

Water Resilience as a Competitive Edge: Bridging R&I Gaps for Nature-based Solutions (NbS)

Charlemagne Building, 170, rue de la Loi, Brussels
Friday, June 5th, 2026, 09:00 – 12:45 CET



Registration

08:30 – 09:00

Introduction

09:00 – 09:10

Welcome from DG RTD

Water resilience and competitiveness: Two interdependent sides of the same medal

- Speaker: James Morrisson, Director of Healthy Planet, DG RTD

Existing Solutions

09:10 – 09:40

Setting the scene

Examples of successful water related NbS solutions from Horizon Europe Projects.

- ARSINOE: Chrysi Laspidou
- RESTCOAST and SpongeScapes: Ase Johannessen
- WATERLANDS: tbd.

In an era of climate uncertainty, water resilience is no longer just an environmental priority – it's a strategic advantage. Horizon Europe projects have demonstrated that Nature-based Solutions (NbS) can transform landscapes, boost biodiversity, and create economic value. Flagship restoration projects prove that NbS can deliver tangible benefits – from climate adaptation to green business opportunities, illustrating that e.g. large-scale wetland restoration is both a competitive edge and good for the planet. By taking inspiration from successful examples, stakeholders like policymakers, private investors and businesses working together can turn proven existing NbS into a widespread reality. This will help unlock the full economic and environmental potential of water resilience R&I results.

Boosting deployment and investments in nature-based solutions (incl. potential barriers and bottlenecks)

09:40 – 10:30

Impact talks: R&I Gaps and opportunities

Pitches from water-related NbS users:

- Agriculture: **Wouter van Eck** – from Agroforestry to Water Resilience innovation
- Insurance: **Olivier Bouc**, CCR – Insurance backed prevention
- Research and Scale-Up: **tbd**, WETSUS
- Best practice: **Kieran Dartée**, FieldFactors – Successful investment journey
- Landscape- and urban planning: **tbd**. (*co-benefit of NbS solution for water management and restoration*)

Audience Q&A

10:30 – 11:00

Coffee Break

11:00 – 11:30

A water resilience research & innovation strategy (WRRIS) is key for paving the way forward

11:30– 12:30

Stakeholder debate: Closing the Gaps – Moderated by Bertrand Vallet

State of play of the water resilience research and innovation strategy by DG RTD Unit B4, followed by a moderated discussion with the audience (incl. polling via Slido):

- What's missing in EU R&I funding for water NbS?
- How can private sector profit from deploying NbS?
- What R&I gap, if closed, would unlock private capital?

Plenary Wrap-Up

12:30 – 12:40

Rapid fire take-aways with the audience

Closing Remarks

12:40 – 12:45

DG RTD B4: Next steps for the strategy

- Speaker : tbd.

Optional: Networking Lunch

12:45 –

Charlemagne Cafeteria