Network Nature

# NetworkNature Task Forces

Paving the way for nature-based solutions advancement

The NetworkNature Team

**The NbS Cluster Task Forces (TF) are in full force for the newest phase of NetworkNature.**

They recently showcased their significant strides at the annual event in Brussels, June 2023, unveiling pivotal contributions across six impactful areas, including a new addition - the Education working group:

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

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

→ **Task Force 3:** Governance, Business Models and Financial Mechanisms

→ **Task Force 4:** NbS Communicators

→ **Task Force 5:** Education

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

**The TFs promote innovation and collaboration, delivering outputs that directly impact accessibility and implementation of Nature-based solutions (NbS).**

For instance, the Data and Knowledge Sharing TF 1 introduced a comprehensive data management plan focusing on FAIR principles, ensuring data's findability, accessibility, interoperability, and reusability. TF 2's innovative handbook, **"Evaluating the Impact of Nature-based Solutions",** and TF 3's guidance on NbS benefit valuations, underscore the tangible value these groups bring to impact assessment and financial understanding within the NbS sphere.

TF 4 for NbS Communicators focused its efforts on finding creative ways to reach new audiences and familiarise new target audiences with information on NbS. One of the most successful avenues for this was the creation of **three animated videos** introducing different aspects of NbS, such as co-creation.

The NbS Education TF 5 is the newest addition to the TF family, brought about by emerging NbS educational initiatives such as **NbS EduWORLD**, **NbS Academy**, **GoGreenRoutes** and **Regreen**. The main expected output from this group will be developing a network space for educators to expand on approaches for NbS and the integration of competencies and skill-

building for the next generation of NbS practitioners. Additionally, the TF 6 on Co-creation and Governance has created multiple products to improve and promote co-creation, including spatial planning and inclusive nature-based regeneration.

The progress in cross-TF collaboration signifies an evolution in their collective impact. The task forces build upon each other's work, fostering novel ideas and establishing robust connections with other NbS projects, notably engaging the NbS regional hubs. These hubs' involvement at regional and national levels further amplifies collaborative efforts, as highlighted in the insightful report, "**Voices from the NetworkNature NbS Hubs: A booklet of success stories**."

In essence, the NetworkNature TFs' diverse outputs not only advance NbS knowledge, but also fortify collaboration, setting a precedent for effective cross-sector partnerships and amplifying the impact of NbS on a global scale.

In this digest, we share an update from the task forces and what they'll be working on over the next few months.

# Task Force 1

## Data and Knowledge Sharing

**Paul Mahoney**

Oppla

**Over the next six months, Task Force 1 (TF1) will be mapping out our workstream, delivering workshops and developing/ refining templates, processes and shared resources.**

**A key tool we'll be developing is a strategic roadmap for TF1 activity.**

This will be an iterative timeline of key milestones from EU-funded projects and initiatives, showing deliverables and outputs relating to data management. This can be used by both TF1 members and external stakeholders. We'll also be establishing TF1 workstreams for smooth management of all activity.

It's important for TF1 activity to deliver tangible benefits to its members, so we will be identifying opportunities for TF1 to assist with data management and knowledge sharing in TF members' own projects.

**TF1 will be carrying out some desk research to help identify:**

→ Data requirements / capacities of municipalities and the best way for TF1 to communicate with and support them

→ Overview of data currently being produced by projects and the standards used by them

## Events and workshops TF1 has in the pipeline for the next six months include:

→ **TF1 members' projects workshop**: an online event where TF1 members can showcase data management tasks, challenges and success stories from their own projects

→ **Priority NbS indicators:** a workshop with TF2 and EC team members to discuss the NbS Indicators and create an initial shortlist
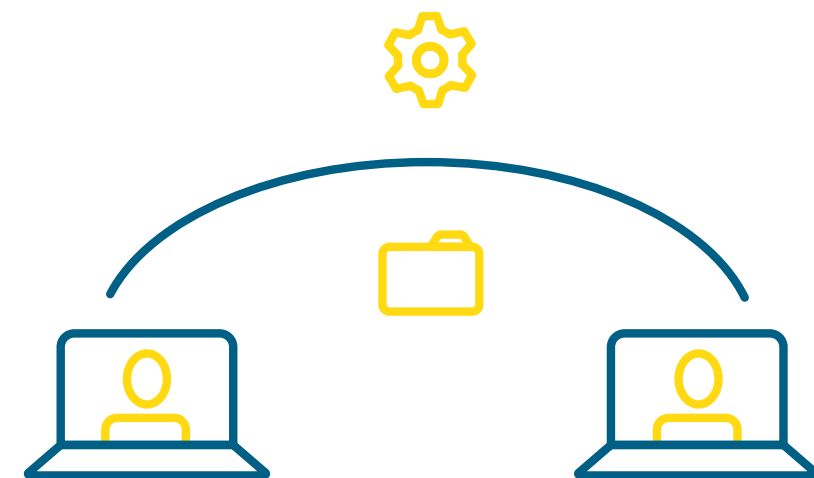
**And specific outputs include:**

→ Iterative activity roadmap/timeline

→ Iterative TF1 workplan

→ Updated Oppla/NetworkNature case study template (to include, for ex ample, data on NbS funding and financing, monitoring and evaluation)

→ Draft proposal for the TF1 Hackathon event latest this year

→ Shortlist of 10 priority NbS indicators that TF1 will focus on in developing an initial set of standardised data templates

In addition, we will be thinking about how to expand TF1 membership.

To this end, we'll be working with TF4 to create and share communication materials designed to promote TF1, targeting personnel responsible for data management within NbS projects and municipalities.

We are excited to start thinking about our initial set of standardised data templates, which we will develop through a workshop and consultation with EC colleagues and TF2, identifying ten priority NbS indicators to use in the process.

**Our approach over the next six months will be transparent, open and collaborative, allowing TF members to self-determine their levels of commitment.**

We'll manage expectations and stay focused on what's possible within the Task Force, as well as keeping up to date with changes in best practice and staying connected with each other. This will ensure TF1 can maximise synergies, efficiency and success.

# Task Force 3

## Business Models, Financial Mechanisms and the Nature Positive Economy

**Victoria Blessing**

Steinbeis Europa Zentrum

## Task Force 3 (TF3) is currently reassessing its properties in a participative process, which started in October 2024.

This includes two rounds of extensive consultations with the TF3 members, the first one focussing on the title and objectives of the TF, and the second one focussing on the workstream structure.

**The first round of consultations took place between October and December 2024.**

The discussions revealed that the topic of governance in the title is not currently a focus of the TF3 members, but that the nature-positive economy is.

Therefore, the title will change to reflect this. One option is "Business Models, Financial Mechanisms and the Nature Positive Economy" which is currently used as the working title. The title will be finalised by the end of the participative process.

TF3 focuses on mobilising finance and investments, creating business models and supporting enterprises and entrepreneurs to maximise the impact and spread of NBS and to promote a nature positive economy.

In the second round of consultations, a thorough analysis to identify the current gaps not yet acknowledged by the workstream structure in TF3 would be done. Based on these consultations with TF members, the title, description, objectives and restructuring of TF3 will be finalised. New members from projects funded through the EU will be included

**In terms of the objectives, the following key areas were identified:**

→ Integrated policy and regulation change to stimulate investment in NBS

→ Research

→ Technology and Implementation Advancement

→ Economic and Entrepreneurial

→ Development and Market Integration and Finance Mobilisation.

in the TF3. Furthermore, an update of the EC expert publication "The vital role of Nature-Based Solutions in a Nature Positive Economy" is planned for late 2024, to include the results of new NbS projects. The operations of the TF3 according to the updated TF3 objectives in NN+ would be streamlined by mid-2024.

# Task Force 4

## Communicators

# Hot topics for the first meetings of 2024?

**Increasing project participation and contribution to the NetworkNature platform.**

A NetworkNature editorial calendar outlining monthly newsbits is in the works and will include a task force tab. Projects can use the calendar to schedule newsbits at strategic times and are expected to do so at least once a year.

Promotion will be made easy via shared canva card templates. **Got an event?** Use the template to create a promotional card, and your friendly NetworkNature communication leads will schedule a post for you. The same goes for newsbits and products. Canva promotion decks will be reviewed on a monthly basis, so be sure to write us a note if you need promotion before the 5th of the next month.

Another upcoming highlight is peer to peer learning. We have a wealth of knowledge in our task force, but also very diverse timelines and needs. Members can either volunteer to share a skill in recurring meetings, or can request that the TF lead (your own Kassia Rudd), identify a speaker who can address a skill that needs honing.

Whenever possible, these learning opportunities will also be made available to other task forces interested in improving their own communication skills. To keep our meetings interesting, we are also exploring having rotating moderators. Do not hesitate to reach out if you are a member of TF4 and would like to lead a meeting!

**Kassia Rudd**
ICLEI

Task Force 4 (TF4), made up of your intrepid Horizon project communicators, is gearing up for some fundamental changes. Inspired by the results of a skill assets, gaps, and priorities assessment at last year's annual event, TF4 is set to shift its focus to targeted peer to peer learning and the generation of cross-project collaborative outputs.

Our purpose hasn't changed, but our operational strategy could not be more different. We will continue to support and amplify the work of NbS Horizon projects, expanding their audience and bolstering impact. The novelty comes from a meeting set up that more explicitly allows us to workshop new ideas and collaboration opportunities, and learn together from common challenges.

## Of interest to all task forces is the new monthly internal TF4 digest.

All horizon projects are invited to add upcoming opportunities, events and products that they would like to share with the NbS community. This informal digest will be sent out to all TF4 members at the beginning of each month. This is still being piloted, so we will continue, end, or shift our approach depending on your feedback.

**Is TF4 doing so many cool things that you have already forgotten what lies ahead? A summary of the most important updates can be found below.**

→ Editorial calendar with regular newsbit contributions from TF4 members

→ Branded Canva Card promotional pack shared with TF4 members

→ Cross task force peer to peer learning opportunities

→ TF4 Monthly Digest

# Task Force 5

## Education

The NetworkNature Team

The Taskforce for NBS Education has recently launched and will cultivate an environmentally conscious and empowered community of educators to develop approaches and material for this developing area. By fostering collaboration, providing resources, and advocating for policy change, the taskforce seeks to transform education into a powerful force for positive environmental action, ensuring a more sustainable and harmonious future.

# The objectives of the task force are:

**→ Community Engagement and Outreach:**

Organise outreach programs, workshops, and events to involve members and the wider community in hands-on experiences that showcase the positive impact of nature-based solutions. This will involve the establishment of partnerships with colleges, schools, community organizations, and environmental agencies to promote awareness and understanding of the benefits of nature-based solutions.

**→ Integration of Nature-Based Solutions in Education:**

Develop comprehensive educational frameworks that seamlessly integrate nature-based solutions into existing curricula across various academic disciplines. Promote interdisciplinary learning experiences that highlight the interconnectedness of ecosystems and emphasise the role of nature in addressing global challenges.

**→ Creation of Engaging Learning Resources:**

Produce innovative and interactive educational materials, including lesson plans, multimedia content, and hands-on activities, to engage students in the exploration of nature-based solutions.

# Task Force 6

## Co-creation and Co-Governance

**Susanna Gionfra**
IUCN

**Task Force 6 (TF6) has identified a list of objectives that will guide their work in the coming years.**

In order to organise the work gradually, TF6 has developed bi-annual workplan and is dedicated to focus their work in the next 6 months to the following priority topics:

→ Justice in NbS and the involvement of unusual suspects in co-creation, such as excluded and vulnerable groups

→ Co-governance and the related institutional resistances

→ Living labs as a method to test NbS co-creation and co-governance

→ Temporal aspects of NbS

→ Cultural aspects driving change

In order to define valuable contributions to these topics, TF6 proposes to start exploring different activities, which may include a literature review on examples, tips and lessons learnt (positive and negative) on involving unusual suspects in co-creation and other process-related failure scenarios, taking advantage of ongoing projects' work.

In addition, engagement activities in the form of workshops will be explored to support the gathering of knowledge on the matter and would result in a short publication/guidance. The exact contributions will be further delineated as the work develops.

In addition, following the recent TF6 publication **"Guidelines for co-creation and co-governance of NbS",** there is an ambition to homogenize the key terminologies used in the building block of the publication.

→ **TF6 is continuing their work in relation to the development of an online tool for co-creation and will aim at gathering feedback for its improvement.**

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