MODULE A2
IUCN Global standards for NbS (self-assessment tool)

Training Manual

October, 2025

The training programme has been developed within the framework of the NATMed project **“Nature-based Solutions on existing infrastructures for resilient water management in the Mediterranean”** funded by the PRIMA programme.

This manual is a collection of notes for workshop participants and is intended to complement the presentation delivered by the workshop facilitator.

For more detailed information on each module, please refer to the "Further Information" section provided at the end of each module, as well as the project website: **https://natmed-project.eu**

This project has received funding from the European Union’s PRIMA Research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No 2221.

FWC-NbS TRAINING PROGRAMME

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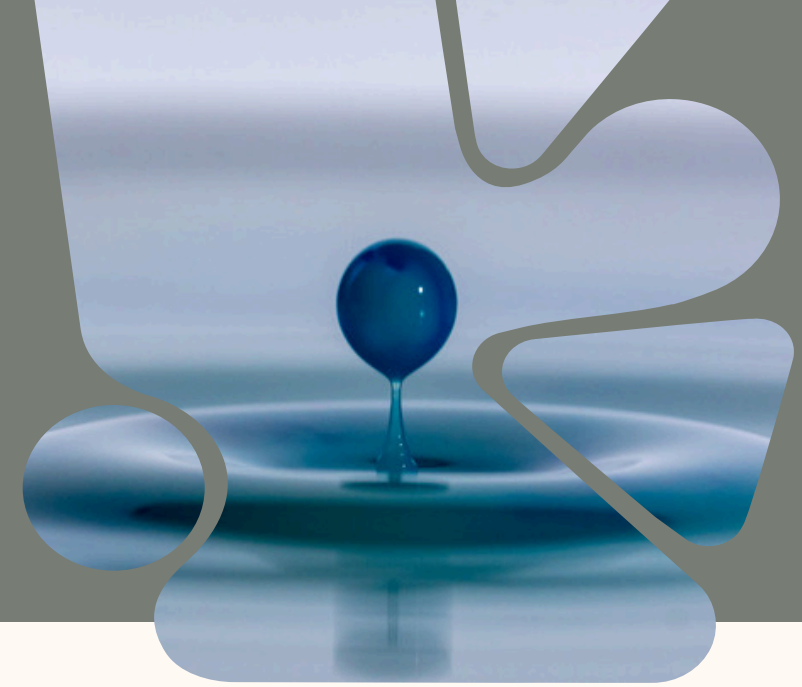


Introduction

During project implementation, a quadruple-bottom-line performance of the implemented FWC-NbS, building on NbS diagnosis, FWC-NbS implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation, has been analysed and validated using the IUCN Global Standard for NbS (IUCN GS), in close collaboration with IUCN-Med.

The IUCN Global Standard for NbS is a user-friendly framework for the design, validation and scaling up of impactful NbS. Thus, proper guidance on the use of the tool and sharing of lessons learnt from its application in NATMed's case studies, can maximize the potential of trainees (from both public and private sector, as well as civil society) to help mitigate climate change, biodiversity loss, water scarcity and natural resources depletion.

What will you learn?

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Understand the **purpose** and **structure** of the IUCN Global Standard for NbS.
- Explain the **8 criteria and 28 indicators** and why they matter.
- See **how the Standard was applied in NATMed's case studies** to improve quality, governance, and replication.
- Use the **self-assessment tools** and **templates** to evaluate NbS interventions.
- **Link monitoring data** (Key Performance Indicators) to performance evaluation under the Standard.
- Reflect on lessons learned and **how to integrate the Standard into regional NbS policies.**

Guiding questions

How can the IUCN Global Standard help distinguish credible NbS from "greenwashing"?

What are the key criteria, and how were they applied in NATMed case studies?

How can monitoring data (KPIs) be used to demonstrate compliance with the Standard?

In what ways can the Standard support replication and policy integration in Mediterranean contexts?

Who is this for?

Technical professionals,
NbS practitioners,
public authorities interested in implementing Nature-based Solutions.

Introduction to the IUCN Global Standard

Launched in 2020, the **IUCN Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions** is the first internationally recognized tool for evaluating NbS projects. It provides a comprehensive framework for identifying good practices, areas for improvement, and potential challenges or barriers, acting as an overarching tool. The standard supports in-depth analysis across a wide range of aspects, from accurately defining the challenges to be addressed, to assessing expected impacts, economic viability, and biodiversity net gain.

Goal

To ensure that NbS initiatives are credible, scalable, and sustainable, addressing societal challenges while generating multiple measurable benefits for both people and nature.

Why the Standard Matters

- Ensures **credibility**: distinguishes true NbS from "greenwashing" or other kinds of interventions, that, although they provide benefits, cannot be claimed as NbS.
- Provides a **universal language**: supports communication with policymakers, funders, and the public.
- Builds **comparability**: allows NbS to be evaluated across projects and regions.
- Facilitates **replication**: standardised criteria help other cities/regions adapt and upscale successful interventions.

Greenwashing means when a project, company, or policy claims to be environmentally friendly, sustainable, or climate-resilient — but in reality, the actions are superficial, misleading, or not delivering real benefits.

Structure and Criteria: How the Standard Works

The Standard is structured around **8 criteria** and **28 indicators** that cover the full lifecycle of an NbS, from identifying the problem to ensuring long-term governance and sustainability. It is meant to be applied through a self-assessment process throughout planning, implementation, and monitoring.

The Eight Criteria & 28 Indicators

No	Criteria	nº	Indicators
1	**NbS effectively address societal challenges**	1.1	The most pressing societal challenges for rights holders and beneficiaries are prioritised.
		1.2	The societal challenges addressed are clearly understood and documented.
		1.3	Human well-being outcomes arising from the NbS are identified, benchmarked, and periodically assessed.
2	**Design of NbS is informed by scale**	2.1	Design of NbS recognises and responds to the interactions between the economy, society and ecosystems.
		2.2	Design of NbS integrated with other complementary interventions and seeks synergies across sectors.
		2.3	Design of NbS incorporates risk identification and risk management beyond the intervention site.
3	**NbS result in net gain to biodiversity and ecosystem integrity**	3.1	NbS actions directly respond to evidence-based assessment of the current state of the ecosystem and prevailing drivers of degradation and loss.
		3.2	Clear and measurable biodiversity conservation outcomes are identified, benchmarked and periodically assessed.

Structure and Criteria: How the Standard Works

No	Criteria	nº	Indicators
		3.3	Monitoring includes periodic assessments for unintended adverse consequences on nature arising from the NbS.
		3.4	Opportunities to enhance ecosystem integrity and connectivity identified and incorporated into the NbS strategy.
4	**NbS are economically viable**	4.1	The direct and indirect benefits and costs associated with the NbS, who pays and who benefits are identified and documented.
		4.2	A cost-effectiveness study is provided to support the choice of NbS, including the likely impact of any relevant regulations and subsidies.
		4.3	The effectiveness of an NbS design is justified against available alternative solutions, taking into account any associated externalities.
		4.4	NbS design considers a portfolio of resourcing options such as market-based, public sector, voluntary commitments, and actions to support regulatory compliance.
5	**NbS are based on inclusive, transparent and empowering governance processes**	5.1	A defined and fully agreed-upon feedback and grievance resolution mechanism is available to all stakeholders before an NbS intervention can be initiated.
		5.2	Participation is based on mutual respect and equality, regardless of gender, age, or social status, and upholds the right of Indigenous Peoples to Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC).

Structure and Criteria: How the Standard Works

No	Criteria	nº	Indicators
		5.3	Stakeholders who are directly and indirectly affected by the NbS have been identified and involved in all processes of the NbS intervention.
		5.4	Decision-making processes document and respond to rights and interests of all participating and affected stakeholders.
		5.5	Where the scale of the NbS extends beyond jurisdictional boundaries, mechanisms are established to enable joint decision-making among the stakeholders in those jurisdictions affected by the NbS.
6	**NbS equitably balances trade-offs between achievement of their primary goal(s) and the continued provision of multiple benefits**	6.1	The potential costs and benefits of the associated trade-offs of the NbS interventions are explicitly acknowledged and informed safeguards and any appropriate corrective actions.
		6.2	The rights, usage of, and access to land and resources, along with the responsibilities of different stakeholders are acknowledged and respected.
		6.3	Established safeguards are periodically reviewed to ensure that mutually-agreed trade-off limits are respected and do not destabilise the entire NbS.

Structure and Criteria: How the Standard Works

No	Criteria	nº	Indicators
7	**NbS are managed adaptively, based on evidence**	7.1	A NbS strategy is established and used as a basis for regular monitoring and evaluation of the intervention.
		7.2	A monitoring and evaluation plan is developed and implemented throughout the intervention lifecycle.
		7.3	A framework for iterative learning that enables adaptive management is applied throughout the intervention lifecycle.
8	**NbS are sustainable and mainstreamed within an appropriate jurisdictional context**	8.1	NbS design, implementation, and lessons learnt are shared for triggering transformative change.
		8.2	The NbS informs and enhances, facilitating policy and regulation frameworks to support its uptake and mainstreaming.
		8.3	Where relevant, NbS contribute to national and global targets for human wellbeing, climate change, biodiversity and human rights, including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

Application of the Standard in NATMed Case Studies

Summary of the five NATMed case studies and the FWC-NbS implemented

CS1. Carrión de los Céspedes

Location: Sevilla (Spain)
Climate: Hot-summer Mediterranean climate
Area (ha): 4.1
FWC - NbS implemented:

- Constructed wetlands
- Floating gardens
- Ultrasound system

CS2. Chimaditida

Location: Amyntaio (Greece)
Climate: Hot-summer Mediterranean climate
Area (ha): 960
FWC - NbS implemented:

- Livestock grazing and management
- Riparian buffers and reforestation
- Distribution systems improvement: monitoring and Water 4.0

CS3. Arborea

Location: Sardinia (Italy)
Climate: Hot-summer Mediterranean climate
Area (ha): 6000
FWC - NbS implemented:

- Managed Aquifer recharge system (MAR): Forested Infiltration Area (FIA) system

CS4. Bozcaada

Location: Tenedos Island (Türkiye)
Climate: Hot-summer Mediterranean climate
Area (ha): 37.6
FWC - NbS implemented:

- Managed Aquifer Recharge system (MAR): Natural infiltration techniques (terraces) and recharge wells
- Managed Aquifer Recharge system (MAR): Groundwater storage
- Conservation agriculture & soil management
- Climate resilient Agriculture
- Distribution systems improvement: monitoring and Water 4.0

CS5. Oued Righ

Location: Touggourt (Algeria)
Climate: Arid Climate
Area (ha): 600
FWC - NbS implemented:

- Constructed wetlands
- Riparian buffers and reforestation

Application of the Standard in NATMed Case Studies

In **NATMed**, the IUCN Global Standard was applied as:

- A **diagnostic tool**, linking baselines and technical specifications to societal challenges as well as identifying opportunities for improving the interventions.
- An **evaluation framework** to ensure that biodiversity and governance were not overlooked, and that the constructed wetlands, infiltration areas, buffer zones, and smart irrigation systems met the NbS criteria and could therefore be designated as Nature-based Solutions.
- A **replication enabler**, helping align Mediterranean FWC-NbS with global frameworks like the SDGs and EU Green Deal and identifying good practices that can contribute to mainstreaming and scaling-up.

Application of the tool per Indicator

1. Societal Challenges

- NbS must respond to clearly identified societal challenges (e.g. water security, climate adaptation, disaster risk reduction, human health).
- NATMed link: Case studies framed water scarcity, land degradation, and pollution as key challenges.

2. Design at Scale

- Solutions must operate at the right ecological, social, and governance scale to be effective, understanding the interactions among them.
- NATMed link: Case studies like Arborea and Bozcaada were designed at watershed/landscape scale, not just at site level.

3. Biodiversity Net Gain

- NbS must enhance biodiversity and ecosystem integrity, not just provide single-service benefits.
- NATMed link: Oued Righ's canal bank revegetation and Chimaditida's riparian buffers strengthened biodiversity indicators.

4. Economic Feasibility

- NbS must be cost-effective, compared to alternatives, and consider long-term financing for sustainability over time.
- NATMed link: Carrión de los Céspedes documented water savings from reuse and wetlands.

Application of the Standard in NATMed Case Studies

Application of the tool per Indicator

5. Inclusive Governance

- NbS must be implemented, ensuring equitable, transparent, and participatory governance.
- NATMed link: The Mediterranean Community of Practice organized in the case study areas, and the NATMed participatory governance plan embedded inclusivity and equity.

6. Balance of Trade-offs

- NbS must identify and manage trade-offs (ecological, social, economic) to avoid harming vulnerable groups or ecosystems.
- NATMed link: Risk analysis in Bozcaada identified water allocation trade-offs between tourism and agriculture.

7. Adaptive Management

- NbS must be continuously monitored and adjusted in response to results and changing conditions.
- NATMed link: Monitoring programmes provided adaptive KPIs on soil, water and biodiversity.

8. Sustainability & Mainstreaming

- NbS must be embedded into policy and practice to ensure long-term sustainability.
- NATMed link: Replication Plan emphasized scaling and integration into Mediterranean water management strategies.

Actions to take

- Use the Standard at the start of NbS planning to validate project relevance and identify areas for improvement.
- Revisit the criteria during implementation and monitoring to ensure adaptive management.
- Document how each criterion is addressed. It builds credibility with funders and policy makers.

Pitfalls to avoid

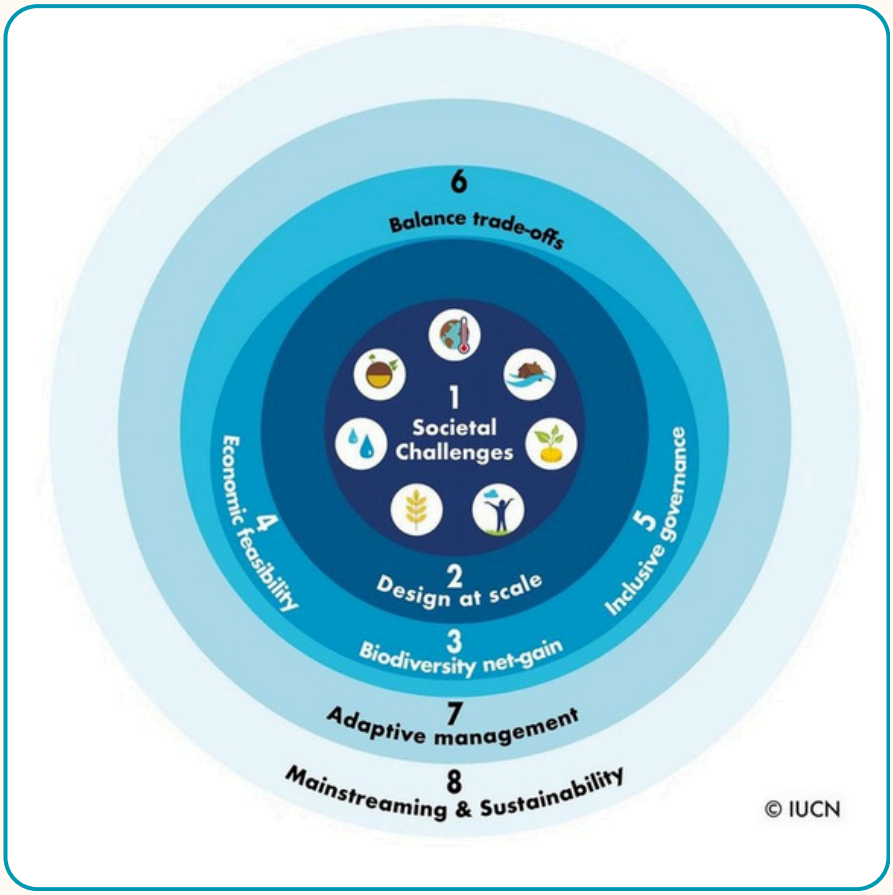
- Don't treat the Standard as a checklist at the end. It must guide the entire process.
- Avoid using it only for environmental benefits; it equally emphasizes social, economic, and governance dimensions.
- Don't ignore documentation; transparency is essential for replication.

Self-Assessment Process: Tools and Templates

The **IUCN Global Standard for NbS** is designed to be applied through a self-assessment process. This allows project teams, municipalities, or communities to evaluate whether their NbS meets the required quality benchmarks.

The self-assessment is a structured exercise where users respond to guiding questions and use a 'traffic light' system (**Insufficient**, **Partial**, **Adequate,** and **Strong**) to score their intervention against the **8 criteria and 28 indicators**.

The tool finally provides an overall score that determines if the intervention is aligned with the Standard or not. Ultimately, the main objective is not to obtain a score, but to identify areas for improvement and lessons learnt, determining the NbS's weakest areas, with the aim of maximising their impact and benefits.



Self-Assessment Process: Tools and Templates

IUCN Self-Assessment Tool (Excel-based template or online tool https://nbs-sat.iucn.org)

- Developed by IUCN (2020) to guide users through all 8 criteria and 28 indicators.
- Provides structured questions per indicator, guidance notes, and scoring scales using the “traffic light” system described above.
- It is necessary to provide means of verification for the practices claimed per indicator, as documentation of evidence (baselines, monitoring plans, stakeholder processes).
- Both tools finally generate a visual “spider chart” showing performance across criteria and the overall adherence to the Standard.

Case Study Factsheets (prepared by the partner NBSCLIMATE)

- Templates used in NATMed pilots to understand each CS intervention and their adherence to the Standard.
- A synthesis of the indicators rated as Insufficient or Partial in the previous assessment and a series of recommendations to improve them, as well as priority actions.

Updating the assessment template (prepared by the partner NBSCLIMATE)

- A structured table for each case study team to revise indicators’ scores after implementation and monitoring activities, justify choices, and reflect on gaps, challenges and good practices. It facilitated group reflection with stakeholders in participatory workshops.
- Encourages discussion and learning rather than individual scoring.

Performance Evaluation Using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Performance evaluation is about checking whether the NbS actually delivers the outcomes it promised. In the IUCN Global Standard, this means using KPIs to provide evidence for each of the 8 criteria. KPIs are the quantitative backbone of self-assessment: they make evaluation objective, comparable, and credible.

NATMed-based Conclusions

- KPIs ensure that evaluation is evidence-based, not just descriptive.
- They connect baseline data → intervention → outcomes → Standard criteria.
- NATMed showed that monitoring KPIs allows projects to:
  - Demonstrate biodiversity net gains.
  - Compare NbS against grey alternatives.
  - Identify risks early and adapt management.

NATMed validation

- NATMed established KPIs on water quality, soil health, biodiversity, and socio-economic indicators.
- These were then used to fill in some of the indicators within the IUCN Standard self-assessment templates.

Each of these indicators provided evidence to "score" criteria such as biodiversity net gain, economic feasibility, and adaptive management.

NATMed practices (examples)

Water-related KPIs

- Evaporation reduction (Carrión, Spain).
- Nitrate concentration in aquifers (Arborea, Italy).
- Pollution load reduction (Oued Righ, Algeria).

Biodiversity KPIs

- Vegetation cover and species richness in buffer zones (Chimaditida, Greece).
- Habitat connectivity indicators in canal revegetation (Oued Righ).

Soil KPIs

- Soil organic matter content in conservation agriculture (Bozcaada, Türkiye).

Socio-economic KPIs

- Water reuse costs vs. savings (€/m^3) in Carrión.
- Farmer participation rates in grazing management (Chimaditida).

Performance Evaluation Using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Actions to take

- Define KPIs during baseline phase, not after implementation.
- Use a mix of ecological, hydrological, and socio-economic indicators.
- Link each KPI clearly to at least one IUCN criterion.
- Document results in dashboards, graphs, or one-page fact sheets for transparency.

Pitfalls to avoid

- Don't rely only on qualitative evidence (narratives, photos) without measurable indicators.
- Avoid selecting KPIs that are too many or too complex to track sustainably.
- Don't disconnect KPIs from decision-making; they must feed adaptive management loops.
- Avoid "cherry-picking" positive KPIs; balance evidence across all 8 criteria.

Reflections and Lessons from Standard Application

Applying the **IUCN Global Standard** in NATMed's project allowed to extract good practices, gaps and recommendations for improvement. However, some case studies encountered some difficulties or challenges in applying the Standard in their respective areas and local context, alongside with time and budget constraints. This information can be useful to other NbS practitioners willing to improve their interventions by applying the IUCN Global Standard for NbS.

NATMed-based Conclusions

- The Standard provided a common language across the diverse NATMed case studies.
- It made evaluation holistic, ensuring that NbS were not judged only on technical success but also on governance, equity, and long-term sustainability.
- Some criteria (e.g. societal challenges, biodiversity net gain) were easier to apply, while others (trade-offs, governance) required more effort and were more challenging given time or budget constraints.
- The process increased credibility with stakeholders and policymakers, demonstrating that NATMed's interventions adhere to the Standard.

The case studies also showed a strong commitment to enhancing these interventions based on the learnings extracted.

Reflections and Lessons from Standard Application

Examples from the case studies

Spain (Carrión de los Céspedes):
Strong scores on challenges identification (water scarcity, climate change, farmers' income) but highlighted the need for broader citizen engagement.

Greece (Chimaditida):
Showed good biodiversity net gain and ecosystem integrity enhancement, but economic sustainability scoring revealed gaps in the economic long-term sustainability and cost-benefit analysis.

Italy (Arborea):
Scored well on economic feasibility due to a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis carried out, but design considering the different interactions between economy, society and the ecosystems could be improved.

Türkiye (Bozcaada):
Demonstrated innovative adaptive management (smart irrigation), but biodiversity and ecosystem integrity goals needed to be more widely incorporated into the intervention.

Algeria (Oued Righ):
Strong biodiversity and water purification outcomes, but trade-offs analysis and corresponding contingency measures were less robust.

NATMed proved that the IUCN Standard is both a quality assurance framework and a capacity-building tool. It helps cities and stakeholders improve their NbS step by step while aligning with international benchmarks.

Reflections and Lessons from Standard Application

Key lessons learnt from the application of the IUCN GS within NATMed

Challenges	Lesson learnt
Adapting projects to the IUCN Standard approach	A project should be concealed from the very first moment with the use of the IUCN GS for NbS in mind, making the assessment process easier on later stages. This will also help to distribute budget and workloads more carefully allowing to better cover all relevant aspects, such as biodiversity outcomes, economic viability, etc.
Understanding the indicators and guiding questions	To count on technicians with certified knowledge on the use of the IUCN GS might be useful in order to better understand the Standard itself, what is its potential and how to optimize all the process and therefore, the NbS intervention.
Means of verification: justifying the actions	It is relevant to keep in mind that for any kind of action claimed as done, a reference as a means to verification it, needs to be provided, so an external reader can actually certificate the action and learn from it. Good advice is to try to document every action, every meeting, every analysis adequately, and find ways to share this information publicly or under demand.
Drawing recommendations, opportunities and challenges	This is the most relevant outcome from any NbS assessment against the IUCN GS. NbS practitioners should make sure that this is clear and that the knowledge gained is properly shared, in order to contribute to the global mainstreaming of NbS.

Reflections and Lessons from Standard Application

Key project characteristics affecting results:

- The scale of interventions was limited, as most NbS were experimental.
- The project was designed mainly to address water-related challenges; therefore, biodiversity and economic outcomes were difficult to measure or validate.
- Resource constraints (time, personnel, budget) further limited data collection.

Interpretation of results:

- The numeric scores from the Standard do not necessarily represent quality or performance, they are just a guidance to understand in which areas the NbS needed to work harder.
- The Standard served as a diagnostic and learning tool, identifying areas for improvement, strengths, and challenges.
- This process helped case studies strengthen their NbS projects, improving sustainability and broadening their benefits.

Actions to take

- Treat the Standard as a learning and dialogue tool, not just an evaluation checklist.
- Use the results to prioritize improvements (e.g. strengthen governance, improve biodiversity monitoring).
- Share reflections openly with stakeholders to build trust and attract replication opportunities.

Pitfalls to avoid

- Don't assume all criteria are equally easy; governance and trade-offs require more time and effort.
- Avoid treating the scoring as an end in itself; the real value lies in the discussion and improvement actions.
- Don't apply the Standard only once; repeat assessments during the NbS lifecycle to track progress.

Integrating the Standard into Regional NbS Policy

The IUCN Global Standard is more than a project tool; it is also a bridge between local practice and regional or national policy frameworks. By applying the Standard, NbS projects generate credible, comparable evidence that can inform decision-making, support funding applications, and foster replication across Mediterranean regions. NATMed demonstrated how embedding the Standard in replication and governance processes can strengthen the mainstreaming of NbS into policy.

The IUCN Standard can help Mediterranean regions move from isolated NbS projects to systemic policy integration, by making interventions credible, comparable, and replicable.

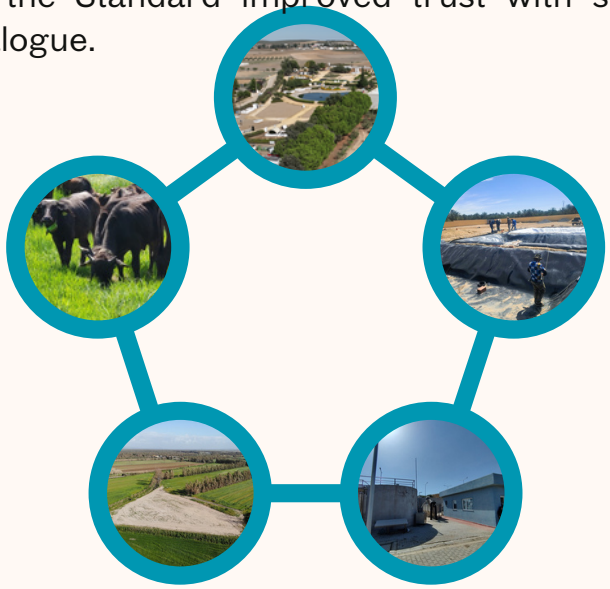
NATMed-based Experience

- Policymakers and funders need reliable evidence to support NbS. The Standard provides a universal quality benchmark.

- Integrating Standards-based evaluations into policy helps:

    - Ensure public funds go to credible NbS.
    - Align local interventions with EU and Mediterranean priorities (e.g. EU Biodiversity Strategy, Water Framework Directive, Green Deal).
    - Create comparability across regions, which is essential for replication and scaling.

- Linking project outcomes to the Standard improved trust with stakeholders and opened pathways for policy dialogue.



Integrating the Standard into Regional NbS Policy

NATMed Practices

- **Replication Plan:** Recommended using the Standard as a baseline for assessing transferability of NATMed solutions to new regions.
- **Governance Plan:** Highlighted that embedding the Standard in participatory processes makes governance more transparent and inclusive, a key policy enabler.
- **Guidelines:** Integrated Standard criteria into the technical framework, making it easier for cities to justify NbS in planning documents.
- **Case study application:** Spain and Italy pilots used Standard criteria to frame policy discussions with regional water authorities.

Actions to take

- Present your NbS outcomes in terms of Standard criteria when engaging with regional or EU policymakers.
- Use the Standard to prepare policy briefs or replication packages that are credible and comparable.
- Link self-assessment results with national climate adaptation and biodiversity strategies.

Pitfalls to Avoid

- Don't treat the Standard as only a technical tool; its value lies in credibility for decision-makers.
- Avoid overselling; the Standard supports policy, but it does not replace the need for local context-specific adaptation.
- Don't ignore governance aspects; many policies value equity and participation as much as technical performance.

Other Standards

While the IUCN Global Standard for NbS is the most widely recognized quality framework for Nature-based Solutions, it is not the only one. Several other international standards and frameworks complement it, focusing on environmental management, ecosystem services, or sustainability reporting, in fact, **the IUCN Global Standard acts as an overarching tool, within which other existing standards or tools can be applied**. For Mediterranean stakeholders, knowing these options helps in aligning NbS with broader policy and funding requirements. The IUCN Standard is the best starting point for NbS quality assurance, but awareness of ISO, UNEP, and EU standards strengthens the credibility and policy integration of Mediterranean NbS.

Examples of Other Standards

ISO Standards (International Organization for Standardization)

- ISO 14001 (Environmental Management Systems): widely used by municipalities and industries to demonstrate sustainable management.
- ISO 37101 (Sustainable Development in Communities): provides a framework for integrating sustainability into urban/regional planning.
- ***Relevance:*** Cities applying NATMed-type NbS can integrate them into ISO-based environmental management or sustainable city strategies.

UNEP NbS Guidelines

- Developed under the UN Environment Programme as part of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.
- Focuses on practical guidance for designing and scaling NbS with emphasis on ecosystem health and human well-being.
- ***Relevance:*** Offers complementary global policy alignment beyond IUCN (check UNEP,Guidelines for Using NbS for Sustainable Development, 2021).

European Standards (CEN)

- Ongoing work on technical standards for urban greening, water management, and ecosystem services assessment.
- ***Relevance:*** Will be important for Mediterranean cities aiming for EU compliance (CEN Strategic Advisory Body on Environment, SABE).

Ecosystem Services Valuation Frameworks

- Tools such as TEEB (The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity) or CICES (Common International Classification of Ecosystem Services).
- ***Relevance:*** Useful for economic feasibility studies of NbS; link to IUCN Criterion 4 (check www.teebweb.org)

Other Standards

NATMed-based Conclusions

- NbS projects may need to align with multiple standards to satisfy funders, certification schemes, or policy frameworks.
- The IUCN Standard ensures credibility at the project level, covering the entire spectrum of topics that an NbS should cover, while others (ISO, UNEP, CEN/CENELEC) provide technical, management, or sustainability benchmarks, sometimes for a specific field.
- NATMed worked with the IUCN Global Standard, but recognizes that linking it with other standards, policies or tools could strengthen replication and policy uptake.

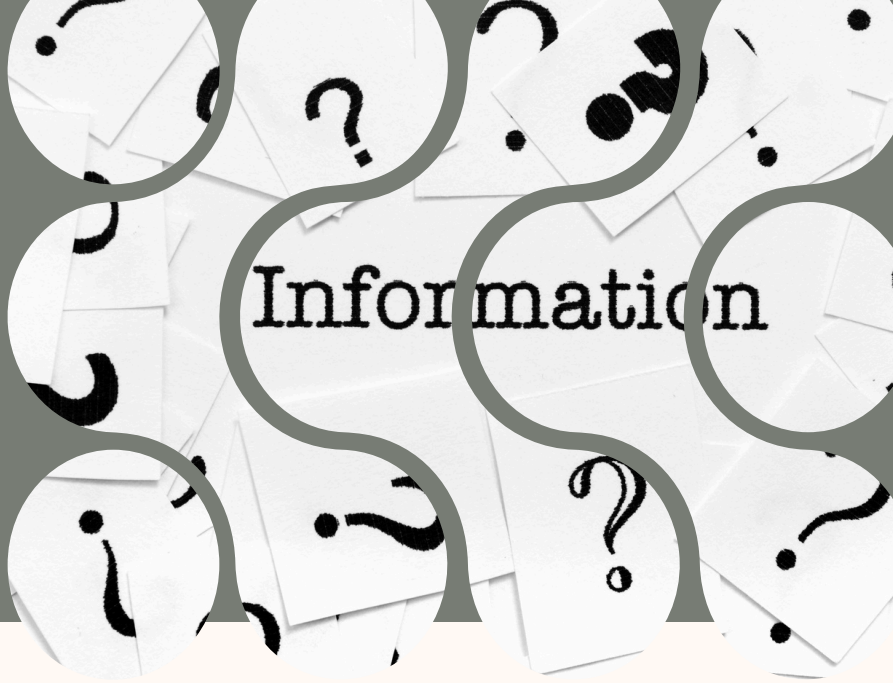
Actions to take

- Use the IUCN Standard as your core quality and guidance framework, but be aware of complementary standards (ISO, UNEP) when designing NbS in policy contexts; one does not exclude the others.
- When seeking funding, highlight how your NbS aligns with both IUCN and other widely recognized frameworks.
- Track developments in EU/CEN standards to anticipate future compliance requirements.

Pitfalls to Avoid

- Don't overwhelm stakeholders with too many standards; prioritize those relevant to your context.
- Avoid treating standards as competing; they are complementary tools.
- Don't ignore local regulations; international standards work best when paired with national or municipal policies.

Further Information



For deeper reading and practical guidance, see:

- D1.1 Site Diagnosis
- D2.2 Technical Specifications
- D3.2 Baseline and D3.3 Monitoring
- D4.2 Guidelines
- D5.1 Replication Plan & D5.2 Governance Plan
- IUCN (2020): Global Standard for Nature-based Solutions – full framework and self-assessment tool.

Quiz

Q1. True or False:

The IUCN Global Standard only measures environmental benefits of NbS.

- True
- False

Q2. What is the primary purpose of the self-assessment process in the IUCN Global Standard?

A) To score NbS projects for certification
B) To identify areas for improvement through guided reflection and evidence-based evaluation
C) To determine which NbS should receive EU funding
D) To rank NbS projects internationally

Q3. Which of the following is NOT one of the 8 criteria of the IUCN Standard?

A) Societal challenges
B) Biodiversity net gain
C) Economic feasibility
D) Marketing strategy

Q4. What does the "traffic light" system in the self-assessment tool represent?

A) Levels of policy priority
B) Levels of project funding
C) Scores indicating whether indicators are Insufficient, Partial, Adequate, or Strong
D) Phases of NbS implementation

Q5. True or False:

KPIs should be defined during the baseline phase to evaluate performance under the Standard.

- True
- False

1-False, 2-B, 3-D, 4-C, 5- True

Glossary

CEN European Committee for Standardization
CICES Common International Classification of Ecosystem Services
D Deliverable
FWC-NbS Full water Cycle Nature-based Solutions
ISO International Organization for Standardization
IUCN International Union for Conservation of Nature
KPI Key Performance Indicator
MAR Managed Aquifer Recharge
MedCoP Mediterranean Community of Practice
NATMedNature-based Solutions on existing infrastructures for resilient Water Management in the Mediterranean
NbS Nature-based Solutions
SDG Sustainable Development Goal
TEEB The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity
UNEP United Nations Environmental Programme

NATMed

Nature-based Solutions on existing infrastructures for resilient Water Management in the Mediterranean

This project has received funding from the European Union's PRIMA Research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No 2221.

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