



FROM COMPENSATION TO REGENERATION: CERTIFYING NATURE TO CHANGE THE ECONOMY

23rd October 2025

Editorial

Biodiversity Certification: Making the invisible measurable

For decades, biodiversity existed in the accounting silence of the economy and in the indifferent void of finance, despite being the invisible support for everything from crops to drinking water, from climate stability to the health of the seas and forests. It has persistently remained outside the spreadsheets, budgets and strategies of companies and municipalities. Its invisibility was not just a technical oversight, but the result of a paradigm that measured progress in financial results, tonnes of carbon and GDP fluctuations, but never in the diversity of forms and functions of thousands of organisms, habitats and ecosystems.

Today, this dogma is finally beginning to change despite the difficult political and social times we are going through. The “carbon era” has paved the way for a new phase of sustainability, one that recognises that decarbonisation alone is not enough if ecosystems continue to degrade. The challenge facing businesses, investors and territories is to go beyond carbon: to understand that **true climate neutrality depends on ecological integrity, and that there can be no economic future without ecological continuity.**

It is at this turning point that the **LIFE Institute** (<https://lifeinstituteglobal.org/>) plays a decisive role. Created in 2009, the LIFE Institute pioneered the first global biodiversity certification system aligned with the **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals**. Its methodology translates ecological complexity into tangible performance metrics, enabling **companies and municipalities to integrate biodiversity into their decisions** with the same rigour with which they treat carbon or financial capital.

With the recent creation of the **European Nature Credits system**, LIFE has become a technical and institutional benchmark for transforming ecological value into verifiable economic value, channelling investment where it makes a difference: into the effective regeneration of ecosystems.

In **October**, the **NBI team** completed the official **LIFE Experts** training, becoming **qualified to apply these methodologies in Portugal and Europe**. This partnership reinforces a vision that NBI has been consolidating: that **true progress is “Net Positive”** and requires **ecological additionality**, the principle that **every action must generate a net and measurable gain in biodiversity**, not just avoid a loss. In this way, we believe that **ecological additionality** is the antidote to greenwashing and the criterion that distinguishes real regeneration from symbolic compensation. It is at the heart of the new natural economy that is beginning to emerge, an economy that measures its prosperity not by exploiting what remains, but by recovering what has been lost.

But the real leap forward will be to make this vision essential in accounting and finance, in management and planning, in the politics and culture of organisations and territories. This is our challenge: **to make the invisible measurable. Are we on the same page?**



NUNO GASPAR DE OLIVEIRA

CEO, NBI – Natural Business Intelligence

Highlight:

Carbon paved the way. But nature is the destination. NBI brings the LIFE benchmark to Portugal

For years, corporate sustainability lived in the comfort zone of carbon — quantifiable, predictable, and financially comfortable. But the true measure of risk and value lies in the ecosystems, soils, and species that sustain life.

It is in this new territory, where biodiversity moves from discourse to evidence, that **Life (Lasting Initiative for Earth)** asserts itself as a transformative tool.

Created in Brazil and present in several countries, the **LIFE Institute** has developed a standard that certifies biodiversity performance and allows the creation of biodiversity credits, acquired by companies seeking LIFE Certification.

Now, through the partnership between **NBI** and **LIFE Institute Global**, the benchmark has arrived in **Portugal**. **NBI has become the national focal point and the first Portuguese entity** to be qualified as a **LIFE Expert**, capable of supporting companies, investors and public entities in certifying biodiversity performance and structuring **Nature Credits**.

With this collaboration, **NBI** introduces a scientific and verifiable model for valuing nature in Portugal, linking science, management and investment, ushering in a new generation of sustainability — one that measures progress by what we can regenerate.

[**READ ARTICLE HERE**](#)



Webinar ‘Transforming Business into Nature Positive: the LIFE benchmark in Portugal’

2 December | 2:30–4:00 p.m. PT 10:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m. BR (online)

Join us and discover how the **LIFE Standard** can strengthen organisations' alignment with **ESG, CSRD and TNFD benchmarks**, transforming positive impact on nature into measurable strategic value.

Access is free upon registration:

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BUSINESS AS NATURAL

NBI and Mafra City Council: restoring the Lizandro River, regenerating the territory

The **Lizandro River** is coming back to life. Between Carvalhal and Cheleiros, around **9 kilometres of riverside corridor** are being redeveloped in a project that restores ecological and cultural value to one of Mafra's most iconic rivers. The initiative is part of the **Strategic Plan for the Rehabilitation of Waterways (PERLA)** and aims to restore ecosystems, stabilise riverbanks and control invasive species, creating conditions for the natural regeneration of the landscape.

NBI is the technical and strategic partner of **Mafra Municipal Council** in this restoration and redevelopment plan, ensuring the integration of **nature-based solutions** that combine ecological regeneration, hydraulic safety, environmental education and the well-being of local communities.

A symbol of the municipality's identity, **Foz do Lizandro**, known for its surfing and coastal landscape, now has a new connection to the interior, with an **interpretive itinerary** and a footpath that will allow visitors to rediscover the source and the natural and historical heritage of the river.

With this collaboration, NBI reinforces its role in the ecological **transformation of territories**, promoting **sustainable water management** and **biodiversity enhancement** in urban and rural contexts. Projects such as Lizandro demonstrate how ecological regeneration can also be social and economic regeneration, with nature playing a central role in public decision-making.



Agroecology Express: accelerating the regenerative transition at the Continente Producers' Club

Portuguese agriculture is undergoing a silent but decisive transformation: the integration of **biodiversity and ecosystem services** as pillars of productive stability and economic value. In partnership with **Continente Producers Club (CPC / SONAE MC)**, **NBI** supports farmers across the country in the transition to more resilient, efficient and ecologically balanced production systems, capable of generating income while strengthening the natural regulation of the territory.

This joint effort **promotes agroecological practices based on ecological functionality**, which aim to restore functional biodiversity, such as pollinators, natural enemies, auxiliary fauna and spontaneous flora, and **rebuild the ecological infrastructure** of agricultural holdings. The approach goes beyond the productive plot: it assesses the **property as a whole**, including refuge areas, water lines, hedges, copses and banks, recognising the role of these areas in **climate, hydrological and biological regulation**.

In its third phase, the programme evolves with the launch of the '**Agroecology Express**' **service**, a rapid and **integrated assessment tool** that allows each producer to understand their ecological situation and identify opportunities for improvement.

Read this article [here](#)

An episode that goes to the heart of the Natural Economy, with NBI

At **NBI**, it is Nature that inspires every decision, not as a backdrop, but as an intelligent system where everything is connected and regenerates itself. It was in this spirit that we participated in the **first episode of the new season of the podcast 'Vozes Circulares'** (Circular Voices), by **Smart Waste Portugal**, dedicated to nature-based innovation.

In the dialogue between **Nuno Gaspar de Oliveira** (NBI) and **Professor Manuela Pintado** (UCP), the potential of **science, biodiversity and bioinnovation** as drivers of an economy that creates value through regeneration is explored. The conversation also addresses the natural-based bioeconomy and examples such as the **BioBlock COVID project**, in partnership with **EXMceuticals**, which demonstrate how biodiversity can be a source of innovation, health and sustainable development. An invitation to reflection and action: biology as a new design for innovation and biodiversity as a strategic asset for the future.

Listen to the full episode:

[**LISTEN HERE**](#)

NBI at the INSURE.Hub Conference: from science to action for Nature

On **29 and 30 October**, **INSURE.Hub**, an initiative of the **Portuguese Catholic University** and **Planetiers New Generation**, will hold its **5th Conference in Porto**, dedicated to innovation, regeneration and the future of nature-oriented businesses.

NBI will be present with a **stand** dedicated to the Natural Economy and the integration of biodiversity value into business strategies, showcasing its latest projects in LIFE certification, Ecological Due Diligence and Nature Positive solutions.

On **29 October**, **Nuno Gaspar de Oliveira** will participate in the round table discussion "**From Knowledge to Action: Linking Science, Policy, and Innovation**", moderated by **Luís Rochartre**, alongside **Ivone Rocha** (Telles Advogados), **Isabel Horta** (DSPA), **Luís Silva** (Porto Tech Hub), **Pedro Cruz** (KPMG) and **Ricardo Voltolini** (Ideia Sustentável). The conversation will explore **how to transform scientific knowledge into strategic action**, bringing together public policy, business innovation, and natural value metrics.

Flávia Canastra will also be present on behalf of NBI,

following sessions and emerging trends in the field of regeneration and integration of nature into the economy.

 **Universidade Católica Portuguesa – Porto**
 **29 e 30 de October**

[**LEARN MORE HERE**](#)



[**www.nbi.pt**](http://www.nbi.pt)

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