

NBRACER 7th General Assembly marks three years of collaboration to accelerate Nature-based Solutions across the Atlantic bio-geographical area



By IID-SII

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The NBRACER consortium gathered in West Flanders for its 7th General Assembly from 5 to 8 October 2026, marking three years of collaboration, innovation and knowledge exchange to advance Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and climate resilience.

Hosted by the **Province of West Flanders in collaboration with VITO**, the General Assembly brought together consortium partners, regional representatives, researchers and advisory board members to reflect on achievements, exchange experiences and define priorities for the last phase of the project.



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Over the past three years, NBRACER has worked to strengthen cooperation between European regions and accelerate the uptake of Nature-based Solutions through co-creation, knowledge sharing, regional adaptation planning and practical implementation.

The General Assembly provided an opportunity to reflect on the progress made, share lessons learned, identify areas of improvement and reinforce the importance of collaboration in addressing complex climate challenges.

Exchanging regional perspectives on coastal challenges and opportunities

The programme began with **Day 0: Exchanging Regional Perspectives on Coastal Challenges and Opportunities**, bringing together representatives from **West Flanders, Friesland, Cávado, Cantabria and Denmark** to explore shared challenges and opportunities related to coastal adaptation.

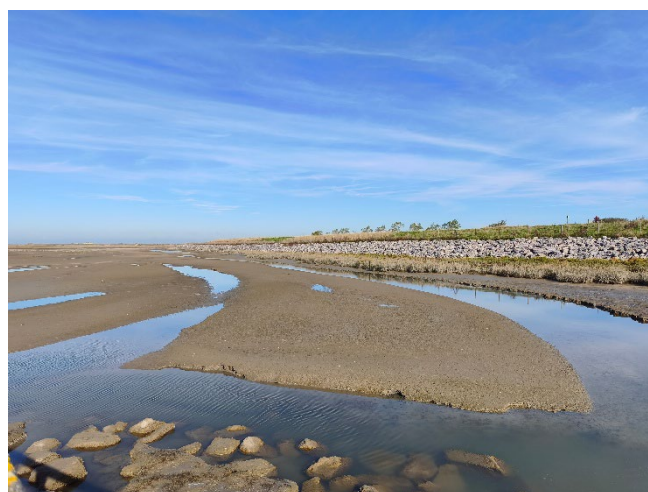
Across Europe, coastal regions are experiencing increasing impacts from **sea-level rise, coastal erosion, flooding, salinisation, freshwater scarcity and changing environmental conditions**. While each region has different landscapes, governance structures and socio-economic contexts, discussions revealed common priorities for building climate resilience.

Partners shared experiences from their territories. West Flanders presented challenges and approaches related to freshwater management in polder landscapes; Friesland shared lessons on climate adaptation, salinisation and climate resilience land use; Cávado presented examples of hybrid coastal interventions, river restoration and land access; Cantabria highlighted restoration and monitoring work in the Oyambre Estuary; and Denmark reflected on adapting coastal protection approaches for future climate scenarios.

The discussions reinforced the need to move beyond isolated interventions and develop **connected landscape approaches** that link coastal areas, rivers, rural and urban systems. Participants also stressed the importance of combining ecological monitoring, modelling and risk assessment with effective governance and stakeholder engagement to support long-term implementation.

A key message emerged throughout the discussions:

“Think in connected landscape systems, not individual Nature-based Solutions projects.”



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Reflecting on achievements and shaping the road ahead

The official General Assembly programme opened with a welcome address from **Deputy Bart Naeyaert of the Province of West Flanders**, followed by reflections on **NBRACER achievements and the road ahead** by the project coordinator.

Partners discussed progress made during the first three years of the project, including the development of Regional Adaptation Portfolios, strengthened collaboration between regions, new tools and methodologies, and increased knowledge exchange across the consortium.

The Assembly also highlighted the importance of combining scientific knowledge, regional expertise and stakeholder engagement to ensure that NbS respond effectively to local needs while contributing to wider European climate objectives.



A key focus of the exchange was the continued development of integrated adaptation approaches across coastal, rural and urban landscapes. Partners explored how Nature-based Solutions can be connected and combined to create long-term pathways for climate resilience.

Discussions highlighted several common priorities for the remaining year, including scaling successful pilot actions into long-term programmes, strengthening monitoring and the evidence base for Nature-



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based Solutions, developing sustainable financing mechanisms, improving governance and stakeholder cooperation, and **finding synergies between climate adaptation, biodiversity and local community needs**.

The exchange of experiences across the consortium also showcased innovative approaches and inspiring practices emerging from different regions, demonstrating the value of collaboration in developing solutions that can be adapted to diverse local contexts.



In addition, partners had the opportunity to participate in dedicated sessions on transformative governance, modelling and mapping, financial tools, monitoring NbS effectiveness, capacity-building, advocacy and emerging research beyond academia.

The **Discovering NBRACER Gems** sessions showcased inspiring examples and innovative approaches from across the consortium, highlighting the diversity of experiences contributing to climate resilience, showcasing youth engagement actions, farmers testimonies, learning journals, connecting NBRACER results and materials, monitoring tools and guidelines as well as the NbS Fresco for citizens engagement.

Connecting strategy with practice through site visits

The General Assembly concluded with field visits across West Flanders, allowing participants to connect project discussions with practical examples of adaptation and sustainable land management.



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At the **Water landscape Beverhoutsveld in Beernem**, participants explored farming practices and water management approaches. Visits to **Bulskampveld in Wingene/Hertsberge** showcased controlled flooding measures, constructed wetlands and monitoring activities along the Rivierbeek. The programme concluded with a visit to a farm near **Oostende**, highlighting non-tillage farming practices supporting soil health and climate resilience.



Three years of collaboration

The NBRACER General Assembly demonstrated the value of long-term collaboration between European regions, researchers, practitioners and local stakeholders. After three years of joint efforts, the consortium continues to strengthen pathways for scaling up Nature-based Solutions and supporting climate-resilient landscapes.

Through cooperation, knowledge sharing and the exchange of experiences, NBRACER enables partners to learn from each other, build on existing knowledge and develop practical approaches to address climate challenges. By connecting scientific knowledge, innovative ideas and local actions, NBRACER supports landscapes to be more resilient, sustainable and better prepared for the impacts of climate change.

Working across different regions and sectors, NBRACER demonstrates how Nature-based Solutions can provide benefits for both the environment and society. These solutions help protect ecosystems, improve quality of life, strengthen communities and support long-term climate adaptation.



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