



GoNaturePositive!

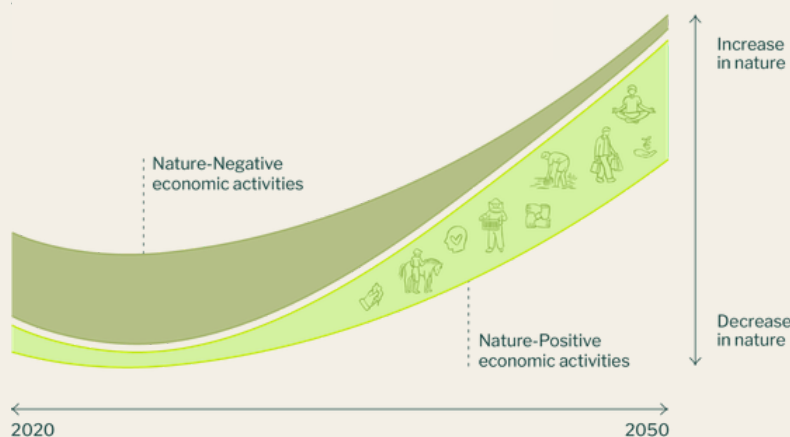
Research & Academic What is a Nature-Positive Economy?



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and why it matters!

A Nature-Positive Economy (NPE) is an economy where the net result of all economic activities combined leads to an absolute increase in nature, to the point of full recovery, and prosperity for all of society.



Why scientific leadership is critical for the Nature-Positive transition

Working with a NPE is essential for research institutions because the transition requires robust evidence, clear definitions, and scientifically credible pathways for change.

Delivering on this demands a deep understanding of ecological limits, social dynamics, and economic systems, which are areas where research organisations hold unique expertise.

As society faces accelerating biodiversity loss, climate instability, and nature-related risks, research institutions play a vital role in identifying workable solutions, avoiding maladaptation, and investigating and clarifying trade-offs. They also help safeguard accountability by developing transparent indicators, biodiversity baselines, and methods for monitoring progress across sectors and scales.

Engaging with the NPE strengthens the public mission of research organisations: supporting evidence-based robust decisions, fostering innovation, and enabling just, regenerative futures in which nature and people can thrive together.

How research enables the Nature-Positive transition

Research institutions have a triple role to play in contributing to the NPE:

1. Education of the next generation,
2. Research to advance knowledge, innovation and insights that are evidence-based, scientifically robust and sound and
3. Science-based advisory services with input and guidance to ministries, municipalities and the private sector on transitioning towards a NPE.

Research institutions generate the scientific foundations and innovations needed for a NPE by assessing ecological limits, advancing NBS and regenerative solutions, and developing robust methods for monitoring and evaluation.

Through interdisciplinary education and training, they equip future leaders to design regenerative practices, understand planetary boundaries, and integrate social equity into decision-making.

And, as trusted advisors, research organizations translate scientific insights into practical guidance for governments and businesses, supporting policies, standards, and accountability frameworks that align economic activity with ecosystem recovery and societal wellbeing.

Get involved!



Join us in advancing knowledge
and solutions for a thriving planet.



Five key messages about a Nature-Positive Economy

After a global consultation with 750+ people across 50 countries, GoNaturePositive! distilled the core messages:

1. Tipping the balance in favour of nature

Today's economy relies heavily on nature - from food and water to materials, climate stability, and cultural value, yet continues to degrade ecosystems.

An NPE flips this logic. It aims for an absolute increase in nature: thriving forests, rivers, soils, oceans and biodiversity that can support future generations. This aligns with the Global Biodiversity Framework and global goals for full nature recovery.

2. Focus on limits, recovery, and wellbeing

The NPE is not “just another green concept.” It connects and strengthens approaches like circular, bio-based, and net-zero economies, while adding what has long been missing:

- Respecting planetary boundaries,
- Prioritising nature recovery
- Putting human wellbeing at the centre

It acknowledges that prosperity depends on healthy ecosystems, and that protecting them is non-negotiable.



3. Everyone has a role

Transforming the economy requires collective action across scales (local to global), timeframes (today to 2050 and beyond), and sectors. GoNP! identifies three groups of actors:

- Actors with high impacts and dependencies on nature: Businesses of all sizes, including nature-based enterprises.
- Actors who shape the economy: Policymakers, governments, investors, and standard-setting bodies.
- Actors who ensure accountability: Researchers, NGOs, education providers, citizens, civil society, Indigenous Peoples, local communities and youth.

To guide transformation, four principles are key: equity & justice; inclusion & plural values; respectful human-nature relationships; and adaptive learning.

4. New opportunities for innovation, investment and jobs

A Nature-Positive transition unlocks major economic potential. Nature-based solutions, such as regenerative agriculture, natural water management, and urban green infrastructure, reduce risks for businesses, restore ecosystems, and support communities.

Nature-based enterprises are already experiencing strong demand and can expand rapidly with the right support, creating jobs and driving innovation.

5. Measuring progress is essential

No single organisation can claim to be “nature-positive” alone. Instead, all actors should assess and disclose how they contribute to the transition, using clear baselines, transparent targets, and consistent monitoring.

Genuine progress must show improvements in ecosystem health, social well-being, and equity together.



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