



Questions and answers on Nature Credits Roadmap

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What are nature credits?

Nature credits represent an investment into nature-positive actions by a company, a financial institution, a public entity or a citizen, which in return can benefit from cleaner ecosystems, risk reduction, improved reputation and higher social acceptability for its projects. Those nature-positive actions can be valued and certified by an independent organisation, thus providing credibility to investors sponsoring the action through nature credits. The actions supported by nature credits can take different forms; some examples in the EU include restoring wetlands or extending forest areas.

How could nature credits work in practice?

Nature credits could be generated by those who undertake restoration or maintenance actions, for example, a group of farmers or land managers working together to restore or enhance a natural area.

An independent certifier would review their project plan, implementation methods, and intended impacts. If the project complies with the appropriate biodiversity certification, it receives a certificate - a formal recognition of its high-quality action. This certificate would then help attract early support and build trust among stakeholders and investors.

These credits would then be sold to companies (e.g. agrifood firms, insurers), public authorities, or citizens who want to contribute to nature restoration, meet sustainability goals, invest in the reduction of nature-related risks or support local ecosystems.

Revenue from the nature credits would go back to the land managers, rewarding their nature-positive work and enabling reinvestment.

What would be the benefits to companies (and financial institutions) of using nature credits?

Nature credits, through certification, set up financial incentives to invest in nature-positive actions and provide a standardised format for such investments. For companies, nature credits can contribute to making their production processes more nature-friendly, increase creditworthiness and facilitate access to financing. They can help de-risk their supply chains, reduce insurance premiums, and meet corporate biodiversity goals.

Nature credits are beneficial for financial institutions as they increasingly account for biodiversity as a core financial risk in cases of, for example reduced yields due to decline in pollination, erosion and loss of soil fertility, increase in pest attacks, floods and droughts etc. Investing in nature can reduce risks for financial institutions that grant loans to these companies.

Why are nature credits beneficial for farmers, foresters and other actors? Will it create additional administrative burden or negatively affect food security?

Nature credits are a voluntary tool. They aim to support key actors, from farmers and foresters to fishers and land managers, in building ecosystem resilience.

For instance, nature credits can open up an additional income source for farmers, earning from nature-positive practices such as maintaining hedgerows, creating pollinator habitats, or enhancing soil biodiversity. While providing financial rewards, these actions also improve ecosystem health, boosting pollination, soil fertility, and water storage—with reduced input costs for farmers as a consequence.

By increasing certainty of investments in nature positive actions, nature credits encourage an increased uptake of more sustainable production models, thus protecting EU food security in the long

term. Nature credits take account of the fact that biodiversity loss and climate change are among the main threats agriculture and farmers are facing, affecting soil fertility, pollination, water availability and crop resilience.

The Commission is working to simplify certification processes and use digital tools to reduce administrative burden and will explore further mechanisms to support early participation.

How will you ensure the involvement of land managers and local communities?

The Roadmap foresees a bottom-up approach that builds on close involvement of concerned stakeholders, including farmers, foresters, fishers, landowners, and local communities. They are welcome to take part in the dedicated expert group. Given the great variety of ecosystems across the EU, markets for nature credits will need to be developed with a strong local dimension.

How much financing could nature credits raise in Europe?

Nature credit markets are still in their early stages globally. However, global demand for biodiversity credits is predicted to reach up to USD 180 billion, depending on policy uptake and corporate action. If the EU captures some of this demand, it could contribute to closing the estimated EUR 37 billion annual biodiversity funding gap in Europe.

As indicated in the Roadmap, the Commission plans to conduct a market potential assessment to better understand the realistic volumes and drivers in the EU context.

Are there already examples of working nature credit schemes?

Across the EU, a range of countries are already testing or implementing nature credit approaches, generating valuable experience for an EU-wide framework. France, Finland, and Ireland have initiated government-led efforts, while in Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Slovakia, and Sweden, pilots are led by civil society, land managers, or financial actors.

Under the [Green Assist programme](#), several pilots are being supported to test the feasibility of nature credit models. These include for example experimentation on wetland in France. Through these pilots, methodologies, governance models, monitoring methods, and financing strategies are being explored.

In addition, several EU-funded research and innovation programmes are laying the scientific and technical groundwork to support future nature market development, including Horizon 2020, Horizon Europe, LIFE, and Interreg. At the international level, the EU is actively engaging with key global platforms such as the Biodiversity Credit Alliance (BCA), the International Advisory Panel on Biodiversity Credits (IAPB), and the World Economic Forum (WEF). These initiatives are contributing to the international convergence of principles and best practices for credible, high-integrity biodiversity credit markets.

What is the added value of EU work on nature credits, on top of individual projects?

A common European perspective would complement existing local pilots and initiatives on nature credits, help them to gain credibility, raise investor interest and scale up nature credit markets.

What is the difference between carbon credits and nature credits? Will nature credits overlap with the carbon credit markets?

Nature and carbon credits are complementary but distinct tools. Carbon credits focus primarily on carbon sequestration and reducing emissions, while nature credits encompass activities that protect and restore biodiversity and ecosystems. Nature credits can therefore also apply to areas with limited additional carbon sequestration potential but high biodiversity value, such as dry ecosystems.

Carbon credits are based on a well-established metric – tonnes of CO₂-equivalent – while nature credits reflect site-specific biodiversity outcomes, which involve multiple metrics and indicators adapted to context.

Nevertheless, there are clear synergies, particularly for carbon farming activities with biodiversity co-benefits.

What is the difference between certificates and credits?

Certificates and credits play two different but complementary roles in rewarding nature-positive action. Certificates are proof that a project meets specific environmental standards. Credits are

tradable units that have been previously verified thanks to these independent standards.

This two-step model — certification followed by crediting — enables innovative financing. Certificates help structure and secure investment by providing upfront assurance, while credits monetise the demonstrated results. Certification ensures quality and transparency; credits turn verified gains into transferable value, which can be pooled, banked or traded.

Are you looking at a timeline to develop nature credit markets?

Yes. The European Commission has set out a clear and progressive timeline in its '[Roadmap towards Nature Credits](#)', covering the period 2025–2027.

The Commission is launching today a call for interest to establish a dedicated expert group bringing together Member States, stakeholders, and technical experts. Their task will be to co-develop the certification methodologies and governance principles for nature credits, with first results expected by mid-2026.

In parallel, the Commission is supporting pilot initiatives across the EU and internationally and preparing an EU-wide market potential assessment.

Based on these steps, we will assess whether further EU-level measures are needed to scale up nature credit markets in Europe. The aim is to move forward gradually, with legitimacy, transparency, and broad support, building a solid foundation.

For more information

[Press release](#)

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