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IPA ADRION

NATURED

**NATURE-BASED
SOLUTIONS FOR A JUST
RESILIENCE IN THE
ADRIATIC-IONIAN CITIES**

Newsletter no. 1

We are excited to announce the first edition of the NATURED Newsletter. Packed with the most up-to-date information, this issue offers insights into project milestones, team achievements, organized/upcoming events, and much more.

Project budget in EUR

1.269.913,13 €

INTERREG funding in EUR

1.079.426,13 €

Project duration

1.7.2024 - 31.12.2026.

Project is co-funded by the European Union through the Interreg IPA ADRION programme.

Learn more about the NATURED Project and our Partnership!

The NATURED Project Offers Nature-based Solutions for the ADRION Region Facing Climate Change Crisis

NATURED brings together 12 partners and 3 associate partners from 9 ADRION region countries, including regional and local policy responsible authorities, supported by development agencies and higher education and research institutions to work on development and implementation of Nature-based Solution in their area. Our project partners will empower policymakers and stakeholders to prevent the effects of climate change on urban areas, particularly flash floods, and urban heat islands. The project seeks to promote a just, safe, inclusive and placed-based resilience approach, anchored in a series of interlinked activities, which include understanding the interactions between climate and cities, creating databases and digital maps for climate vulnerability and hazards in different urban zones, and engaging citizens and stakeholders to define action plans for Nature-based Solutions. These solutions will be tested in pilot actions and subsequently integrated into the public work plans of cities, with the ultimate goal of replicating the most effective solutions on a wider scale.

NATURED Partnership

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Lead partner: Unione della Romagna Faentina – URF (Italy)



URF is an association of six neighbouring Municipalities located in the south-east area of Emilia-Romagna Region (Italy). It is at the crossroad between Ravenna and Florence on one side and between Bologna and Rimini on the other side. It covers an area of 597 km² and has a population of approx. 90.000 inhabitants. This association was created in 2012 to offer to their own citizens more efficacious services

with higher levels of quality, joining territories with different characteristics in terms of size, urban development, main economic sectors, and touristic offer. URF has different departments dealing with local policies and services (urban planning, strategic planning and sustainable mobility, social services, culture, tourism and economic development, education, security, and local police), with around 500 employees.

Project Partner 2: Consortium for coordination of Research Activities concerning the Venice Lagoon system – CORILA (Italy)



CORILA is an association of Ca' Foscari University, University IUAV of Venice, the National Research Council and the National Institute of Oceanography and Experimental Geophysics (Italy). Overseen by the Ministry of University and Research, CORILA specializes in coordinating interdisciplinary research to sustainably manage the Venice Lagoon system. With extensive experience in managing national and EU-funded projects, CORILA plays a pivotal role in addressing environmental challenges and promoting resilience by science-based solutions. In the inception of the NATURED project, CORILA and its

associated body IUAV lead the organisation of the transnational seminars.

Project Partner 3: Regional Development Agency of Northern Primorska L.t.d. Nova Gorica – RDA Nova Gorica (Slovenia)



RRA severne Primorske
Regijska razvojna agencija d.o.o. Nova Gorica

RDA Nova Gorica was established in 1999 to unite all local, regional and national potentials and to realise development projects financed with national and international resources. Its task is to identify the needs in the economic and social environment and to stimulate regional development. The RDA's goal is to earn recognition in the local, regional, national, and

international environment as a development agency, which strives for harmonised development of the region. In cooperation with the inhabitants, we will realise goals we have set and build quality life for the inhabitants of the region.

Project Partner 4: Public institution RERA S.D. for coordination and development of Split-Dalmatia County – PI RERA S.D. (Croatia)

rerasd

JAVNA USTANOVA ZA KOORDINACIJU I
RAZVOJ SPLITSKO-DALMATINSKE ŽUPANIJE

PI RERA S.D. is a regional development agency and interdisciplinary institution founded by Split-Dalmatia County (regional self-government body) with the purpose of preparing and implementing projects related to regional development. PI RERA S.D. uses the multidisciplinary knowledge and rich experience of its employees to perform tasks of public interest, with the aim of effective

coordination and promotion of regional development of Split-Dalmatia County. Its primary role is to assist public entities in Split-Dalmatia County in order to prepare and implement their projects, mostly financed by EU funds. It also prepares and implements its own projects, which are of strategic importance for the sustainable development of the County.

Project Partner 5: Region of Thessaly (Greece)



HELLENIC REPUBLIC
REGION OF THESSALY

The Region of Thessaly occupies the central eastern part of continental Greece with a population 753,888 or 6.9% of the total country population. Its priorities are focused on sustainable rural development, economic growth and employment, sustainability of tourism and improvement of the region's infrastructure and transport network. The region possesses expertise in climate science and urban climatology which is necessary to understand the interactions between climate and cities, including the influence of urban structure and composition on local

climate, but also in project management, stakeholder engagement, conducting seminars and debates, in data collection and analysis, as well as in policy and planning.

Project Partner 6: International University of Sarajevo – IUS (Bosnia and Herzegovina)



IUS is a leading higher education in Bosnia and Herzegovina, blending academic excellence with a multicultural environment. Established in 2004 by the Foundation for Education

Development Sarajevo, IUS offers internationally accredited undergraduate, master's, and doctoral programs in engineering, business, social sciences, law, arts, and education. Since its foundation, IUS has been involved in the academic development of the region and with more than 2200 students from over 50 countries, cutting-edge facilities, and a strong focus on research, innovation, and global collaboration, IUS prepares graduates to excel in a competitive, interconnected world.

Project Partner 7: Regional Agency for Socio – Economic Development – Banat Ltd – RDA Banat (Serbia)



RDA Banat is located in Zrenjanin (Serbia) and has a leading role in coordinating development activities in the central/north Banat districts. As part of the network of accredited development agencies that work together on the balanced territorial development of Serbia, RDA Banat is recognized as a creator of regional initiatives, finding solutions that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable, all in line with

key national/regional development priorities. By bringing together partners from all sectors, RDA Banat works to improve competitiveness and a better quality of life in the region, through the promotion of European standards and values.

Project Partner 8: Regional Development Agency South – RDAS (Serbia)



RDAS, located in Nis, Serbia, drives sustainable regional development by supporting local governments, businesses, and communities in Nisavski, Pirotski and Toplicki Region. Accredited by the Serbian Ministry of Economy, RDAS is part of a broader system of agencies working to implement national and regional strategies in line with Serbia's sustainable development goals. Through this network, RDAS collaborates on policy alignment, strategic planning, and project implementation, fostering innovation, cross-sector cooperation, and inclusive growth across Serbia.

Project Partner 9: Old Royal Capital Cetinje (Montenegro)



The Old Royal Capital Cetinje is a local authority from Montenegro and it operates as a local self-government unit for the administrative and financial public services, development of spatial and urban plans, infrastructure development, organization of local public service providers, inspections, and establishment of municipal bodies, organizations, and services. One of the main fields of local development is dedicated to Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy Sources usage to tackle climate change, Tourism Development, promotional activities, and the realization of EU-Funded projects conducted by the Sector for EU-funded projects founded in 2011.

Project Partner 10: Municipality of Tirana (Albania)



**BASHKIA
TIRANË**

The Municipality of Tirana, Albania's capital with 1M residents, is a political, economic, and cultural hub undergoing major urban transformation. Key projects like Skanderbeg Square, the New Bazaar, and the 2M-tree Metropolitan Forest showcase its sustainability goals. The Municipality prioritizes green spaces, sustainable mobility, and energy efficiency, introducing bike lanes, electric buses, and reducing plastic bag use by 65%. Through EU-funded programs, Tirana fosters innovation in recycling, air quality, and cultural tourism.

Project Partner 11: Municipality of Gostivar (North Macedonia)



The Municipality of Gostivar is situated in the western part of the Republic of Macedonia, in the upper part of Polog Valley, in the southern part of Gostivar Field. The area is 518, 79 km², approximately 2,9 % of the whole terrain of the Republic of Macedonia. The municipality has 35 inhabited places, one town and 34 villages. According to the 2021 North Macedonia census, this municipality has 59,770 inhabitants. In the municipality of Gostivar there are 11 primary schools and 4 high schools. Because of its placement on the plain in Gostivar Field the Municipality has enough space for expansion, having in mind that its growth is dynamic and perpetual, both economically and demographically as an only administrative, cultural, political and economic center in upper Polog.

Project Partner 12: City of Banja Luka (Bosnia and Herzegovina)



GRAD BANJA LUKA
CITY OF BANJA LUKA

The City of Banja Luka is the second largest city in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the largest city in Republika Srpska and is the traditional centre of the densely-forested Bosanska Krajina region of northwestern Bosni, first mentioned in 1494. Banja Luka covers some 1239 km² of land and is situated on both banks of the Vrbas in the Banja

Luka valley with 184257 inhabitants. As local public authority, is actively involved in monitoring and risk management of environmental risks, including flooding, droughts, landslides, storms, primarily through the Civil protection service and fire-rescue brigade, which are under the jurisdiction of the City.

Associate partner 1: Municipality of Larissa (Greece)



The Municipality of Larissa is the largest city and capital of the region of Thessaly, situated in a rural area in Central Greece, just a few kilometers away from the Olympus Mountain, with the total area of 335.12 km² and population of 160.000 inhabitants. Larissa is the with a population of 147.000, with a significant rural hinterland, and hosts many public organizations, educational and financial institutes and health institutions, while it has a considerable production infrastructure and commercial activity.

Associate partner 2: City of Zrenjanin (Serbia)



City of Zrenjanin the largest city in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina and the second largest in the Republic of Serbia referring to the administrative territory it covers (1,326 km²). It is administrative, cultural and business center of the Central Banat District, situated on the western edge of the Banat loess plateau, at the place where the canalized River Begej flows into the former water course of the River Tisza. With its 22 settlements, the City of Zrenjanin has 105,722 inhabitants, and their 20 national minorities testify to the extremely rich multilingual and multicultural environment of Zrenjanin.

Associate partner 3: Municipality of Nova Gorica (Slovenia)



**MESTNA OBČINA
NOVA GORICA**

The largest municipality in the Goriška Region, Nova Gorica is one of the eleven city municipalities of Slovenia and seat of all the major regional institutions. The municipality lies in the western part of Slovenia along the border with Italy, stretched across 280 square kilometers. The municipality is divided into 19 local communities with 44 settlements, with a total population of 31752 inhabitants and the average age is 44.3 years. The Mediterranean Sea, the Alps and continental Europe are all quite close to the city and therefore the climate is mostly sub-Mediterranean with plenty of sunshine, mostly mild, rainy winters and hot summers.

WHAT WE HAVE BEEN UP TO...

The project started with a phase of development and implementation of transnational and local seminars, with the aim to inform and train policymakers, civil servants, professionals, and groups of citizens on the complex interactions between climate and the city (composition, structure), as evidence-based knowledge for decisions, actions, and change of behaviors.

Building Climate Awareness: NATURED Transnational Seminars

Between October and December 2024, NATURED project hosted three transnational seminars with the aim to share and advance knowledge about the complex interactions between climate and cities and the use of Nature-based Solutions to foster climate adaptation. The seminars, coordinated by CORILA and IUAV University of Venice, were designed to enhance the capacity of the project partners and their teams, and were led by internationally recognized experts. To extend the impact of these discussions, the seminars were recorded, and the sessions are now freely available to a broader audience: <https://www.youtube.com/@ProjectNATURED/videos>.

The first transnational seminar took place online on October 16. It introduced the critical topic of climate change in cities, and especially focused on heat-related challenges in cities. Through theoretical and case study presentations, the seminar provided a deep understanding about the urban heat island effect, the main contributing factors, and the mitigation strategies that can be implemented. Special attention was given to nature-based approaches, emphasizing their potential to alleviate urban heat stress effectively.

The second transnational seminar, held online on October 31, shifted the focus on the flood-related challenges in cities and surrounding areas, with a particular attention on pluvial and river flooding and on how urban and water-related policies and planning instruments can enhance flood resilience. Practical examples of nature-based measures and real-world policies to reduce flood risk were presented too.



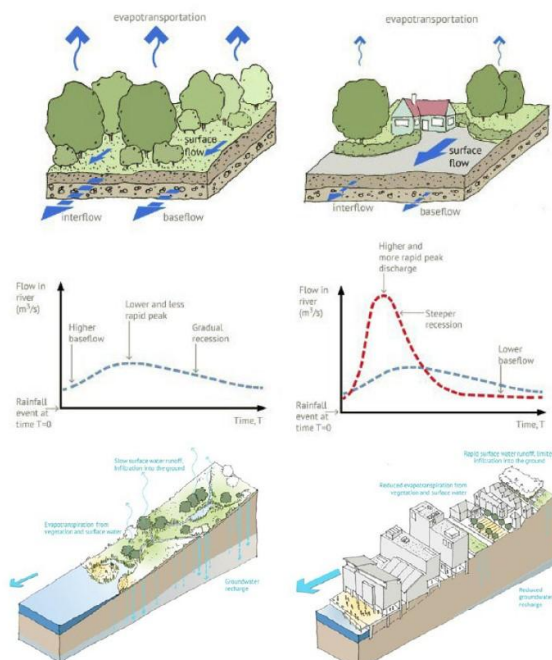
The third transnational seminar was delivered on December 6, during the first in-person NATURED meeting in Faenza (Italy). The seminar covered key planning and implementation aspects of Nature-based Solutions for climate adaptation. Topics included an overview of policy instruments that support Nature-based Solutions in urban adaptation planning, along with key planning considerations such as managing ecosystem service trade-offs and addressing distributional equity in their design and implementation.

The NATURED transnational seminars play a key role in enhancing the knowledge and skills of policymakers, urban planners, and citizens about the complex relationships between climate and cities. By addressing critical urban climate challenges, such as heat islands and flooding, and exploring the role of Nature-based Solutions to advance climate adaptation, these seminars assist policymakers in making more informed decisions and choices based on evidence base knowledge, fostering collaborative actions through shared expertise and innovative approaches for more sustainable and resilient urban environments.

SUDS guidelines

Descrizione	Tessuto urbano di applicazione							Funzioni idrologiche					Co-benefici
	La città storica	La città consolidata di prima cintura e morfologia compatta e sofferta	La città consolidata di prima cintura con aree curate verdi	La città consolidata di seconda cintura	La città consolidata policentrica	La città della produzione	La città della ricerca e dell'innovazione	Filter	Reuse	Infiltrate	Storage	Release	Co-benefici
Green roofs	○	○	○	○	○	○	○		●		●		●●●
Drainage pavements	●	●	●	●	●	●	●				●	●	●●●
Filtering bands	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	●			●		●●●
Tree cover	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		●		●●●
Draining bands	○	○	○	○	○	○	○		●	●			●●●
Vegetated canals	○	○	○	○	○	○	○				●	●	●●●
Water retention	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	●					●●●

- Priorità**
- alta
 - media
 - bassa
- Efficacia**
- alta
 - media
- Benefici bonus**
- riduzione stress da calore
 - habitat per la biodiversità
 - miglioramento qualità dell'aria



Effects of urbanization and soil sealing on water management

- Increased peak flow
- Increased surface runoff
- Reduction in runoff times
- Less water infiltration
- Reduced groundwater recharge
- Surface water pollution
- ...

How are the effects of new urbanization compensated in ITA and UK?



Policy instruments for scaling NbS



Summer temperatures in Atlanta present day, left, and what computer models show they would be with tree canopy increased to 50% of all plantable space, right. Urban Climate Lab, 2024, CC BY

Enabling NbS uptake and scaling out: geographically replicating from highly localized solutions to wider application



This way, **cumulative** benefits of the scaled up NbS really have a tangible effect in addressing urban climate challenges



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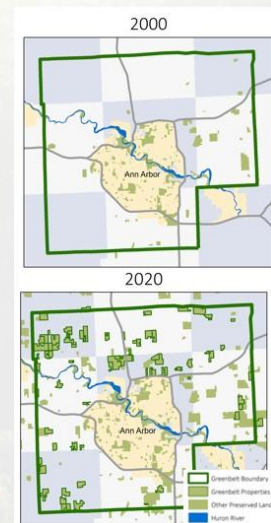
Land acquisition programs

INSTRUMENT DESCRIPTION

The public administration (e.g., municipality) buys the land from the owners to prevent development or to realize public (green) projects (also called “fee simple” acquisition programs).

EXAMPLES

Preservation from development of natural/ agricultural land or environmental improvement of the purchased areas, for example through afforestation programmes (e.g., for the creation of a greenbelt).



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First NATURED F2F meeting – Faenza, Italy

The ‘NATURED - Nature-bAsed soluTions for a jUst Resilience in thEAdriatic-Ionian cities’ project, launched in July, of which the Romagna Faentina Union is the lead partner, got into full swing with the first transnational meeting, gathering the European partnership, and the organization of the first local seminar addressed to the local stakeholders.

After the first project launch activities and the first two online transnational seminars, Faenza hosted the first face-to-face meeting on 5 and 6 December 2024, attended by almost all project partners from the Adriatic-Ionian area (Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Greece, Bosnia Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, and North Macedonia).

It was an important event because it allowed for the first time the members of the partnership of this ambitious project, to get to know each other, to directly discuss the activities and challenges to be faced in the next two years, strengthening the basis for the networking to be tackled together. A meeting also aimed at fostering and growing professional and human relations.

The first day of the meeting included a crucial coordination meeting to align the partners on project management, quality assessment tasks and the next project activities to be realized in the near future.



On the second day, the Romagna Faentina European Project Officer illustrated a recently launched project, called AQUAGREEN, that is going to implement different nature-based solutions in an area of Faenza that was particularly affected by the flooding events of 2023 and 2024. The effects of these dramatic events were shown to the partners through a poignant video and a short visit of the area.

This was followed by the third and final transnational workshop entitled 'Challenges and opportunities for nature-based solutions planning and implementation' took place, with the participation of experts from the University of Venice.

In the afternoon, the first local seminar and project dissemination event was open to the public entitled "From the NATURED European Project to the local scale. Ideas for the design of Nature-based Solutions for the Union of Municipalities of Romagna Faentina" took place in the Municipal Library. The event was attended by around 40 people, including administrators, professionals, members of citizens' committees, associations and organisations involved in environmental protection and common citizens interested in better understanding the interactions between climate and cities in our territory, with reference to flooding and urban heat islands, and learning about the possible nature-based solutions (NbS) that can be applied.



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