



Project partners met in Leuven, Belgium between 10th to 13th October 2023 for the second Collaborative CiPeL Workshop and the fourth progress meeting.



Representatives from the 7 cities and 13 organisations that compose the JUSTNature consortium met in person at De Romaanse Poort of Leuven to share experiences and discuss in the 2nd Collaborative CiPeL Workshop, and to review the progress made and the way ahead, especially in light of the review meeting with the Research Executive Agency. As the project transitions into its third year, it now sets its sights on the second phase, which is focused on the implementation of the innovative practices and the dissemination and exploitation of results.

Day 1

The first afternoon of the meeting was dedicated to the **2nd Collaborative CiPeL Workshop (CCW)**, coordinated by our partner Prospex Institute, and bringing together the representatives from the 6 City Practice Labs (CiPeLs); Leuven (Belgium), Gzira (Malta), Munich (Germany), Szombathely (Hungary), Merano & Bolzano (Italy), and Chania (Greece).

During the interactive sessions, the representatives from the CiPeLs had engaged in collective reflections and discussions regarding the challenges and opportunities related to their Local Stakeholder Workshops (LSWs). The topics covered during these sessions included:

- How to incentivize participation of a more diverse range of stakeholders?
- What do you think are the participants skills and expertise that can be of relevance for the project? And how to activate these?
- How to translate complex concepts into simple formats? What media or ways of communication can be used?
- How to go about LSW evaluation in a way that it works for both participants and the project?

During the discussions, It became evident that effective communication necessitates the use of local languages to empower and engage everyone wishing to voice their opinions, or potentially the need to organise separate sessions for individuals speaking different languages. Moreover, to incentivise people to participate, complex concepts and jargon should be simplified or conveyed through visual elements such as images, comics, infographics or tangible objects like flowers and fruits.



It was also the occasion for all project partners to partake in two workshops on the topics of **Power dynamics** and **Usability of the indicator framework**. During the first workshop, Eurac Research collaborators engaged participants in thought-provoking discussions about how to make power dynamics transparent in relation to their influence on the design of nature-based solutions and who these solutions ultimately benefit. Suggestions included using language and tangible objectives to clarify concepts for different groups, reconfiguring seating arrangements in meeting rooms, involving experts to mediate and foster constructive dialogue, and how to explicitly discuss power dynamics in workshop settings. The second workshop, led by the Technical University of Crete, provided city partners with an opportunity to review and refine the indicators used to measure justice levels and construct socioecological profiles, aligning them more closely with city objectives.

Day 2

Continuing the 2nd CCW programme, the first workshop, led by the Technical University of Munich, centred on the development of **Co-governance indicators** based on the theory of change. This approach aimed to establish a framework for monitoring and evaluating the collective efforts of a group

striving to achieve a shared objective. City partners were tasked with defining clear objectives and outlining the specific actions required to attain each desired outcome.



Next, the **Twinning activities workshop** explained the purpose of its activities that aim to supplement the dissemination of JUSTNature and achieve engagement of wider audiences, including enabling a wide-scale replication of effective NbS. Facilitated by Prospex Institute and ISOCARP, the workshop tried out the storytelling method, where imaginative narratives from the future were employed to conceptualise the fundamental aspects of the project that could be duplicated and shared in twinning cities' activities. It was fun and constructive to reflect on the project from the future and more importantly review how the project's legacy could be sustained and extended.

At the end of CCW, the focus shifted to identify gaps and plan the next phase. Timelines for upcoming activities with city partners and work package leaders were reviewed and updated. During this reflective session, CiPeL representatives reflected on the learnings and discussions from CCW2, and defined the next engagement steps. To enhance internal communication, an action plan and deliverables were created and shared via interactive posters. Those outcomes will be taken up by Prospex Institute and integrated into the planning of the forthcoming activities. The second CCW session wrapped up successfully before lunch, paving the way for the commencement of the 4th progress meeting in the afternoon.

The 4th progress meeting

JUSTNature project partners convened for a comprehensive review of two years of progress to gain a better understanding of the way ahead and challenges to be faced. Project coordinator Sonia Gantioler from Eurac Research outlined the project's overview and the anticipated results necessary for achieving project goals. Each work package presented their previous work, lessons learned on what went well and what less well, and the immediate next steps over the coming 6 months. **Leuven's Aldermen, Dirk Vansina**, extended a warm official welcome to the city, introducing some of its problems but also the various initiatives already existing and the opportunities the city offers.

The various impact boosting and validation committees shared their feedback on the progress of the project. This includes the **Advisory Committee** members, who partly joined online and partly in presence, including **Farzana Gandhi** from New York Institute of Technology, **Maeva Bureau** from WECF France, **Mira Conci** from EIT Climate-KIC, **Thomas Osdoba** from NetZeroCities. and **Elena**

Stefanoni from UNEP. In addition, the **Ethics Committee** provided an overview of main appearing issues and aspects to be addressed, such as the appointment of the ombudsperson. To further improve innovation processes in relation to key exploitable results, Inlecom provided insights into the **re-shaping of the innovation committee**.

Next, Inlecom, Eurac Research, and Crowdhelix then reported on their respective efforts, focusing on **entrepreneurial activation**, research into financing challenges, and barriers faced by local governments in implementing Nature-based Solutions (NbS). Inlecom also showcased financial models for city business plans, financial roadmaps, and sustainability plans, while Crowdhelix elaborated on the Nature-building Helix, a commercial and financing ecosystem and a tool for the dissemination of the main exploitable results of the project.

University of Malta, Crowdhelix and the ISOCARP Institute presented on-going **communication and dissemination** activities and planned to develop specific engagement strategies towards specific target audiences, and monitoring and evaluating effectiveness of engagement activities.

Day 3

The project partners visited **the pilot site on Constantin Meunierstraat** in Leuven. The partners explored the 'street of the future,' a temporary bioactive placemaking and traffic mitigation intervention equipped with sensors to track user interactions and assess setup changes. This monitoring phase will extend for three months, gathering valuable data and neighbour feedback to inform the street's future replicable enhancements. Subsequently, the partners returned to the venue to continue their reporting on the project's implementation phase.



Prospex Institute provided updates on **CiPeLs operationalisation**, specifically on the Local Stakeholder Workshops and how knowledge gained there is being fed back into the project. E2ARC presented the progress made over the past 6 months, which included the definition of the **concept design of the NbS to be implemented in the 6 City Practice Labs**, and the development of an **Implementation framework**. The latter will ensure that high quality NbS will be delivered on time and within budget. **"Project Implementation Diaries"** will be used to report key information from each CiPeL, facilitating replication and upscaling of the applied solutions, while also enabling knowledge exchange with twinning cities.

Following these presentations, city representatives shared valuable insights and raised concerns about the depth of scientific research and the alignment of implementation results with the project's primary objectives. Additionally, CiPeLs representatives presented their posters, sharing recent developments and outlined their vision for the next steps with the rest of the JUSTNature consortium.

Eurac Research presented the **ecological (space) justice strategic planning toolkit** and **Socio-ecological profiles**, designed to aid in identifying key justice-related challenges cities face and opportunities presented by nature-based solutions. To better understand the tools, a workshop was conducted, utilising inspiration cards to assess aspects such as impact scale, just indicators, and beneficiaries. The inspiration cards highlight weak aspects and offer inspiration on how to improve.

Integrated Environmental Solutions presented the completion of **Digital twin developments**, which is now entering the prototyping phase. This digital tool is expected to enable 3-D georeferenced analysis for outdoor thermal comfort, 3-D simulation of intervention impacts, and data visualisation.

Technical University of Crete, ABUD, and Eurac Research reported the completion of **developed methods and indicator frameworks** for CiPeLs for the causal analysis on the performance of the interventions. After the group work session, tailored indicators for each CiPeL to address their goals were discussed, with data processing remaining for further discussion. Following the extensive day of discussions, partners had the option to enjoy a city tour on foot or by bike.



Day 4


On the morning of October 13th, Eurac Research, the project coordinator, presented a **peer review process** and the recommendations from the European Commission review. It was also announced that the next progress meeting will be held in Bolzano and Merano, Italy.

The Technical University of Munich, ABUD, and ISOCARP reported the completion of the assessment period and kicked off the new task of **Nature-building communities**. This task aims to establish local coalitions to ensure the ongoing benefits, impact, and maintenance of interventions beyond the project's duration. City partners were introduced to the co-governance concept to help them define their achievable goals.

In summary, the JUSTNature project is making significant progress towards its **innovation practice phase**, with a focus on co-implementation with citizens and formation of 'communities of practice'.

For more information, you can find updated stories on our website:

[JUSTNature | Driving a just transition towards low carbon cities \(justnatureproject.eu\)](https://justnatureproject.eu)

 Follow us on our social media channels:

[FACEBOOK](#)

[INSTAGRAM](#)

[X \(TWITTER\)](#)

[NEWSLETTER](#)

[YOUTUBE](#)



Article 29.5 Disclaimer

This deliverable contains information that reflects only the authors' views and the European Commission/REA is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under Grant Agreement No. 101003757.