



Network  
Nature

# Network Nature Report

**Nature-based solutions Task  
Forces Cluster Meeting**

IUCN

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# Executive summary

The fifth NetworkNature Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) Task Forces Cluster Meeting, held online on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023, brought together more than 80 participants, representing all Taskforces, several EU NBS projects, and stakeholders from NetworkNature and the European Commission (European Research Executive Agency and DG Research & Innovation).

The meeting provided the opportunity to host an interactive dialogue to take stock of achievements of the Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe Nature-based Solutions projects to date and to further increase their impact. Further, the meeting strengthened synergies and exchange to propose updated Taskforces functioning, themes, and ideas, as well as cross interactions for NetworkNature+. New Horizon NBS projects were introduced, as well as the latest news from NetworkNature and the Taskforces.

The meeting included interactive group discussions to better assess the needs and suggestions on how the taskforces functioning, workstreams, themes, collaborations and impact creation can be improved. Enabling a more systemic approach to knowledge transfer, defining clearer and more specific goals, and establishing further relations to other policy fields were among the suggestions made during the meeting, while also strengthening the role of networking in facilitating possible collaborations on projects, learning and exchanging information, and new ideas, broadening horizons, and getting more contacts in the research field. Three areas of interest – namely, capitalisation of projects' results, collaboration and co-creation, and policy advocacy – were discussed in detail in groups.

A panel discussion gathered experts on the theme of “Nature-based solutions and education”, highlighting some of the key challenges in integrating NBS and its principles in education. Solutions included adopting a multidisciplinary approach, collecting information for specific needs and at different education levels, but also questioning ourselves on when a top down learning approach is suitable, and how we could focus on creating the learning experiences that can lead to a feeling of belief within a community. Opportunities exist to find innovative ways to increase engagement in NBS and biodiversity, taking advantage of projects working on implementation, and using the power of reimagining exercises. Ideas and suggestions were also collected for the structuring of the future Taskforce on NSB and Education.

The meeting concluded with a forward-looking session, outlining the objectives and additions of NetworkNature+, and the potential interlinkages with the BiodivClim Knowledge Hub and taskforces.

# Introduction

## Structure and objectives

The fifth NetworkNature Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) Task Forces Cluster meeting, held online on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023, aimed to bring together Task Force members, NetworkNature, and the European Commission (European Research Executive Agency and DG Research & Innovation) for an interactive dialogue to take stock of achievements of the Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe Nature-based Solutions projects to date and to further increase their impact.

Further, the meeting aimed at strengthening synergies and exchange to propose updated Taskforces functioning, themes, and ideas, as well as cross interactions for NetworkNature+. New Horizon NBS projects were introduced, as well as the latest news from NetworkNature and the Taskforces, and a panel discussion revolving around the current NetworkNature semester theme “Nature-based solutions and education”, and a future dedicated Taskforce to be created.

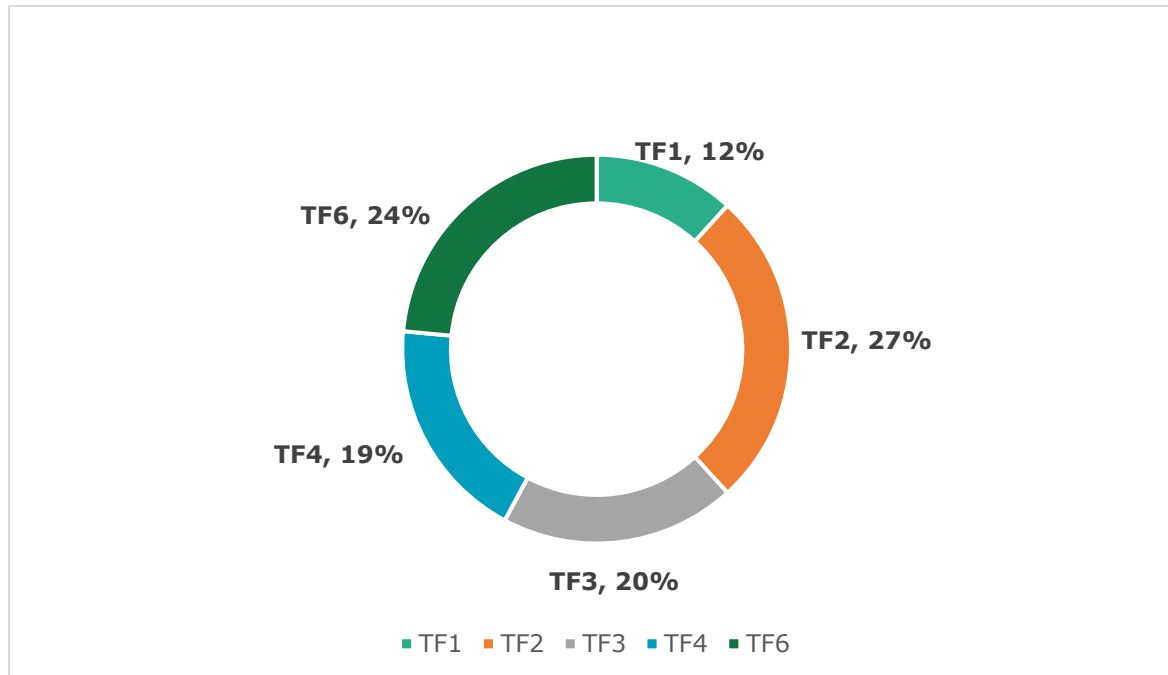
The meeting included interactive group discussions to better assess the needs and suggestions on how the taskforces functioning, workstreams, themes, collaborations and impact creation can be improved.

## Participation

The NetworkNature Nature-Based Solutions Taskforce Meeting brought together at least 80 participants, including Task force members, NetworkNature, and the European Commission (European Research Executive Agency and DG Research & Innovation), as well as new projects representatives.

All Taskforces were represented. Considering that several participants were part of multiple taskforces, the following pie chart provides an overview of TF representation during the meeting.

Figure 1 - Taskforces representation



# Morning session

## Welcome speech by the European Commission

Paola Lepori, Policy Officer at DG Research and Innovation in the European Commission, welcomed the event. Mentioning her professional background in relation to Nature-based Solutions, she outlined the vibrant, passionate, dynamic and extremely committed community participating in the TaskForces.

Bringing together more than 46 projects which received more than 440 million euros from the European Commission, the NetworkNature Taskforces (TF) mandate is about making this community stronger and maximising the social and environmental innovation impact, harnessing the efforts made by different projects. Ensuring policy relevance and coherence, taking advantage from collective intelligence, promoting cross-fertilization among projects, creating synergies, avoiding duplication of efforts are between the goals of the TaskForces for a fruitful investment. This is why the new Horizon Europe calls on NBS explicitly mention the need to cooperate with the TFs.

She also celebrated the visibility of NBS is increasing in the European Union, in the context of the Green Deal policies. Among others, the Biodiversity Strategy, the Adaptation Strategy, the proposed Nature Restoration Law, are bringing new opportunities for the NBS community, e.g. design and implementation phases, co-creation and governance, financing.

She stressed the need to cooperate within this horizontal structure to increase results' impact and robustness, not only for research but also for policy makers and implementers. She invited new projects to contribute to the TFs.

She finally thanked the TFs leads and contributors, NetworkNature and REA for their work on the TF.

## Highlights from NetworkNature and the Task Forces

### NetworkNature news | Bettina Wilk, ICLEI & Susanna Gionfra, IUCN

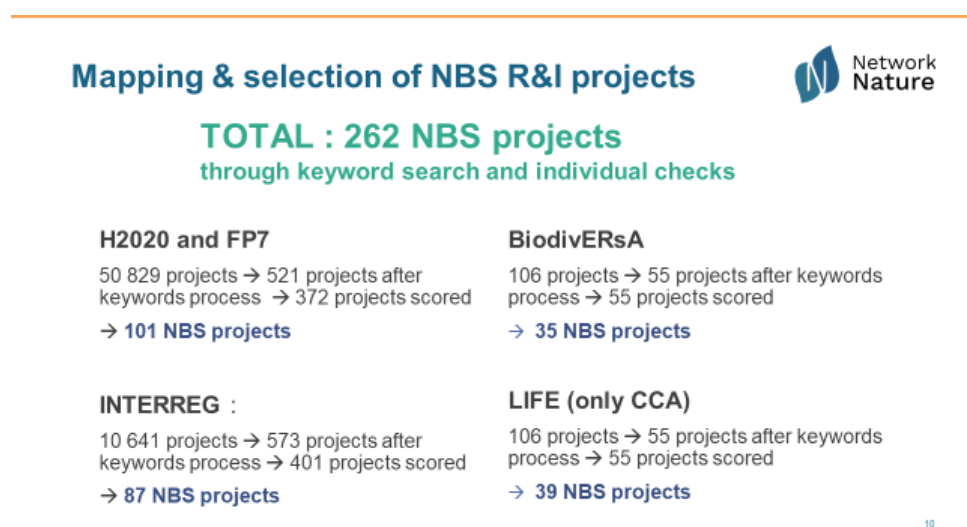
Bettina Wilk, Senior Officer on Sustainable Resources, Climate and Resilience at ICLEI, presented different outcomes from NetworkNature produced during the last semester.

She started presenting a [Policy Brief, produced last October on the role for cities and regions in the proposed EU Nature Restoration Law](#), outlining the governance approach, the actions to prioritize, the need to integrate within local policy and planning, the stakeholder engagement with unusual suspects, and the private and public finance.

She also presented the NetworkNature [NBS knowledge databases](#), that consists of **three different databases**. The first one focuses on [NBS knowledge gaps database](#), the second one

compiles [EU research and innovation projects](#) on NBS (from 262 European R&I or implementation programmes: Research & Innovation Framework programmes (FP7 and Horizon 2020), BiodivERsA, Interreg and LIFE, between 2011 and 2021, and will be updated) and the third one gathers different types of [NBS knowledge](#), bringing together more than 700 European research, policy, projects and market-based resources. She also invited participants to upload information to this knowledge database.

*Figure 2 – Mapping and selection of NBS Research and Innovation projects on the EU R&I NBS projects database*



Susanna Gionfra, Programme Officer on Nature-based Solutions at IUCN, shared a few more outputs produced by NetworkNature.

In terms of knowledge products, she presented 3 factsheets: [“Nature-based Solutions How are we restoring our relationship with nature in Europe?”](#), [“Seizing opportunities for ecosystem restoration to tackle societal challenges”](#) and [“Shifting the water paradigm: managing water through nature”](#). The last, produced during the last semester theme, demonstrates the potential of shifting away from conventional ‘grey’ solutions and of increasing the uptake of nature-based solutions targeting the ever-growing water-related challenges.

She also mentioned the two knowledge briefs produced by NetworkNature, one entitled [“Taking nature-based solutions up the policy ladder: from research to policy action”](#) and a second one focused on [“Ensuring the quality of nature-based solutions: perspective of key stakeholder groups”](#).

She finally presented two more upcoming products, a knowledge brief on “Nature-based solutions and inclusiveness” and a factsheet on “Financing Nature-based solutions for municipalities”. Susanna also presented the following initiatives:

- the #Naturefacts, a social media series, published weekly, informing about NBS benefits and impacts. She thanked all TF members that are contributing to that.



- The [NBS projects visualisation](#) that includes an overarching illustration of NBS and grouped 46 projects around different illustrations of societal challenges and ecosystem types.
- The [videos about different views](#) on the Nature Restoration Law, that were produced during NetworkNature Annual Event in September 2022. One of the videos summarises the views from different stakeholders, and, additionally, five more videos focus on specific stakeholders (business, environmental organisations, EU member states, Research and Landowners).

Further information on this session can be found in the slides ([5-17](#)).

### **TF1 | Data and Knowledge sharing | Jonathan Porter, Oppla**

Jonathan Porter, Coordinator at OPPLA —the EU Repository for Nature-Based Solutions and partner of Network Nature — presented Task Force 1 on Data and Knowledge science. He reminded the objectives of TF1 and pointed out that the [databases of NBS case studies](#) are continuously growing globally. They are now working on a template to encourage consistency when storing metadata on NBS datasets, along with making NBS tools and code more accessible. Finally, a work plan is in development for new activities in TF1.

Further information can be found in the slides ([19-24](#)).

### **TF2 | Impact Assessment Framework | Verónica Ruiz, IUCN Global**

Verónica Ruiz, Programme Manager for Disaster and Climate Resilience at IUCN, presented the updates from Task Force 2 on Impact Assessment Framework. A long-term goal for TF2 is to improve the handbook “[Evaluating the Impact of Nature-based Solutions- a Handbook for Practitioners](#)”, published in 2021. In addition, a mini-handbook on NBS & Biodiversity, based on the full handbook, is currently under development. TF2 is also preparing for the sixth European Climate Change Adaptation Conference to present its work. New areas of work will also be explored with discussions on NBS & Health and NBS & Marine environment.

Further information can be found in the slides ([25-31](#)).

### **TF3 | Governance, Business Models and Financial Mechanisms | Victoria Blessing, Steinbeis Europa Zentrum**

Victoria Blessing, Senior Project Manager at Steinbeis Europa Zentrum, presented the work of Task Force 3, on governance, business models, and financial mechanisms. TF3 members created the European Commission Expert Publication “[The vital role of Nature-Based Solutions in a Nature Positive Economy](#)”. The publication focuses on the role of NBS in shifting toward nature and positive economy and raises awareness on the role of NBS enterprises in delivering NBS. TF3 is also promoting the publication, through participation to events such as COP 27, Davos World Economic Forum or Nature Future Event 2023 on emerging trends for NBS and

enterprise. TF3 is also working on two new publications: on “Economic Valuation of NBS benefits” and “Activating climate action through spatial and urban planning: Catalysing conditions analysed in several European cases”.

Further information can be found in the slides ([32-35](#)).

#### **TF4 | NBS communicators | Kassia Rudd, ICLEI**

Kassia Rudd, Communications Officer, Nature-based solutions and food systems at ICLEI, presented the work of Task Force 4 on NBS Communicators. TF4 is working on a series of three videos on NBS, two of which have been already completed:

- [\*What Are Nature-based Solutions?\*](#)
- [\*How are nature-based solutions co-created?\*](#)

A third video on types of nature-based solutions is in the making. An NBS communication campaign with the videos is also being planned.

Further information can be found in the slides ([36-40](#)).

#### **TF6 | Co-creation and co-governance | Knud Erik Hilding-Hamann, Danish Technological Institute**

Knud Erik Hilding-Hamann, Senior Specialist at Danish Technological Institute, presented the work of Task Force 6, on co-creation and co-governance. He introduced two major outputs: a master document for co-creation and co-governance and an online decision support tool (ongoing). They conducted a questionnaire which gathered around 27 cases that will be integrated into the master document. Then, they will focus on creating a layout publication. The online decision support tool, currently being developed, aims to help policy makers and practitioners in giving them guidance on the decisions to consider when implementing and managing co-creation and co-governance of NBS. TF6 members also organised a side-event on co-creation of NBS for climate adaptation at COP 27.

Further information can be found in the slides ([41-43](#)).

#### **Questions & Answers**

During the questions and answers session, it was emphasised that there is a need for coordination between the different platforms gathering the data on Horizon projects. NetworkNature is committed to integrate knowledge and cases from the EU NBS projects in the knowledge products being produced. In order to contribute to knowledge sharing, TF members are participating in events and contributing to the creation of online educational programmes (MOOCs).

## Introducing the new Horizon Europe projects on NBS

Six new Horizon Europe NBS projects were introduced, namely NaturaConnect, EcoAdvance, MarinePLAN, Marine SABRES, MSP4BIO and Naturance.

### NaturaConnect

The [NaturaConnect](#) project was introduced by Martin Jung from the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA). The project focuses on developing knowledge, tools and capacity building to support EU member States in realizing an ecologically representative, resilient, and well-connected network of conserved areas in Europe (Trans-European Nature Network or Ten-N). It is to facilitate the establishment of new protected areas, identify the gaps and the corridors and finally increase the efficiency of existing ones in Europe, at different scales. The project is in line with the objectives of the EU biodiversity Strategy for 2030, aiming to legally protect at least 30% of the land (including inland waters) in the EU, of which at least one third should be under strict protection. It is gathering twenty-two partners from fifteen European Union Member States, working on six case studies.

The project is coordinated by IIASA and runs from 2022 to 2026.

Further information can be found in the slides ([46-50](#)).

### EcoAdvance

Mark Morris from Samui, presented the [EcoAdvance](#) project (Advancing freshwater restoration). The main objective of the project is to assess and consolidate recent scientific advances on freshwater ecosystem restoration by identifying factors that drive success and highlighting successful solutions across Europe. The approach chosen is to focus on projects and talking directly to the people involved. The project incorporates scientific, social, business and financial aspects. A consultation platform has been developed to assist consultation and showcase processes. All EU member states, as well as Israel and the UK are involved in the project.

The project is coordinated by Samui and runs from August 2022 to January 2025.

Further information can be found in the slides ([51-56](#)).

### MarinePLAN

Maren Kruse from the Thünen Institute provided an overview on the [MarinePLAN](#) project. It aims to enhance the design and effectiveness of spatial conservation and restoration planning for marine biodiversity in European seas by developing two axes. The first one is to develop and apply a Decision Support System (DSS) for an ecosystem-based maritime spatial guidance (EB-MSP). The second focus is to provide best practices guidance. Then, they can be shared

to the practitioners and policy makers and will help develop a toolbox to adapt each planning to the context and requirements, with the goal of balancing uses and conservation objectives in a sustainable manner. Eight planning sites across Europe will help to test and refine tools before sharing them. Seventeen partners from EU, the UK and Canada are participating in the project.

The project is coordinated by the Thünen Institute and runs from October 2022 to September 2025.

Further information can be found in the slides ([57-62](#)).

## Marine SABRES

Zacharoula Kyriazi, from the University College Cork (UCC), provided an introduction to the [Marine SABRES](#) project (Systems Approaches for Biodiversity Resilience and Ecosystem Sustainability). The main purpose is to co-develop and test a Simple Socio-Ecological Systems analysis framework (the Simple SES) in order to improve the uptake of Ecosystem-Based Management (EBM). The project is conducted in collaboration with three European marine regions, called demonstration areas, to develop measures and management of coastal and marine ecosystems that will contribute to the protection and conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services flow. The first area, the Tuscan archipelago, is developing tools to maintain and restore natural carbon sinks through the protection of seagrasses. The second demonstration area is the Arctic region, which focuses on developing measures to adapt the fish industry to climate change. The last one, Macaronesia, contributes to improving measures to estimate the quantitative benefits of restoring tourism activities. Twenty-two partners, from eleven countries, are involved to bring together the different actors (policy, business, coastal management, and scientists).

The project is coordinated by UCC and runs from September 2022 to August 2026.

Further information can be found in the slides ([63-67](#)).

## Naturance

Jaroslav Mysiak from CMCC (Euro-Mediterranean Centre on Climate Change) provided an overview of the [Naturance](#) Project. It mainly focuses on examining technical, financial and operational feasibility and performance solutions that are built on a combination of disaster risk financing and NBS investments. It stimulates dialogues and knowledge sharing on policy and practice to analyse and design sustainable finance. The missions of the project are diverse. They are working closely with existing knowledge networks (KNs) and are also participating to nine innovation labs co-organised with KNs and financial organisations to work on assessing different NBS investment and insurance schemes. In addition, they are developing a compendium of innovative insurance and investment instruments for NBSs, as well as examples of good practice.

The project is coordinated by CMCC and runs from October 2022 to March 2026.

Further information can be found in the slides ([68-73](#)).

## MSP4BIO

Ivana Stojanovic from S.pro introduced the [MSP4BIO](#) project (Improved Science-Based Maritime Spatial Planning to Safeguard and Restore Biodiversity in a coherent European MPA network). Its mission is to improve biodiversity consideration in the decisions taken on different governance levels by developing and demonstrating an integrated socio-ecological management framework of the European marine ecosystems. The project will also provide an EU-wide overview of biodiversity data availability, an ecological toolkit, improved ecological criteria and policy coherence solutions. Moreover, six test sites from five European seas are codeveloping and validating solutions with the cooperation of various stakeholders. Eighteen partners are involved in MSP4BIO project.

The project is coordinated by S.pro and runs from August 2022 to July 2025.

Further information can be found in the slides ([74-79](#)).

## Break-out sessions

### Survey results

Maria Nuñez Rodriguez, Programme Officer Nature-based Solutions at IUCN, presented the results of a survey that was shared with all TF members, with the objective of gathering feedback and ideas regarding the TFs.

The results of the survey, to which 33 people participated, shed light on the main positive, well-functioning element of the TFs, such as the learning opportunities, cooperation and collaborations, possibilities to increase projects' visibility, and creating impact. Similarly, the survey provided some insights on ways to make improvements to the TFs, including by improving the engagement of TF members (e.g. exploring funding), enabling a more systemic approach to knowledge transfer, defining clearer and more specific goals, and establishing further relations to other policy fields.

In particular, the networking potential of the TFs was assessed, and it was clarified that networking opportunities should be created to facilitate possible collaborations on projects, to learn and exchange information, and new ideas, to broaden horizons, and to get more contacts in the research field.

Ideas were also shared for the TFs role and functioning in NetworkNature+, namely potential collaborations by ecosystem types, regional networks per biogeographic areas, the creation of position papers on common findings that can shape policy, and exploring cross-cutting themes.

More detailed information on the survey's results can be found in the slides ([82-94](#)).

Three breakout groups were organised to discuss common topics: Taskforces meetings, coordination and engagement, common challenges, and effective types of products. Each group then dived into a specific topic of discussion: capitalisation of projects' results, collaboration and co-creation, and policy advocacy.

## TF meetings, coordination and engagement

For future TF meetings and coordination, participants suggested the following:

- *Create a common vocabulary within and between TFs*
- *Plan cross-TF activities and workshops (e.g. on communication, technologies in projects, and ecosystems/case studies, NBS and procurement), or guest lectures from external experts*
- *Intentionally integrate climate, justice, and racism across TFs, but potentially also in a dedicated TF*
- *Consider how the NBS hubs could be integrated into TFs meetings*
- *Increase emphasis on exploitation*
- *More active and intentional outreach by all members to bring in relevant projects*
- *More intentional cross TF topical connections*
- *Greater engagement of policymakers*
- *Dedicated NBS funding at local levels for implementation, and clearer management structure*
- *Design TF so as to support the work already being developed in project.*
- *Building a funding mechanism that supports finished projects in sharing their mature outputs*
- *Featuring more inspiring case studies (also through in-person visits)*
- *Generating common lessons learnt from pilots and by ecosystem*
- *Linking TF meetings to other events, exploring opportunities to link to relevant policy processes*
- *Enabling co-creation labs for upscaling NBS and capitalising on NetworkNature*
- *Responding to topical policy developments*
- *Publishing open call for contributors to outcomes*
- *Creating clever synergies across TFs and projects deliverables*
- *Identifying clear and achievable deliverables and outcomes*
- *Creating simple slide-deck about the TFs, that is ready to use, also to gain new members*

## Common challenges

Several challenges were identified, including:

- *Risk of losing people by positioning Europe as a leader in NBS, rather than as a partner*
- *Exploitation of results*

- *Monitoring and implementation across scales*
- *Communication towards a more general public*
- *Overpromising*
- *NBS language*
- *Time scales and community expectations*
- *Stakeholders/experts engagement fatigue*
- *Legal issues hindering NBS in cities*
- *Better integrating the inclusivity aspect of NBS*
- *Integrating NBS in other sectors/areas (e.g. agriculture, circular economy)*

## Effective types of products

A list of products were considered relevant as potential outcomes of the taskforces, including:

- *Instruments and tools (increasing coherence and coordination of available tools)*
- *Success stories*
- *Joint policy outputs*
- *Governance models*
- *Multimedia*
- *Translation guide between science and stakeholders*
- *Legal instruments*
- *Tools for design, monitoring and impact assessment of interventions – in particular financial tools such as tools for cost-effectiveness analysis*
- *Knowledge briefs and factsheets tailored for thematic areas and stakeholders*
- *Visual/interactive products and digital story telling*
- *Shorter and more concise content*

## Group 1: Capitalisation of projects' results

Capitalisation of projects' results was discussed in Group 1.

As regards to the main identified needs, it was clearly stated the importance of **continuous and diversified communication on the concept of NBS**. There is a need to communicate and promote the principles and vision for the implementation of NBS, across a wide range of stakeholders from different thematic areas. Building on the available and future knowledge products, needed communication material includes: organizing cross-project workshops and webinars, visual messaging, modular guidance, tailored briefs (in specific targeting policy and finance) and web tools. It is also imperative importance of the holistic approach of NBS and how NBS is complementary to various sectors and not separate from them, therefore calling for further collaborations with non-NBS departments.

Finally, given the diversity of the NBS, achieving targets and goals is not possible without **cooperation and partnerships**. TFs are best positioned to identify and develop cross-project inclusive synergies for knowledge management and developing collaborative knowledge and

communication products, from sharing best practices and lessons learned to joint workshops and events. TFs could contribute to stakeholder/expert engagement and work together to ensure high-integrity NBS through developing decision support systems sometimes with overlapping goals/functions.

The overview of the full board is provided in **Annex I**

## Group 2: Collaboration and co-creation

The topic of Collaboration and Co-Creation was discussed in Group 2. The main messages included:

- *Establishing connections with EU missions, universities as well as non-EU experts*
- *Possibility for TF4 to support coordination between TFs*
- *Integrate collaboration needs into projects' Grant Agreements*
- *Establishing links with Living Labs*
- *Facilitate comparability of deliverables to learn from each other*

Finally, the discussion generated three main needs:

- *Need for a critical reflection on NBS language. Wording which does not reflect what is happening in the fields around the world, may hinder NBS uptake.*
- *Need to better consider how culture and power fit into restoration, perceptions of nature, and NBS.*
- *Need to acknowledge and address the different time scales in NBS, which do not align with public's desire for quick results.*

And three main suggestions:

- *Integrate climate justice, social justice, antiracism, and equity work across TFs*
- *Develop cross TF workshops, trainings, and publications*
- *Explicitly write TFs and other forms of collaboration into Grant Agreements.*

The overview of the full board is provided in **Annex I**

## Group 3: Policy Advocacy

Policy advocacy was discussed in Group 3. The topic was seen as very important, and it was stressed that the TFs should not be a secluded island within Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe projects, but the work done there should be used to actively influence policy as well.

The main messages regarding policy advocacy were:

- *Needs in policy advocacy*
  - *For those policy makers who are already interested in NBS, provide targeted information*



- *Spark the interest of those policy makers who are not yet interested in NBS*
- *Create linkages with relevant policy processes, e.g. in the form of joint events*
- *Suggestions and ideas in policy advocacy*
  - *For the involvement in policy processes, create a timeline of important events and plan the participation well in advance*
    - *Including events which are organised for policy makers*
  - *To reach policy makers, keep a list of relevant contacts*
  - *Needs-based information – react to requests when possible, write joint policy briefs which are easy to use for practitioners and have a manageable length*

The overview of the full board is provided in **Annex I**

# Afternoon session

## Semester talks: NBS and Education

A panel debate, moderated by **Conor Dowling, Trinity College Dublin**, gathered different experts around the topic of NBS and education. Adopting NBS remains a challenge and more efforts are needed to show how critical these solutions are to achieve a more sustainable future. Education plays a key role in this effort. The moderator informed the audience that a new taskforce will be created gathering NBS projects representatives to collaborate on this topic.

**David Maddox, The Nature of Cities**, introduced the NetworkNature semester theme on NBS and education. He informed that, as part of this semester, an NBS comics series is being created. Following an [open call for stories on NBS](#), diverse responses were received, currently being assessed and shortlisted. The creation of such comics series stresses the importance of engaging the youth in contemporary topics of relevance. This type of engagement requires a level of entertainment in education to ultimately gauge the interest of more people in NBS. Through the comics series, NetworkNature hopes to provide educative and entertaining stories, making NBS an integral part of our daily lives.

**Ulrike Pisiotis, European Commission DG EAC**, presented the EU policy sphere around learning for sustainability. In 2022, EU Member States (MS) agreed on a [Council recommendation on learning for the green transition and sustainable development](#), a high-level policy statement of intent to strengthen sustainability education. It provides a roadmap for MS to integrate sustainability in all sectors and stages of education and training, highlighting the need to involve many actors to integrate sustainability in education. From the learners' perspective, hands on opportunities, for instance through outdoor learning, are considered crucial to create a direct contact with, and care for nature. In addition, she introduced the [European Sustainability Competence Framework \(GreenComp\)](#) which defines 12 sustainability competences, to live and act more sustainably. The framework helps educators in teaching these competences. She expressed her hope for this framework to feed into education policy, curricula and programs.

More info on EU actions generally on green education can be found [here](#).

**Sally Anderson, University of Aarhus**, talked about the different understandings of NBS. She brought up the question of the translatability of the NBS concept, and what children would need to know, and be educated on, to become active in green transitions. She surfaced the idea of distinguishing between top down learning and creating a feeling or set of beliefs within a community. When thinking of integrating NBS in curricula, the most challenging factor revolves around which teachers will be willing to take it on in their teaching plans, and what the motivation behind is. She brought to the table some experiences from the Horizon2020 [REGREEN](#) project, highlighting the work carried out to engage children in their local areas on topics such as biodiversity, spatial layout and water challenges, encouraging them to explore the outdoor. She introduced the eco-field books as an example of education tools where teachers and children can choose what chapter to focus on and construct the book the way they want to. The books can then be sent to municipal planners, or other children. Further, she presented the work of REGREEN on using [walkable floor-maps](#), and their success in stimulating awareness of the local environment, among children, teachers, and municipality planners.

**Ivelina Ivanova, European Schoolnet**, talked about the potential of NBS in education. In order to bring NBS to classrooms, there is a need for cooperation between schools, teachers, and governing bodies. While there has been a lot of interest in supporting the development of NBS in education, challenges persist. For instance, building teachers' knowledge and competences requires funding and trainings. She stressed the need to address different knowledge levels, and to make learning fun and entertaining for the students. Further, NBS career opportunities are rarely promoted, and should be made more available. She introduced the Horizon Europe [NBS EduWorld](#) project, which aims to support an NBS literate society, facilitating synergies between different stakeholders to ensure easy access to knowledge and resources on NBS. In this context, a [MOOC](#) was organised on exploring NBS in classrooms, for teachers with limited knowledge on NBS. Further, the project will aim to produce creative educational resources, for instance using performing arts.

The moderator addressed a final question to all panellists, on their proposals to solve the main problems in NBS with education.

Ivelina Ivanova stressed the need to make sure NBS are accessible and understood at different levels, not only for students. A community should be created to enable exchange, create and share opportunities, best practices, and key frameworks. More engaging and creative approaches should be explored for this purpose.

Sally Anderson mentioned the clear gaps that still persist, not in knowledge, but rather in terms of institutional architecture, class size, and motivation. There is a need to first address the general lack of interest in the natural world.

Ulrike Pisiotis explained that NBS and sustainability education needs to be looked at in a holistic way by those who create policy and those who put it into practice, rather than looking at changes introduced in the curricula. She called for a whole school/institution approach.

David Maddox emphasised the need to bring more voices into the conversation in order to develop a common language and build a culture of nature, while clarifying why NBS initiatives are needed. A possibility, in a broad education context, is to focus less on the specific (NBS) solutions and focus more on the idea of nature as a partner in human lives.

The panel debate shed light on some of the key challenges in integrating NBS and its principles in education. Solutions included adopting a multidisciplinary approach, collecting information for specific needs and at different education levels, but also questioning ourselves on when a top down learning approach is suitable, and how we could focus on creating the learning experiences that can lead to a feeling of belief within a community. Opportunities exist to find innovative ways to increase engagement in NBS and biodiversity, taking advantage of projects working on implementation, and using the power of reimagining exercises.

Several EU NBS projects have been working with such innovative approaches, which provide clear examples of how the potential of education for NBS can be reached. Examples are provided in the chapter **Take-aways and follow-up actions** of this document.

## **Towards a Taskforce on NBS and education**

An interactive mentimeter session shed light on how EU NBS projects are addressing education, and what is expected from a future Taskforce dedicated to NBS and education.

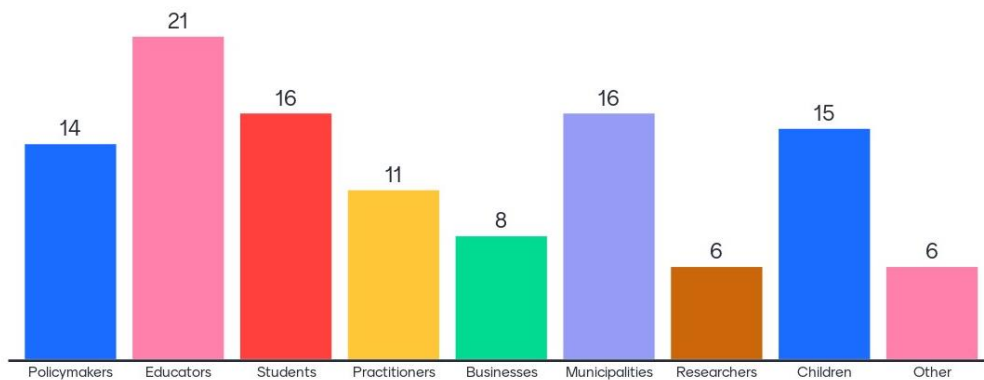


Figure 5 - Expected outcomes from the Taskforce on NBS and Education



Several target audiences were identified as groups to be reached through the Taskforce's outcomes, with a preference for educators, municipalities, children and policymakers.

Figure 6 - Taskforce's preferred target audiences



Finally, participants were asked to list the expected impacts of the Taskforce on NBS and Education.

Figure 7 - Taskforce's expected impacts



## Looking to the future

### Transitioning to NetworkNature+

Bettina Wilk, ICLEI, introduced the next phase of NetworkNature to start in August 2023: NetworkNature+. The ambition of the project remains to accelerate the upscaling of NBS in science, policy, business and practice, with a greater focus on policy integration and targets, specifically on the European Green Deal, and on capacity building.

The project will last 4 years. The consortium will be expanded to include a stronger support in finance and business, on policy, and on education. The objectives of NetworkNature+ will be to:

- Support policymaking by spurring NBS evidence integration and mobilisation
- Broaden, guide and engage the NBS community of innovators, developers and practitioners
- Build capacities and skills of public authorities, NBS investors and society

Examples of products that will be developed include: an interactive network map of NBS project (building on the visualisation produced in NetworkNature), an NBS interactive walkthrough, a new NBS R&I Roadmap, product packages per policy area, guidance booklets, game-based platforms, and creative and educational products. 5 priority policy themes (to be identified) will frame and orient the work and activities under the project. Through its activities, NetworkNature+ will open to new target audiences, such as cities and subnational governments, investors and entrepreneurs, subnational and national policymakers, civil society, educators and students.

The work of the Taskforces will continue, with an additional taskforce on NBS and Education led by Trinity College Dublin. In addition, the expansion of the NBS hubs will continue, beyond the current 6 hubs launched in NetworkNature.

Further information on NetworkNature+ can be found in the slides ([101-107](#)).

## BiodivClim Knowledge Hub

Hilde Eggermont, Biodiversa+ chair/coordinator and Filipa Grilo, BiodivClim Knowledge Hub co-chair presented the **BiodivClim Knowledge Hub**, a new knowledge Hub initiated under Biodiversa+.

Under the previous Biodiversa, a multi-year program called BiodivClim COFUND action (ending in 2024) funded a call for research proposals that allow to fund 21 transnational projects working on biodiversity and climate change. One subtheme of this program was specifically focused on the potential of **NBS** for mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

Other activities of the call were meant to valorise outcomes of the projects and maximise the impact. The Knowledge hub is part of these activities, in relation to the funded projects.

Recently, Biodiversa has moved into the European Biodiversity Partnership called Biodiversa+ and, depending on the outcomes, it will be possible to foresee an extension of the Knowledge Hub beyond 2024.

The Knowledge Hub provides a structural support for the funded projects; in terms of clustering activities, both in academic terms and in the science-policy-society interface. The Knowledge Hub is mostly focused on BiodivClim projects but it also includes a few other projects funded under Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe, from JPI Climate and JPI FACCE, as well as experts from IPBES and from the IPCC. The Knowledge Hub is organised in two task forces, the first (technical task force) one focus on academic production, exchange of projects and knowledge, including possible frontiers for research. The second (SPI-SSI task force) focuses on science-based policy support, policy briefs, guidance documents and on how these projects can fit in the IPBES and the IPCC projects. The task forces, with 16 projects, begun in February 2023.

Filipa Grilo, PhD student and member of the Technical TF, presented some expected outputs and outlined some possibilities to collaborate between NetworkNature Task Forces and BiodivClim Knowledge hub.

For the first year, it is planned to produce from the technical TF, a scientific paper on knowledge gaps on NBS and climate change adaptation and mitigation and another one on implementation gaps regarding NBS. The other TF is focused on producing a policy brief on successful case studies, on the update of Biodiversa+ Stakeholder engagement Handbook, and on digests to feed IPBES/IPCC, on organising panel discussions with different stakeholders on different topics. Both TFs are engaged in organising a session on NBS and climate change at the ECCA Conference and at the UNFCCC COP28.

The Knowledge Hub would be glad to collaborate with different Task Forces, and outlined the relation between the work developed by TF1(NN) and the Technical TF (BiodivClim).

Further information can be found in the slides ([108-114](#)).

# Take-aways and follow-up actions

## Take-aways

While TF members are generally satisfied with the functioning of the TFs, the meeting, breakout rooms and survey, have shed light on some **key aspects to reconsider and improve**, regarding the types of collaborations that can be enabled through the TFs, the power of networking, the ways to create greater impact by broadening horizons to wider policy fields, the need to simplify and clarify the goals of the TFs, among other. Three key areas of discussion have arisen, namely better capitalisation of projects' results, improved cooperation and collaboration, and policy advocacy. In addition, in more practical terms, the **use of the online TF space** remains limited and could benefit from improved functionalities.

Overall, several **publications, policies and resources** were promoted during the meeting.

### Publications

- [\*The vital role of nature-based solutions in a nature positive economy\*](#)
- [\*Evaluating the impact of nature-based solutions\*](#)
- [\*NetworkNature Policy Brief 1\*](#)
- [\*NetworkNature Facsteet 1, 2, 3\*](#)
- [\*NetworkNature Knowledge Brief 1 and 2\*](#)

### Resources

- [\*What Are Nature-based Solutions?\*](#)
- [\*How are nature-based solutions co-created?\*](#)
- [\*videos about different views on the Nature Restoration Law\*](#)
- [\*3 NetworkNature NBS knowledge databases\*](#)

### EU Policies

- *The Nature Restoration Law*
- *Urban Greening Plans*
- *EU Biodiversity Strategy*

From the discussions and interactions held during the meeting, it is also clear that the **topic of education** appears, to differ extents, in several EU NBS projects. Many relevant and innovative examples have been brought forward which contribute to the variety of educational products and tools for NBS, providing inspirations for other.

### Education-related resources:



- The CLEARING HOUSE project developed an "Inspirational package" to help teachers make trees and forests part of their teaching. Available [here](#).
- DivAirCity has launched a co-creation activity for the younger generations. The youngsters will work in groups (mostly school class groups) and create their ideal NBS solutions in the 5 pilot municipalities of the Project. This involves Municipalities, schools and especially the younger generations. Available [here](#).
- In proGfreg an indoor green wall has been co-created with students in a primary school in Turin, Italy. Available [here](#).
- WaterLANDS has just finished a call for artists-in-residence at each of their 6 restoration sites. 500 applications were received for 6 positions. The idea is to engage an artist's "way of seeing", to help co-design restoration with communities, scientists, etc. Available [here](#).

## Follow up actions

This TF Cluster Meeting served as a way for gather key ideas, suggestions, and aspirations for the future work of the TFs. NetworkNature will take stock all the information gathered, with the objective of:

- Better designing future TF Cluster Meetings that meet the expectations and desires of the projects, members of the TFs
- Explore ways to improve the functioning and role of the TFs, looking at proposed themes, types of collaborations and ideal outcomes
- Reflect on the ideas and themes received for the current TFs, as well as for the future TF on NBS and Education

EU NBS projects representatives, who have not done so yet, are encouraged by NetworkNature to engage in one or more of the NBS Taskforces.

Topic	Action
Taskforces	TF1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you would like to join Task Force 1: Data and Knowledge Sharing please contact <a href="mailto:jonathan@oppla.eu">jonathan@oppla.eu</a> or <a href="mailto:Alberto.POZZA@ec.europa.eu">Alberto.POZZA@ec.europa.eu</a></li> </ul>
	TF2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If interested in joining TF2 please contact: Laura PALOMO RIOS and Verónica RUIZ GARCIA</li> <li>• If interested to contribute to the NBS &amp; Biodiversity work under TF2 please contact: Esther San José Carreras (<a href="mailto:estsan@cartif.es">estsan@cartif.es</a>), Stuart Connop (<a href="mailto:s.p.connop@uel.ac.uk">s.p.connop@uel.ac.uk</a>), Raúl Sánchez (<a href="mailto:rausan@cartif.es">rausan@cartif.es</a>) &amp; Caroline Nash (<a href="mailto:c.nash@uel.ac.uk">c.nash@uel.ac.uk</a>)</li> </ul>
	TF3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To join TF3 contact: Victoria Blessing <a href="mailto:Victoria.Blessing@steinbeis-europa.de">Victoria.Blessing@steinbeis-europa.de</a></li> </ul>
	TF4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All new projects' communicators are encouraged to join TF4 - please email <a href="mailto:kassia.rudd@iclei.org">kassia.rudd@iclei.org</a> and <a href="mailto:hello@networknature.eu">hello@networknature.eu</a></li> </ul>

	<p>TF6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>If interested in joining TF6, please contact <a href="mailto:susanna.gionfra@iucn.org">susanna.gionfra@iucn.org</a> , <a href="mailto:khi@teknologisk.dk">khi@teknologisk.dk</a> or <a href="mailto:isabelferreira@ces.uc.pt">isabelferreira@ces.uc.pt</a></i></li></ul>
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# Annex I

## Breakout room 1

### Breakout Room 1

#### Future TF meetings

- Have more substantial of work in progress, collaborative or collaborative cases and other issues
- Presentation of case studies
- Visits in outstanding case studies
- Co-creation lab for updating recommendations and using the NBS
- Influence policymaking
- Linked to events

#### TF coordination and engagement

- Sharing good practices between different TFs
- More updates on the progress of different TFs
- Different topics for TF
- Develop synergies across projects, deliverables as much as possible
- Learn from the experience of the other TFs, learn from the UK, learn from the EU, learn from the other countries
- Creating collaborative documents about NBS (e.g. Wikipedia style)
- More flexibility to form work
- More communication through direct contact, more to other TFs
- Resources to support policy developments
- Publish open calls for contributions to authors to an output

#### Common challenges (e.g. by ecosystem)

- Time to interact with other stakeholders, especially NGOs, to get to consensus
- Substantial part of a project is not funded
- Combine NBS to create a better solution to address the same problem
- Quality assurance
- Decision support systems, consistency with existing qualifications
- Knowledge management, creating the capability, KPIs
- Dissemination of results, especially to the public
- Dissemination and implementation of NBS
- Measure more for NBS, but not only for NBS, but also for other ecosystem services, e.g. NBS for Agriculture
- Integration of NBS with other ecosystem services, e.g. NBS for Agriculture
- Eight terms related to NBS in different areas, NBS, deep-level level
- Make NBS more politically relevant
- Create a more inclusive definition of NBS

#### Effective types of products

- Organizer of a workshop, workshop, in our case, we are not in the day etc.
- Web Tools (easy to use)
- Different languages
- Call for advice or increasing awareness of policy & governance dynamics
- Open access scientific publications
- Policy briefs
- Visual messaging around NBS
- Twitter threads with easy publication of IP and specific projects
- Modular guidance (take what you need)
- Very clear publications available for policy makers
- Fact sheets (organised by key words)
- More webinars about NBS, implementation, especially for the technical details
- Collaboration for knowledge management & dissemination, especially for the business community
- More content specific, history, culture
- Clearer NBS impact and cost analysis
- Examples of NBS, including other ecosystems

### Discussion point 1 : "CAPITALISATION OF PROJECTS' RESULTS"

*identified needs*

guidance implementation of the EU Restoration Law	Guidance implementation of the EU Soil Health Law and Zero land take objective	How NBS should be upscaled to maximize the impacts (on climate, biodiversity and to comply with the EU policies?)	Lacking overview of projects' products/ policy activities
Make clear and available descriptions of the NBS, especially on their technical implementation	Working with non-NBS departments	Improving the narrative, in scientific terms, about the business potentials of NBS	Sort some TFs acc. to policy goals (more targeted work towards policy implementation=

*concrete suggestions/ideas*

Guidance on ethical questions, environmental justice and power dynamics shaping NBS activation	Short guide on layman words on NBS with examples	Deep Analysis of the Tools developed by the EU projects to identify complementarities	NBS for dummies - workshop / knowledge product (definitions / terminologies / prioritisation)	Get overview with EC/ NN+ on products by all past and future NBS projects (avoid overlap, create complementarity)
Series of webinars - Briefing policy makers	FACTSHEET of the Role of NBS in the EU Restoration and Biodiversity Strategy			

# Breakout room 2

## Breakout Room 2

### Future TF meetings

- Claire (L) will be leading the 2nd task force meeting in the next 2 weeks. It will be a 1.5 day event in the afternoon. It will be a 1.5 day event in the afternoon.
- Conversations on what we are doing wrong
- Opportunities to impact policy processes
- Get beyond WP and project language. How to move on to more political agendas?
- Maybe inviting NBS Hubs to contribute?
- planning projects' follow up
- Cross-TF activities and Workshops
- Bring outsiders into discussions
- How to include the adoption and implementation of NBS in procurement of Municipalities

### TF coordination and engagement

- All members to engage in bringing in ongoing relevant projects and initiatives
- Cross task force logical connections
- More clear EC NBS?
- Indicates more resources to TF participation in their records
- More clear EC NBS?
- Instrumental
- Consider joint policy outputs, such as briefs for similar projects
- Practitioner webinars
- A "translation guide" between communities / science / business / government
- Many number of external support tools be no created
- How can we reduce the fact that the science of NBS not often in the with public's desire for obvious quick results?

### Common challenges (e.g. by ecosystem)

- Why are we positioning Europe as a leader and not a partner?
- Effective interpretation of national legislation
- Not enough clear communication on our work towards a more general public
- Over-pointing to communities and institutions on benefits and values
- the production of ignorance
- Means it: the skills
- Urban should be the priority domain for NBS. It is a subject in the people's lives
- Urban should be the priority domain for NBS. It is a subject in the people's lives
- Urban should be the priority domain for NBS. It is a subject in the people's lives
- Urban should be the priority domain for NBS. It is a subject in the people's lives

### Effective types of products

- Consider joint policy outputs, such as briefs for similar projects
- Practitioner webinars
- A "translation guide" between communities / science / business / government
- Many number of external support tools be no created
- How can we reduce the fact that the science of NBS not often in the with public's desire for obvious quick results?

### Discussion point 2: "COLLABORATION AND CO-CREATION"

- can EU missions help with collaboration?
- Will it help or hurt to explicitly write collaboration into our GAs?
- Can the EC organise more collaboration opportunities?
- Could communication task force do a training on comms for other task forces? to make sure products reach their audiences?
- Can we link universities to local communities
- We could link with existing Living Labs
- Learn from each other! Deliverables that we all have to do - compare approaches
- 3 identified needs:
  - Clearer on the strategic needs of the living lab network
  - Better visibility and an easier way to use and power in the economic, political or other and NBS
  - How can we reduce the fact that the science of NBS not often in the with public's desire for obvious quick results?
- 3 concrete suggestions/ideas:
  - Integrate climate justice, social justice, and other into existing work across task forces
  - Cross TF workshops, trainings, and publications
  - Explicitly write TFs and other forms of collaboration into GAU

## Breakout room 3

# Breakout Room 3

### Future TF meetings

- Align messaging and communication across projects
- Exchange data and knowledge, establish connectivity processes
- How to involve insurance sector to invest in NBS
- Link up with relevant policy process, promote joint events in upcoming COP16 for example?
- Greater linkages with other TFs, are all at work with NBS experts, do there exist other networks or groups of people on the work on NBS?
- Ways to ensure stronger commitment to specific TF members
- How to avoid duplication of project actions or rep. duplication...
- Linkage meetings among Task Forces
- Share current projects across TFs
- Collecting common lessons learned from pilots
- How to align project audience, do they to remain the same?
- Share relevant TF activities with other TFs
- Share relevant TF activities with other TFs
- Share relevant TF activities with other TFs

### TF coordination and engagement

- Communicate core and agreed deliverables or objectives and outputs
- Move quickly from coordinators to committed contributors
- Work on this once NBS is prioritized
- Identify clear & achievable outputs/ deliverables to focus on
- Time to lead!
- Having TF leaders who have strong leadership and commitment to create it
- Focus on clear, achievable outputs/ deliverables to focus on
- Focus on clear, achievable outputs/ deliverables to focus on

### Common challenges (e.g. by ecosystem)

write here

write here

### Effective types of products

- joint report
- visual leaflet or interactive booklet
- video campaign
- Digital storytelling tools
- Align / reinforce social media messaging across projects
- Manageable length (not >300 pages)
- Write dissemination of impressive "by the way" project results and impacts
- Specialized "friendly" guidance

## Discussion point 3 : "POLICY ADVOCACY"

- Give targeted information to interested policy makers**
  - Adding on the targeted outputs for audiences, also sector specific, start with the sector those untapped policy makers care about and introduce this in that context
  - Do we have a good overview of what policy makers need? Do they need more policy briefs or has this evolved to something else?
  - Targeted outputs for policy audience - written and in person
- Spark interest if those policy makers not interested yet**
  - aligning messaging on key policies across channels
  - using case studies to illustrate best practices that contribute to policy targets
  - Needs-based with voting on requests for certain outputs?
  - Writing joint policy briefs
  - 'practitioner friendly' guidance
  - Manageable length (not >300 pages)
- Link up with relevant policy process, promote joint events in upcoming COP16 for example?**
  - Planning, global stage events are planned far ahead of time
  - Timeline of important events, planning
  - List of relevant contacts
  - Target events to policy makers, esp. in Brussels
  - Participate in thematic clustering meetings - different DGs, will be organised by REA

**3 identified needs:**

- Provide targeted information to policymakers
- Sparkling interests of policymakers and currently interested in NBS
- Create linkages with relevant policy processes

**3 concrete suggestions/ideas:**

- create a timeline of important events and plan the participation well in advance
- Keep a list of relevant contacts of policymakers
- Needs-based information (e.g. joint policy briefs)



NetworkNature is a resource for the nature-based solutions community, creating opportunities for local, regional and international cooperation to maximise the impact and spread of nature-based solutions. The project is funded by the European Commission under the Horizon 2020 programme.



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