

Reflections on the High-Level Regenerative Development Event

On April 11, 2024, Brussels hosted an important event organised by the Federal Public Service for Public Health, Food Chain Safety, and Environment, under the auspices of the Belgian Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The High-Level Regenerative Development Event was designed to advance the goals of the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, which emphasises the crucial principle of giving back to nature more than we take.

Daniela Rizzi from [ICLEI Europe](#) and Jomme Desair from [INBO](#), both members of the [GoNaturePositive!](#) consortium, were notable attendees who participated in the Nature-Positive Roundtable in the afternoon.

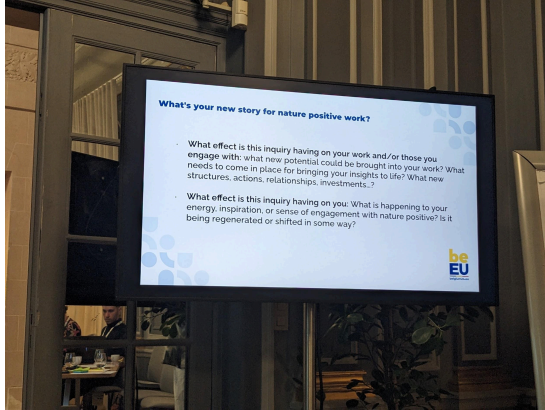


Overview of the Event

The event commenced with an introduction to the concept of regenerative development, emphasising its significance within the European context. The keynote speech by Ms. Sandrine Dixson-Declève of the Club of Rome inspired attendees with her insightful provocations on the current state of affairs. Leen Gorissen, author of the report on regenerative development that underpinned the event, showed us the intrinsic and inseparable connection between humans, our economy and nature, setting the stage for a day filled with insightful discussions.

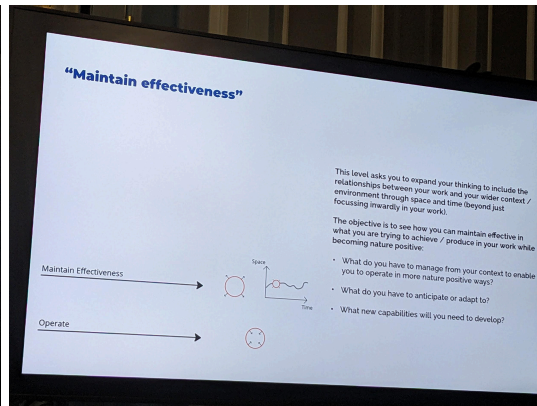
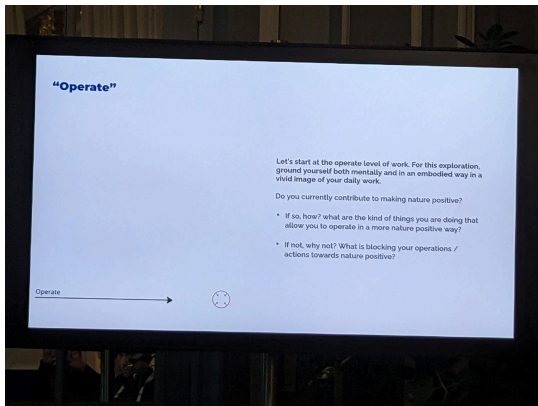
A panel of experts, including Ms. Anna Chilton from Nestlé, Mr. Ben Haggard from the Regenes Institute, Ms. Elle Merete Omma from the Saami Council EU Unit, Mr. Humberto Delgado Rosa from the DG Environment, European Commission, and Mr. Thomas Elliott, CEO of Restor, explored various facets of regenerative development. Their discussions underscored the need for transformative changes in our interactions with nature.

The event featured four focused roundtable sessions where participants delved into topics such as Just Transition, Adaptation and Resilience, Circular Economy, and Nature Positive outcomes. Daniela and Jomme contributed to the Nature Positive Roundtable.



The Nature Positive Roundtable

This interactive roundtable adopted a systems thinking approach. Discussions began at the “operate” level, where participants were invited to consider their daily work's impact on nature. The conversation then expanded to examine the relationships between participants' work and their broader contexts. Questions were posed to encourage reflection on how to enhance these relationships to foster more nature-positive outcomes and what systemic changes are necessary to radically evolve our engagement with nature. The session culminated in exploring the "regenerate" level, which encouraged participants to consider their interconnectedness with nature and the underlying philosophy of nature positivity.



Reflections

The High-Level Regenerative Development Event was more than a conference; it was a collaborative forum that brought together diverse perspectives and expertise to shape the future of sustainability. Within the Nature-Positive Roundtable, Daniela Rizzi and Jomme Desair shared insights from the public launch of the GoNaturePositive! project in Dublin in March 2024 and discussed the ongoing and complex efforts to define the nature-positive economy.

An upcoming conference report was promised to summarise the outcomes of the event, ensuring that the insights gained continue to influence and inspire change across Europe and beyond. These will certainly also serve our endeavours to define and measure a nature-positive economy. While the discourse of regenerative development is perhaps less focused on the natural world, both try to find a way to bring about the best of times for the human and more than human world.

Looking back, the event stands as a testament to the power of collective effort and innovative thinking in the pursuit of a regenerative future. For those involved in environmental policy, sustainability practices, or simply invested in the future of our planet, the insights and discussions from Brussels serve as both a guide and inspiration for what we can achieve together.

