

Belgium

Green-Blue Networks



TYPE OF TOOL
Plan



MAIN SECTORS
Spatial planning



THEME
*Green;
Resilience*



INFRASTRUCTURE GOVERNANCE PILLARS
*Long-term strategic vision;
Transparent, systematic and effective
stakeholder participation*

In a nutshell



OBJECTIVE: To respond to climate change and societal challenges, Flanders is integrating Green-Blue Networks into its strategic vision for spatial planning and climate adaptation plan.



Agency in charge
Department of Environment and Spatial Development Flanders



Year of implementation
2018



Levels of government
Sub-national



Current status
Fully operational

Overview

Nature-based solutions (NbS) offer innovative, cost-effective opportunities for supporting infrastructure sustainability and resilience. NbS can protect infrastructure assets and services from harmful environmental impacts (including those related to climate change), but also help reduce infrastructures' negative impacts on the environment. Scaling up the use of NbS requires strategic government leadership to co-ordinate and engage stakeholders. The strategic vision of the Flanders Space Policy Plan (2018) has the ambition to permeate Flemish environment with Green-Blue Networks (GBN). By connecting different green spaces in the city and in open space, the long-term goal would be to create a coherent, functional network in response to various societal challenges. The concrete implementation of GBN on the ground is aimed to be mainly place-based, tailored to the most important local needs. To this end, through the 'Gobelin' project, the INBO (Flemish Institute for Nature and Forest Research) and the University of Antwerp, in cooperation with the Department of Environment and Spatial Development Flanders, engaged with a broad spectrum of participants from various sectors in a wide-ranging co-creation process, among other things to initiate social learning processes, to argue the different visions and expectations regarding GBN, and to share available expertise and concrete practical experiences. Moreover, the Flemish Climate Adaptation Plan (2022), aimed at preparing Flanders against climate change, recognises NbS as important solutions to ensure the sequestration of carbon and buffering of flooding, drought and heat effects. One of the strategies formulated in the plan consists of building and connecting green-blue infrastructure (using NbS). The action points under this strategy include green-blue metamorphosis of built-up centres and facilitating climate-proof design, layout and (re)building.

REFERENCES:

- Department of Environment and Spatial Development Flanders, *Green Blue Networks in Flanders – Gobelin*, <https://omgeving.vlaanderen.be/nl/groenblauwe-netwerken-in-vlaanderen>
- Department of Environment and Spatial Development Flanders (2022), *Flemish climate adaptation plan: Arming Flanders against climate change*, <https://www.vlaanderen.be/publicaties/vlaams-klimaatadaptatieplan-vlaanderen-wapenen-tegen-de-klimaatverandering>