



Network
Nature

Network Nature NBS National SMEs' Representatives Objectives

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Background

Nature-based solutions (NBS) support major EU policy priorities, in particular the European Green Deal, biodiversity strategy and climate adaptation strategy, as a way to foster biodiversity and make Europe more climate-resilient (see official website of the European Union and appendix).

The project [Network-Nature](#) aims to increase awareness of the value of NBS and accelerate their uptake across science, business, policy, and practice by providing guidance and capacity building, creating, and operating new European NBS regional hubs and networking with practitioners, business, investors, and policymakers using namely sectoral events and champions.

A strategy to improve the attractiveness of NBS for businesses will be developed through better insight into business opportunities, using existing knowledge and the experience shared by the granted EU-NBS-Projects. The Network-Nature activities will help implement this strategy, including a match-making service, an incubator for NBS interested businesses to understand barriers to entering the market, and guidance and support on innovative NBS for business and investors, as well as engaging and communicating with private sector leaders according to their interests and needs. Dialogue with businesses, e.g., through annual and regional events, will explore multiple benefits of NBS.

Objectives: Establish a European network of national representatives for Businesses (mainly SMEs and start-ups) interested in NBS.

Create national contact and advisory points for start-up and SMEs on business opportunities related to nature-based solutions across different sectors and provide support in developing related business activities through capacity-building, networking, matchmaking and advising on financing and funding options.

National contact and advisory points: should be organisations interested to support the implementation of NBS with the ambition to support SMEs in their country in developing their business and finding financial support. These partners should advise businesses interested in NBS in their country and be ready to channel their interests and requirements and represent them.

This network and its partners will be profiled and **will benefit** from Network-Nature's online and offline activities and resources, such as:

- **Training and support tools:** NBS Business Outlook (giving updates with the latest developments in the NBS market), capacity-building on available financing instruments, support to business model development for NBS, guidance documents for SMEs and start-ups working or planning to engage with NBS, innovation management and internationalisation through access to tools, web-seminars, trainings;
- Access to **state-of-the art knowledge**, clear overview and updates on latest policy and regulatory developments from the European Union, best practices, case studies, financing instruments and opportunities for NBS via the Network-Nature web platform;
- Dedicated profile and **exchange group** on the Network-Nature web platform (similar to Facebook group where members can be invited) where relevant local/regional/national documents and resources can be uploaded (in local language) and shared, as well as integrated with the wider NBS resources section (tagging option);

- **Invitation to relevant events** such as conferences, brokerage, networking, matchmaking, and capacity-building events, etc. and national representatives will have the opportunity to share their knowledge and experiences in Network-Nature's Annual and Dialogue Events with practitioners and European policy makers, as well as pertinent regional events as opportunities for exchange and learning. They can also **promote their own events** related to NBS on Network-Nature's event calendar;
- Access to an extensive network of experts from different disciplines and sectors through the Network-Nature web platform and regular events;

The national representatives and network members are expected to **commit** to:

- provide on an ongoing basis **insight in national and regional developments and trends relevant for NBS finance, business opportunities and funding** to support knowledge on opportunities and barriers;
- provide inputs for Network-Nature policy briefs (to shape policy and funding in making these more supportive to NBS related SMEs) with **recommendations and guidance for integrating NBS in European and national policy**;
- **share** on an ongoing basis relevant NBS reports, case studies, technical guidance and other **information related to financing, business models, stakeholder engagement and lessons learnt**. Network-Nature will make this information available through its web platform.

Interested? Would you like to know more or to suggest a potential organisation for this network, then please just contact:

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Appendix

Nature-based Solutions (NbS) are defined by the [International Union for Conservation of Nature \(IUCN\)](#) as “actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits”

Nature provides billions of dollars in **business value** as well as **cost savings**, as an example we find ‘[Bankable Nature Solutions](#)’ where we can find examples across different sectors and geographies, such as climate-smart agriculture, environmental protection, forestry, wastewater treatment and renewable energy. In this report, we find 13 case studies of bankable nature solutions that generate a positive return on investment.

Investment in NbS offers multiple opportunities **to unlock new revenue streams** and to increase customer engagement. Examples are increased environmental service benefits in and around agricultural land, including biodiversity, soil health and water quality or revenue benefits from premium prices obtained from regenerative agricultural practices ([EIB, 2019](#)). The development of business activities and models that have no or positive impact on biodiversity and ecosystem services and the upscaling of investment and implementation of natural solutions require making natural capital measurable and to develop the skills, targets and partnerships that turn these approaches into action. Examples of such partnerships are the [Athens Green Infrastructure](#) investment plan for nature-based adaptation solutions or the [insurance policy for coral reefs](#) in Mexico’s State Quitana Roo.

Upscaling NbS requires:

- *Networking and supporting - to increase the number of SMEs involved in NBS, a network of organisations sharing best-practices, suggesting policy recommendations, and providing advises to SMEs needs to be developed.*
- *Policy and regulation - governments can steer the development of sustainable business models through legislation that has a positive effective on biodiversity, but also the enforcement of existing legislation and the phasing out of harmful subsidies play an important role.*
- *True pricing - a tool to revalue the natural systems food provisioning depends on and the contribution it makes to a healthy society and fair-trade relations. Successful implementation of true pricing will require recognition of the societal roles that farmers play and to adopt policies to create a level*

playing field. For true pricing to be reflected in market prices, it will require governments to levy taxes accordingly.

- *Business mainstreaming of natural capital - to reduce impacts on biodiversity and integrate the value of nature in business decisions and actions, reducing business risks and providing opportunities for climate change adaptation and mitigation.*
- *Financing the design and implementation of NbS- governments and the EU can help pave the way for private investors to facilitate investment in natural capital, and reduce the risk for investing in NbS, but also the development of bankable projects that demonstrate a clear payback/revenue model for nature is needed to upscale private investment in natural capital and NbS.*



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