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# Identifying enabling factors for effective Protected Area governance and promoting innovative funding opportunities to improve connectivity

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EUROPARC Conference 2023 – Tribute to our landscape  
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# Agenda

<b>14:00 – 14:10</b>	<b>Introduction to NaturaConnect project &amp; the main themes of the session</b>
<b>14:10 – 14:20</b>	<b>Presentation of activity on governance and policy barriers and solutions</b>
<b>14:20 – 14:30</b>	<b>Presentation of the NaturaConnect funding factsheets</b>
<b>14:30 – 15:30</b>	<b>Discussion on barriers and solutions – governance and funding (break out groups)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• On barriers: break outs + reconvene</li><li>• On solutions: break outs + reconvene</li></ul>
<b>15:30 – 15:50</b>	<b>Coffee break</b>
<b>15:50 – 16:10</b>	<b>Presentation of ecological frameworks and related funding mechanisms (Flanders &amp; France examples) + Q&amp;A</b>
<b>16:10 – 16:40</b>	<b>Discussion on improving existing policies and setting up ecological frameworks (break out groups)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Divided between public and private instruments – break outs (20') + reconvene (10')</li></ul>
<b>16:40 – 16:50</b>	<b>Final questions and conclusions (10')</b>
<b>16:50 – 17:00</b>	<b>Evaluation (10')</b>

# Towards a future coherent Trans European Nature Network



NaturaConnect receives funding under the European Union's Horizon Europe research and innovation programme under grant agreement number 101060429. The contents of this material are the sole responsibility of the NaturaConnect consortium and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the European Union.

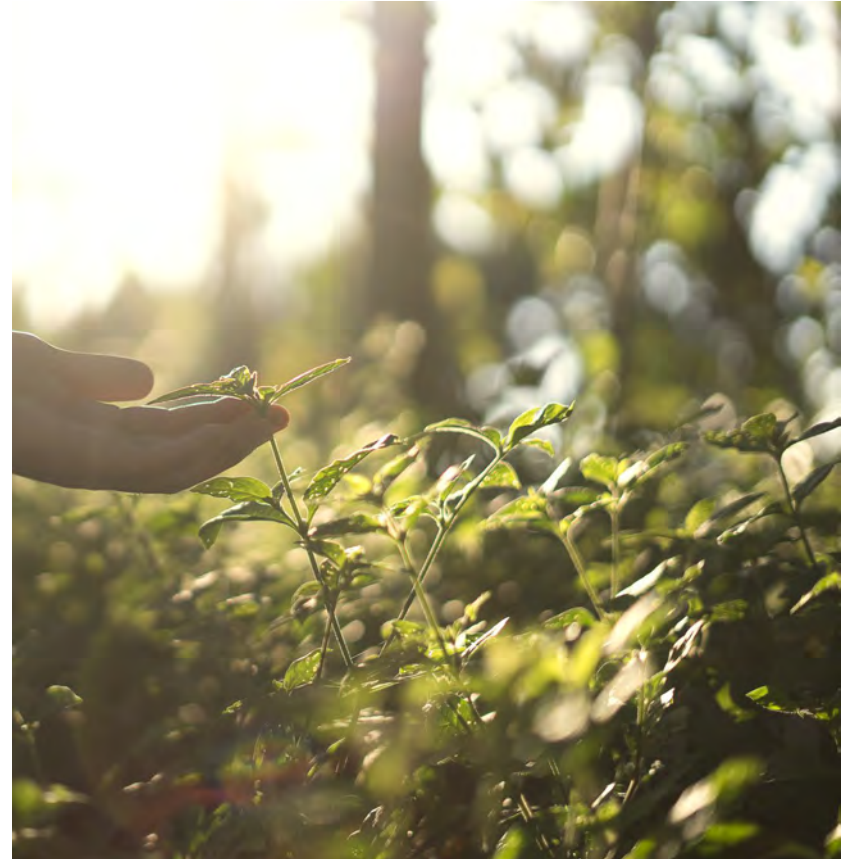


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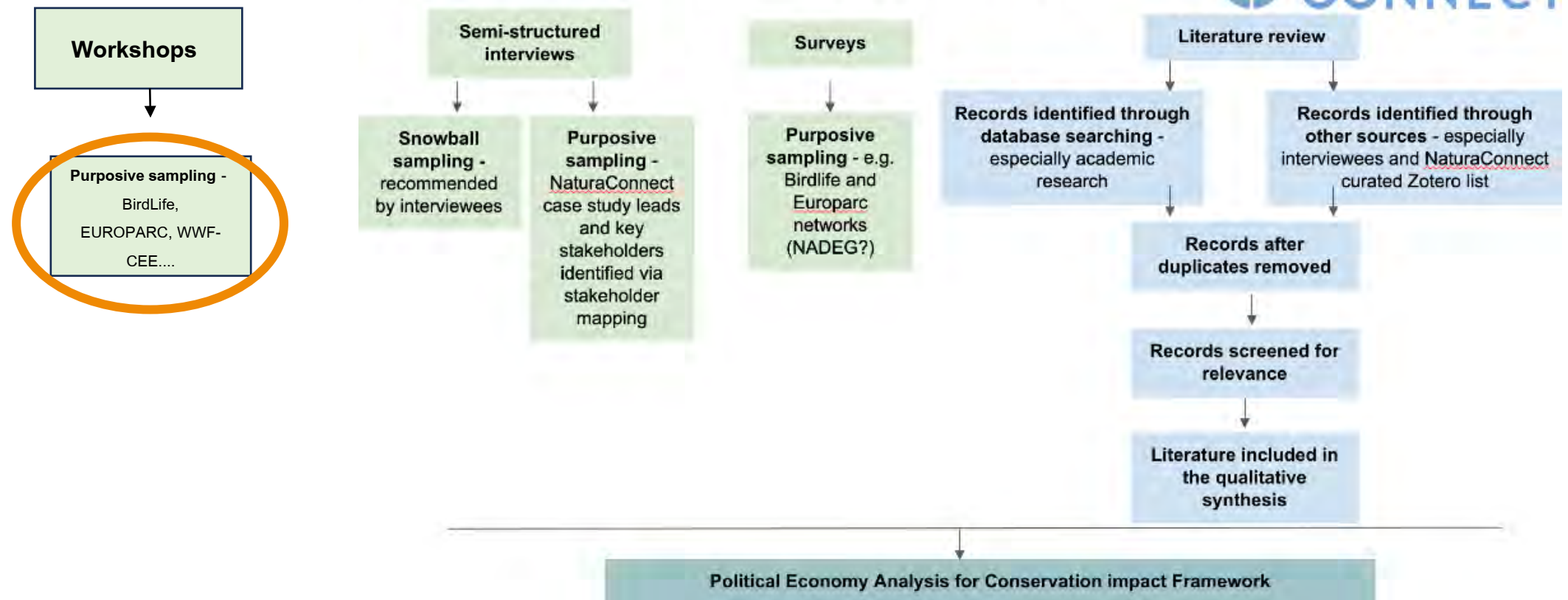
# NaturaConnect

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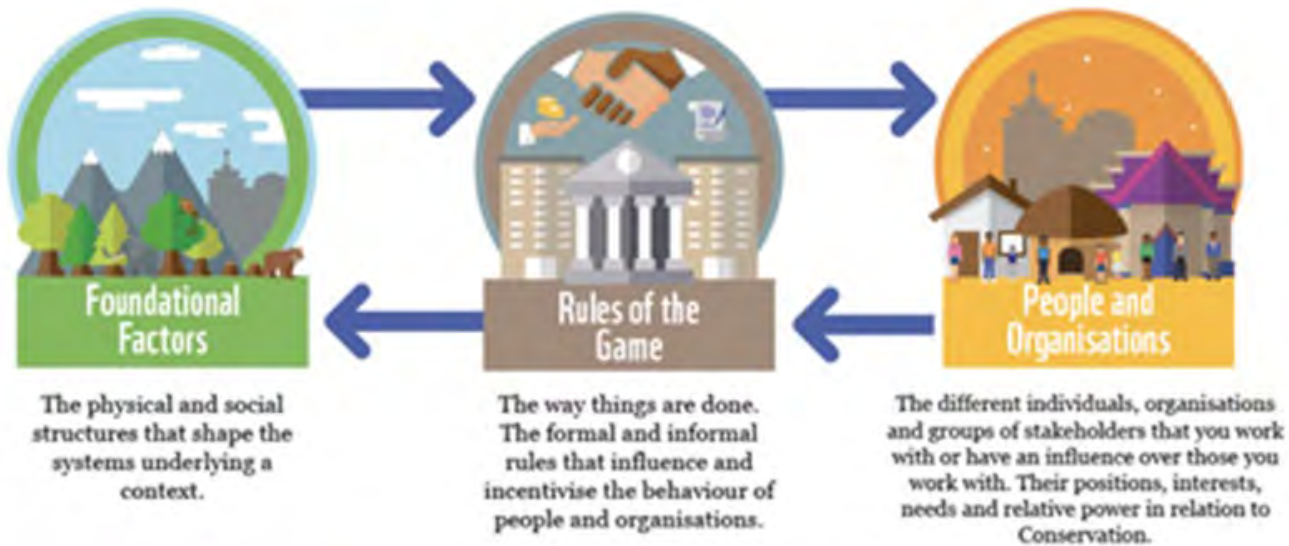
- NaturaConnect focuses on developing knowledge and tools for a well-connected Trans-European Nature Network – TEN-N - a key target of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030
- The primary goal is to understand and recommend policies, governance, and financing strategies for the TEN-N
- The project involves stakeholders in the co-production of support tools and guidelines for connectivity planning in Europe
- We are doing a critical review of EU and national governance, policies, laws, and guidance.
- NaturaConnect aims to learn from stakeholders' experiences to enhance connectivity planning efforts



**Data collection and analysis methods for WP2 - deliverable 2.1**







### PE Dynamics

Causal relationships and the feedback loops between building blocks in order to understand how change happens as well as the implications of that change within the context.

**PEA ----->PEACI**

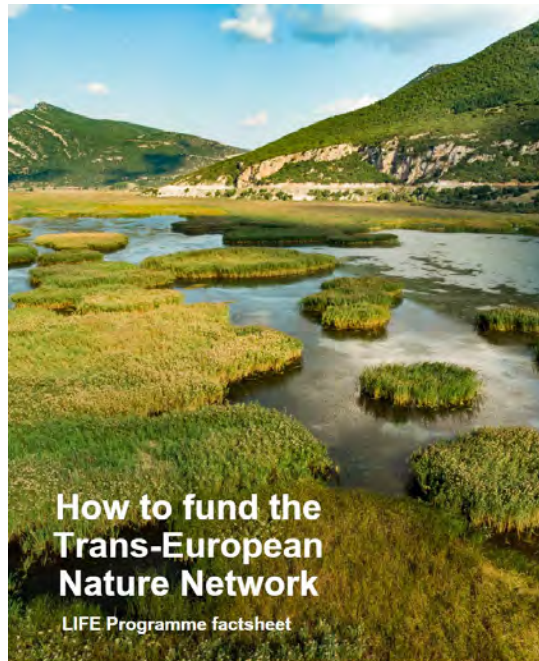
**Use PEA to improve the design and implementation of effective biodiversity conservation projects**



# Funding Factsheets

How to fund the Trans-European Nature  
Network (TEN-N)?

# Factsheets about public and private instruments



- Presentation of the instrument
- How is the instrument relevant for TEN-N - What activities that are necessary to create or expand ecological continuity can be funded through this instrument?
- Who can apply and how - eligibility conditions
- Important considerations, strengths and weaknesses
- Examples of successful projects



# Factsheets about public and private instruments

## Public instruments

- LIFE Programme
- European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Cohesion Fund (CF)
- Interreg
- European Maritime, Fisheries and Aquaculture Fund (EMFAF)
- Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

## Private instruments

- User-pays principle
- Green bonds
- Resilience bonds
- Debt for nature swaps
- Aligning subsidies
- Blended finance

# What funding works and what is missing?

## STRENGTHS

- LIFE and Interreg are key EU funds aimed at TEN-N
- LIFE IPs & SNPs are scaling up
- CAP and EMFAF provide funding for ongoing management

## GAPS OR WEAKNESSES

- Project-based funding – how to fund ongoing management after the project ends
- Barriers & burden of applying for EU funds – paperwork, rules and reporting, co-funding requirement
- Private funding – still small



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# Discussion on barriers and solutions

break out groups

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## Round 1: BARRIERS

Examples where connectivity is well or badly handled across:

- Legally
- Policies
- Coordination among administrative authorities i
- Coordination among the different administrative levels
- ...



**20 min**

# Main barriers identified in previous discussions

- Lack of funding
- Lack of legislation/legal status
- Lack of coordination between authorities/ no functional administrative authorities
- Intensive agriculture/primacy of agricultural profits
- Presence of Linear infrastructure
- Lack of data/Lack of monitoring
- Non-secure tenure rights for connectivity
- Land abandonment and vegetation succession
- Lack of awareness



## Round 2: SOLUTIONS

### Governance

- What good examples do you know, at any scale, that address the barriers?
- Where are connectivity issues well-handled across:
  - the different administrative authorities in charge of managing nature (eg. PA authorities and water authorities)?
  - the different administrative levels (eg. local - regional - national - international)?
- Have you seen positive (or negative) changes in the governance model or how it has been implemented in the last years?

### Funding

- What are your main funding needs?
- What are your funding sources (currently used)?
- Do you have any experience in using EU funds and private instruments? (What do you know about the instrument, have you used it before, has it worked, is it easy enough to access, would these factsheets be useful to you, etc.)



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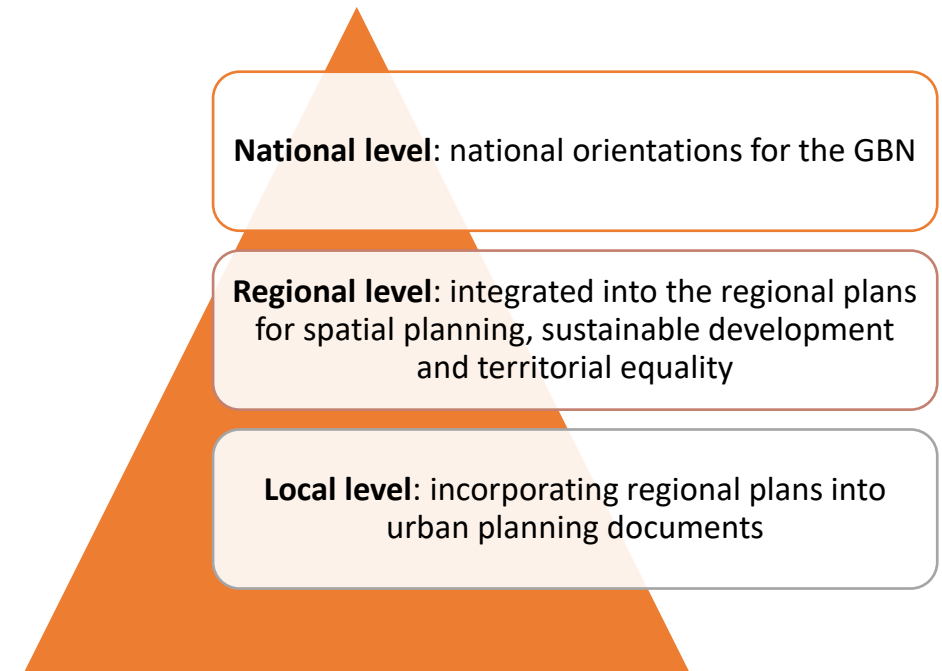


# Examples of ecological networks – are they working? France, Flanders

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# France – the Green and Blue network

- National public policy aiming to preserve and restore ecological continuity
- Networks identified by regional planning documents, implemented at national, regional and local levels
- Legal obligation enshrined in the Environmental Code
- Also a land-use planning tool



# Funding the Green and Blue network

- Regional documents are incentives – ways to initiate actions by mobilising funds
- No new tool or funding mechanism created by the law for the GBN – existing funds must be channelled to implement the documents
- Mostly EU funding (ERDF), although not used by a majority of regions
- Some regions set up specific ‘green and blue contracts’ to finance the measures set in the documents
- National calls for tenders, LIFE programme to finance studies
- ‘Green fund’: national envelope to implement the National Biodiversity Strategy, with €30 million out of €2 billion for connectivity projects

# Strengths and weaknesses of the GBN

- Makes ecological connectivity part of the strategic planning of the territory
- Can be quite compartmentalised but is expanding its scope (noise and light pollution for ex)
- Lack of human resources as well as financing
- Not a binding set of measures – can be complicated to fully integrate it into spatial plans locally (although a good start)

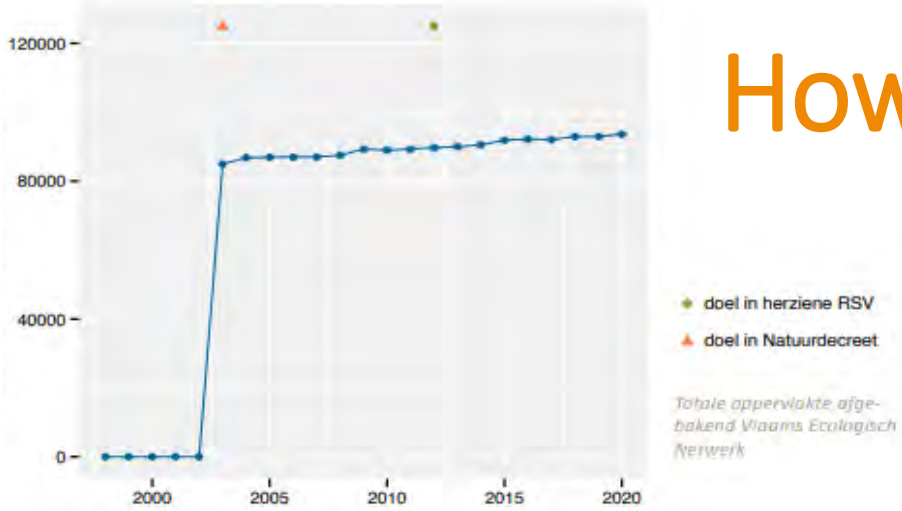


# Flemish Ecological Network (VEN and IVON)

- ✓ Regional Nature Decree in 2003 reconfirmed in 2012
- ✓ Target 125 000 ha 'core'

# How well is it working?

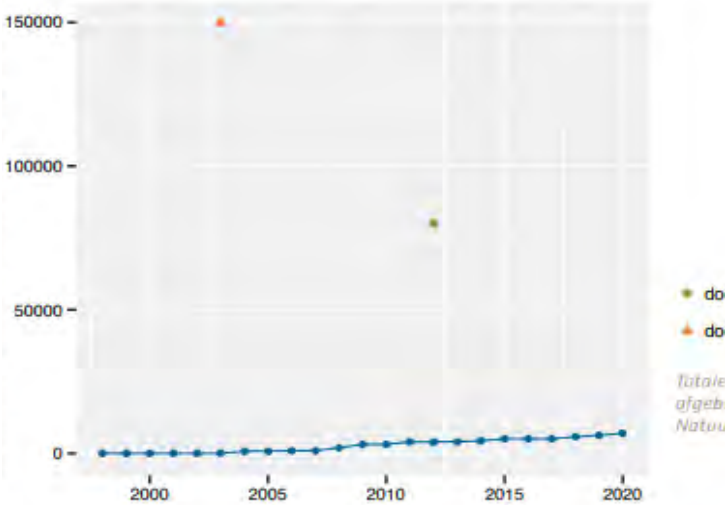
Delineated surface of VEN in ha



VEN

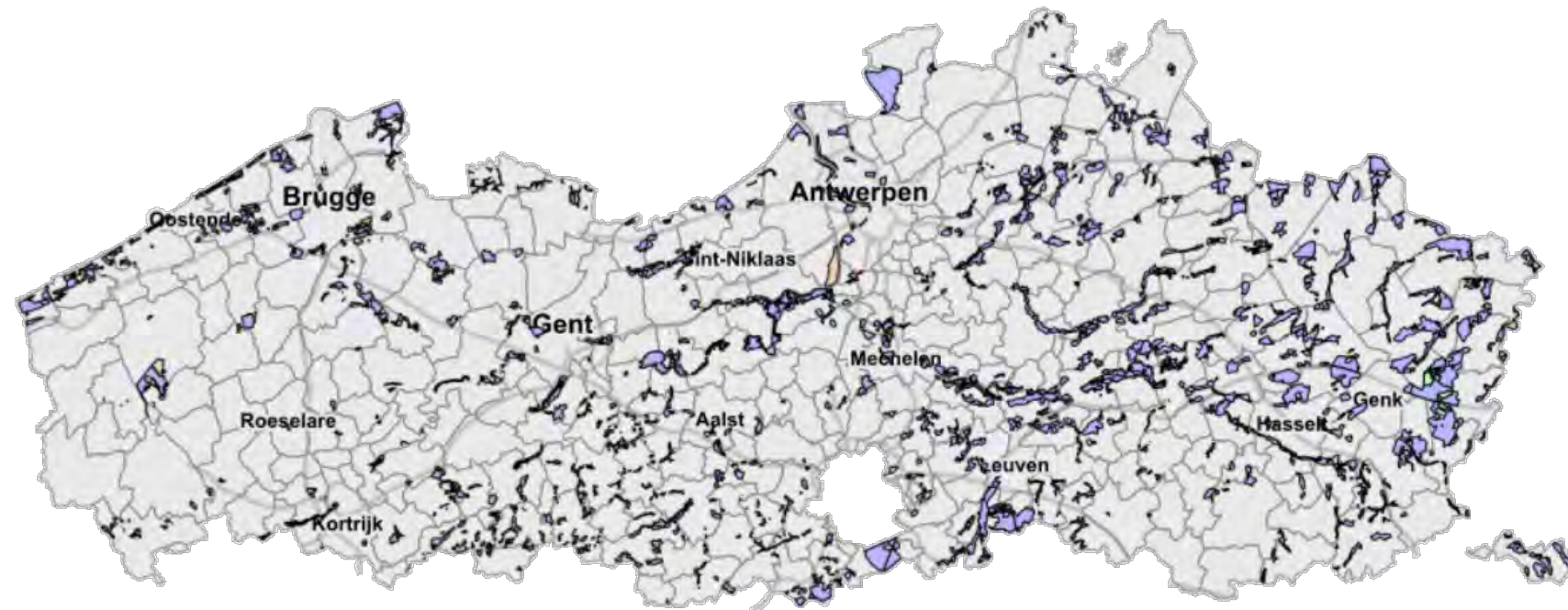
target surface (red), after review (green) and actually developed (blue)

Delineated surface of IVON in ha

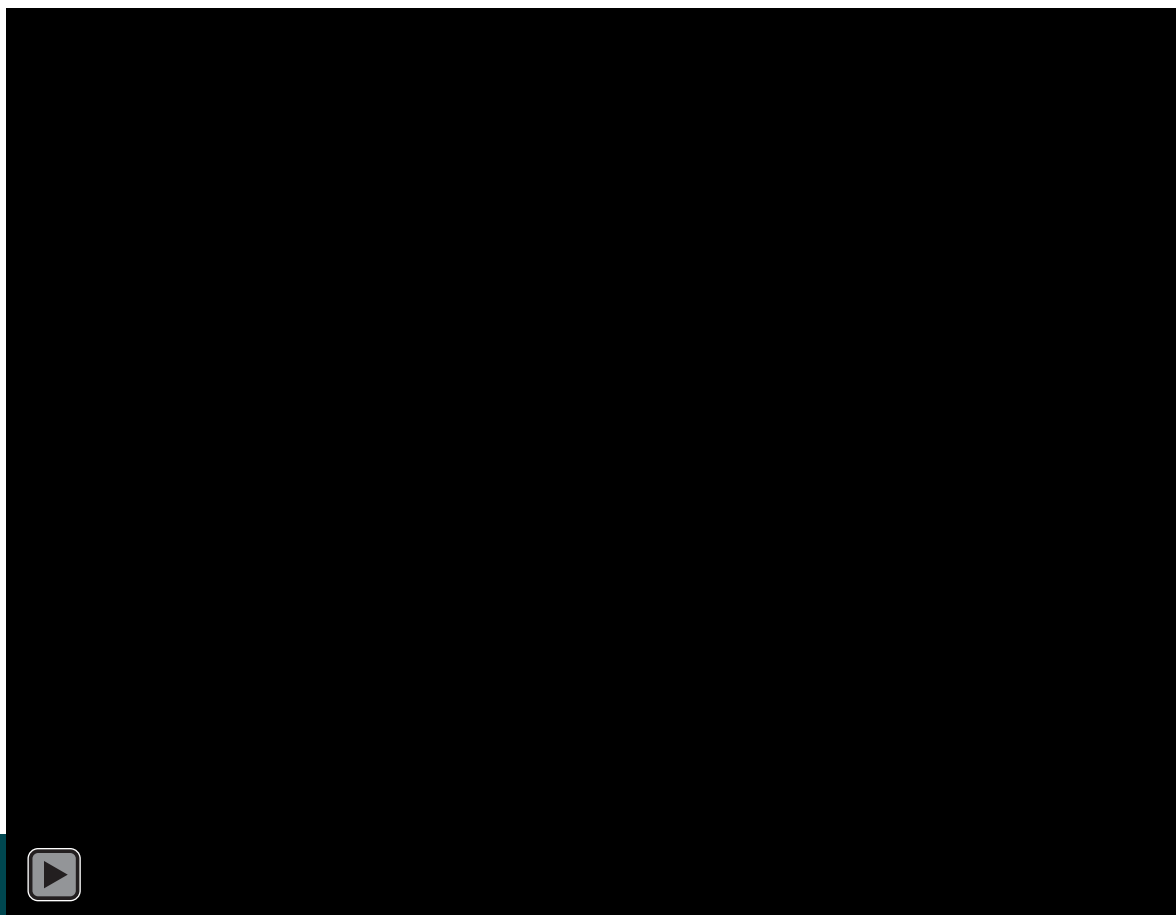






IVON

target surface (red), after review (green) and actually developed (blue)



# Overlap of VEN with Natura 2000



-  VEN 'core'
-  IVON 'interlacing and connection' areas
-  Habitats Directive sites (SAC)
-  Birds Directive sites (SPA)

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# Strengths and weaknesses of the Flemish Ecological Network

- Looks good on paper
- Difficult in practice – how to actually change land use
- Is the focus on ecological connectivity for Flanders' habitats and species still there?
- What interaction or synergy with ecosystem restoration?



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# Discussion on ecological networks – what works? What is needed?

break out groups

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## KEY POINTS FROM THE DISCUSSIONS

- Why are ecological networks not working on the ground?
- What kind of governance needs to be in place for such ecological networks? What features of governance structure? What enforcement?
- What funding sources? What is working and what is not?
- Which soft measures are needed for this: how to incentivise landowners to participate (awareness raising, campaigns, regular meetings, etc.)? Other examples we don't know about? Any comments on these examples?
- How do habitats and species priorities feed into ecological network planning?



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# Evaluation

How did you like this workshop?

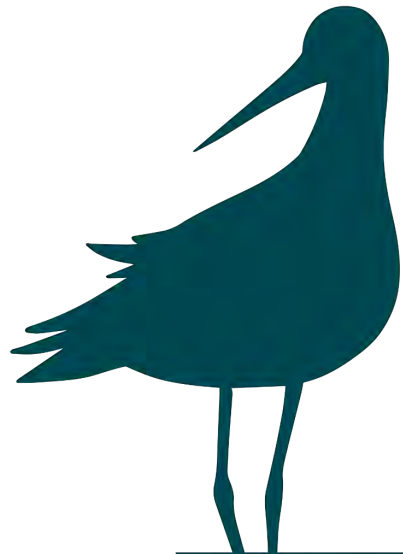
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