

NATUREFIN Newsletter



NATUREFIN Newsletter I/2026

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IPBES-12: A Landmark Assessment for Business, Biodiversity and Nature-Positive Finance

As the global community continues to grapple with unprecedented biodiversity loss, the upcoming **12th session of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES-12)**, taking place from **3-8 February** 2026 in Manchester, UK, marks a pivotal moment for advancing the science-policy interface on nature-positive economies and sustainable business practices.



At the heart of this plenary sits the much-anticipated Business and Biodiversity Assessment, a **first-of-its-kind scientific evaluation of the interdependencies and impacts of business activities on biodiversity** and nature's contributions to people. After three years of work by leading experts, the assessment synthesises evidence on how global economic actors both depend on and affect ecosystems and species, offering **methodological guidance** to quantify these linkages and identifying approaches businesses can adopt to transition towards nature-positive strategies. Delegates from over **150 IPBES member governments** are expected to review and approve the Summary for Policymakers, setting the stage for its formal launch and uptake in international policy and corporate decision-making.

The methodological assessment comprises **six core chapters**: business typology; how business depends on biodiversity; how business impacts biodiversity; approaches for measuring these dependencies and impacts; options for action by businesses; and creating an enabling environment for business, governments, the financial sector and civil society to drive change. Crucially for NATUREFIN and sustainable finance stakeholders, the assessment explicitly considers the **roles of financial institutions and markets** within business typologies and in shaping an enabling environment for nature-positive action, offering **evidence and tools** that can help align investment decisions with biodiversity outcomes.

The City of Heinola Celebrates Its 250th Anniversary by Protecting Forests

Heinola is celebrating its **250th anniversary** by launching a **new forest management programme** to keep the city's municipal forests **healthy, productive, and rich in biodiversity** for the long term.



The plan balances climate objectives with recreational access, landscape values, and the sustainable economic use of forests. Heinola manages around **3,700 hectares of forest**, including 1,400 hectares of commercial woodland, and is expanding "value forests" to safeguard cultural, natural, and scenic assets.

Actions to strengthen biodiversity include increasing protected areas, retaining broad-leaved trees and deadwood, tackling invasive species, and diversifying species in overly dense or ageing spruce stands. Good planning also supports **water protection** by reducing run-off into nearby waterways. The international project meeting of the NATUREFIN project will be held in Heinola in the



summer of this year, **from 9 to 11 June 2026.**

Somogy County Launches Two TOP-Plus Projects to Strengthen Nature-Based Tourism

The **Somogy County Local Government** has recently launched two large-scale **TOP-Plus projects**, marking a significant step in strengthening **sustainable, nature-based tourism and regional development**. Supported by **EU funding and Hungarian state co-financing**, the initiatives focus on active tourism development along the **River Drava** and in the **Zselic** region, with both projects running until **June 2029**.

The Drava project targets the development of **water tourism infrastructure**, creating environmentally sensitive entry, exit and stopping points along the river while minimising ecological impact in a nationally significant natural area. In parallel, the Zselic project delivers a **complex active tourism network** for hikers, cyclists and equestrian tourists, improving trail connectivity, accessibility and visitor services. Together, these TOP-Plus investments demonstrate how **cohesion policy funding** can support **nature-based solutions**, enhance ecosystem-friendly tourism and stimulate local economies in disadvantaged regions. For **NATUREFIN**, the projects provide strong examples of how public investment can align **environmental protection, sustainable finance and regional resilience**, reinforcing the role of green infrastructure and low-impact tourism in long-term territorial development.



New Business and Biodiversity Toolkit: Turning Data into Nature-Positive Action

Biodiversa+ has released a new **Business & Biodiversity Toolkit** designed to help companies and financial institutions engage with biodiversity as an

emerging strategic and financial risk. The first guide offers a comprehensive overview of the business and biodiversity landscape, mapping **key EU policy frameworks** such as the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), the Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation (SFDR) and the EU Taxonomy. It also clarifies the roles of major initiatives including the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) and the Science Based Targets Network (SBTN), and points to existing tools for identifying nature-related dependencies and impacts to support strategic decision-making.

Building on this foundation, the second guide focuses on **how the private sector can access and use public biodiversity data**, with practical guidance on data sources, quality considerations and applications for risk assessment, strategy and reporting. The third guide addresses **best practices for sharing biodiversity data responsibly**, highlighting the importance of transparency for credibility, regulatory alignment and contributions to global knowledge.

Building Regional Teams for NATUREFIN – First Stakeholder Events Summary

Across **October** 2025, NATUREFIN partners strengthened their local stakeholder ecosystems to turn biodiversity goals into bankable, **finance-ready actions** and organized the **first stakeholder events** of the project.

In **Somogy County (Hungary)**, an in-person workshop in Kaposvár (20 October) brought together public authorities, development organisations, business support institutions and academia to explore how **EU Taxonomy** and **Do No Significant Harm (DNSH)** can be used as practical tools in regional planning.



Discussions linked policy requirements to implementation opportunities such as renewable energy and eco-tourism, underlining the need for targeted capacity building and stronger alignment with EU sustainability standards.

In **Badajoz (Spain)**, the Provincial Council convened its first cross-sector stakeholder meeting (31 October), engaging municipalities, the University of Extremadura, the regional energy agency (AGENEX), a local financial institution, NGOs and innovation actors. The group focused on what it takes to make projects both **nature-positive and investment-ready**, including clearer sustainability criteria for public investment and how climate and biodiversity risks are reflected in finance. Green bonds, sustainability-linked tools and blended approaches featured prominently—alongside a commitment to keep a permanent regional platform active and reconnect next semester.



In Beiras and Serra da Estrela (Portugal), CIMRBSE's first Local Stakeholder Group meeting (28 October) kick-started a shared pipeline of replicable good practices —from **community energy models** and **e-mobility solutions in historic villages** to **circular-economy tourism**.

Stakeholders also flagged barriers such as slow bureaucracy and limited “360-degree” sustainability approaches, pointing to the need for stronger public–private partnerships and clearer navigation of sustainability requirements.

Meanwhile, **Heinola (Finland)** built its stakeholder team through **one-to-one engagement**, securing named contacts across nearly all organisations and identifying potential good practices and Finnish study-visit targets for June 2026 - laying the groundwork for effective long-term collaboration.

Together, these steps are helping partners refine NATUREFIN policy instruments, build regional capacity, and accelerate a pipeline of **nature-positive investments that meet funder expectations**.

European Commission Unveils SFDR 2.0 Proposal to Update Sustainable Finance Disclosure Rules

On 20 November 2025, the European Commission officially published its **legislative proposal to revise the Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation (SFDR)**, launching what is widely referred to as **SFDR 2.0**. The proposal aims to overhaul the current SFDR framework, in place since March 2021, to make sustainability disclosures simpler, clearer and more useful for investors, while reducing reporting burdens for financial firms. Among the key elements are: a shift from the existing light- and dark-green product labels to **three new product categories** (“Sustainable”, “Transition” and “ESG basics”); **streamlined disclosure requirements**; and the **removal of entity-level sustainability disclosures** for most firms to reduce duplication with other EU reporting rules. SFDR 2.0 also seeks closer alignment with related EU rules such as the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and the EU Taxonomy Regulation. Once adopted, SFDR 2.0 is expected to apply likely around 2027–2028.

Partner Spotlight - Jaana Kuula on Greener-by-Default Project Delivery for Interreg Europe

At an **Interreg Europe** online seminar on **4 December 2025**, **Jaana Kuula**, NATUREFIN Project Manager at the **City of Heinola**, showcased how sustainability is built into everyday project practice - from responsible catering and dining to choosing meeting and event venues.

She shared practical examples such as Heinola's **25% staff lunch benefit**, using a **local social enterprise** for lunches and catering, and prioritising **largely plant-based**, locally sourced food while avoiding **unnecessary waste and disposable dishes**.



Green catering in the project's everyday work

Lunch for personnel (also working in the project)

- City supports by 25% every day
- At a local social enterprise's diner - supports elderly people's living and eating
- Social enterprise gives additional discount (EUR 2)
- Good **quality** of lunch - prepared mainly with domestic ingredients
 - Includes a large variety of salads, warm vegetables and soup, meat, fish, potatoes in various forms, rice and/or pasta and dressing and a selection of healthy bread
 - Drinks include water, milk, sour milk and traditional home-made beer made of malt (non-alcoholic)
 - Dessert includes coffee/tea, biscuits, cake, pudding or similar
- **Reusable tableware** from ceramic; knives, forks and spoons from steel

The presentation also looked ahead to the international NATUREFIN project meeting planned **in Heinola in June 2026**, with initial plans including:

- Selection of venues within **walking distance** or a short journey from accommodation.
- A project dinner planned in a **renovated historic building** by the river.
- Menus designed around **sustainable and locally sourced ingredients**.
- A study visit to a forest or natural area, potentially including **outdoor discussions**, weather permitting.

By embedding low-waste, plant-forward, locally rooted choices into routine decisions - from catering to venue selection—project teams can **reduce their footprint, support local communities, and set a practical example** that others can replicate.

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