

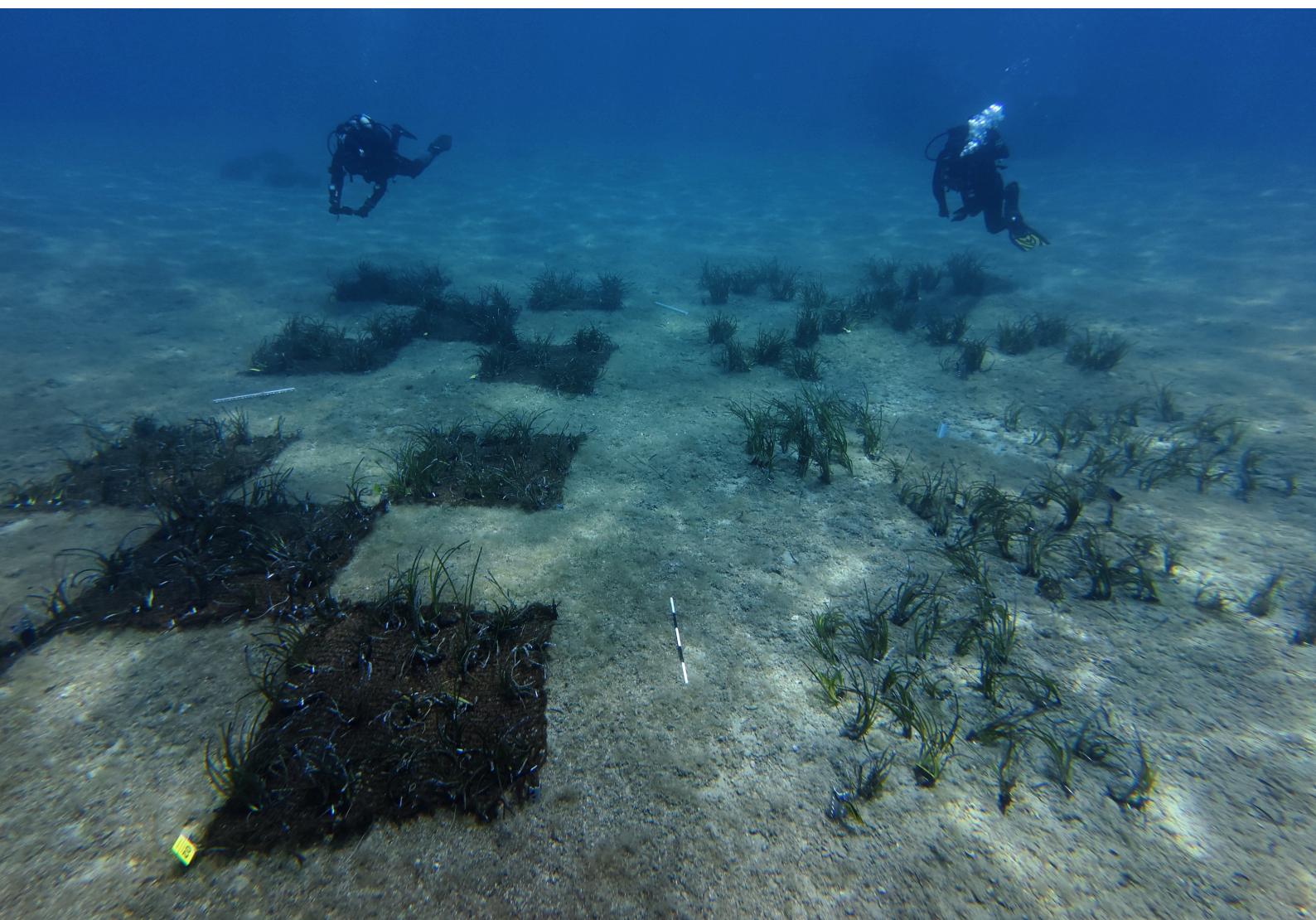


ARTEMIS

Interreg
Euro-MED



Co-funded by
the European Union



Scaling Financing for Seagrass Restoration in Europe

White paper

Jan 2026

Main authors: Bax Innovation

 **bax**

 EUROPEAN
SEAGRASS
RESTORATION
ALLIANCE

Executive summary

Seagrasses are marine flowering plants found in intertidal and sub-tidal zones across the globe, providing key ecosystem services ranging from blue carbon sequestration and storage to fisheries support and coastal protection. Europe is home to four native seagrass species: *Posidonia oceanica*, *Zostera marina*, *Zostera noltii*, and *Cymodocea nodosa*. Together, they represent an often overlooked yet critical asset for Europe's long-term sustainability, resilience and security.

With up to 72% of the EU non-financial corporations (NFCs) highly dependent on at least one ecosystem service (ECB, 2023), and up to 36% of the EU's economic value added (EVA) highly reliant on nature (JRC, 2025) the increasing risks posed by biodiversity loss and the collapse of ecosystems are consistently recognised as major global threats (WEF, 2025). These threats translate into tangible risks for investors and businesses: supply-chain disruption, rising insurance costs, asset devaluation, and regulatory and reputational exposure. Nature (including seagrass) conservation and restoration are therefore not only an environmental choice but a strategic imperative for a resilient and prosperous Europe.

We are at a pivotal moment. Interest from investors and policymakers is growing but much work remains in order to translate ambition and high expectations into real-world, large scale delivery and cash flows.

A confluence of factors creates an unprecedented window of opportunity for scaling seagrass restoration financing: the legally binding EU Nature Restoration Regulation, the EU's Roadmap towards nature credits, Europe's latest Knowledge and Innovation Community on Water (EIT Water), and (so far, mostly voluntary) nature positive momentum within the private sector.

Despite their importance, Europe's seagrass meadows remain heavily degraded and restoring them is still costly, time-intensive and technically complex. The scale of the challenge is compounded by a significant financing gap. Closing the biodiversity funding gap requires around €19 billion per year in the EU (EC, 2025), yet most current support comes from public sources. This raises a critical question:

How can seagrass recovery through active and passive restoration in Europe be financed at scale?

This white paper provides an overview of five key challenges and a suite of seven interconnected solution areas to respond to this question. Insights come from synthesising the input collected from over 40 professionals at ARTEMIS key events and consultations, including the 2nd European Seagrass Restoration Workshop and the UN Ocean Conference in 2025.

Five interlocking challenges still hold back large-scale investment: policy and governance gaps, hard-to-verify outcomes and data deficits, a perception barrier that keeps seagrass low on corporate and political agendas, a structural financing gap and a fragmented collaboration ecosystem with underdeveloped project pipelines.

Against this backdrop, one overarching message stands out: moving forward, **policy and governance are a make-or-break factor.** Clear regulation can drive structured market growth, ensuring both ecological and market integrity. Without coherent policy implementation, durable commitments and clear custodianship, even the most innovative finance mechanisms or technical advances will struggle to gain traction. At the same time, **coordinated piloting** is essential now.

Four key additional areas for progress are brought forward through this report: filling critical data gaps for an **investment-grade evidence base**, increasing the **readiness and cost-effectiveness of large scale restoration**, validating a suite of **financing mechanisms** and driving systemic shifts in **mindsets and perceptions**, while promoting multi-sectoral **upskilling**. Strong **multi-actor collaboration and dialogues** will be a key enabler of this process moving forward, allowing to bring together the many and very different players needed to bring together two separate worlds until now: the scientific and restoration community and potential financiers of seagrass restoration projects.

We are still at an early stage but the direction of travel is clear. By collectively addressing these points, we can move from scattered pilots to a mature, investable pipeline that delivers lasting ecological and socio-economic value. This report is offered as a contribution to that journey: a starting point for further dialogue, joint experimentation and, above all, collective action to place seagrass at the heart of Europe's nature-positive, climate-resilient future.

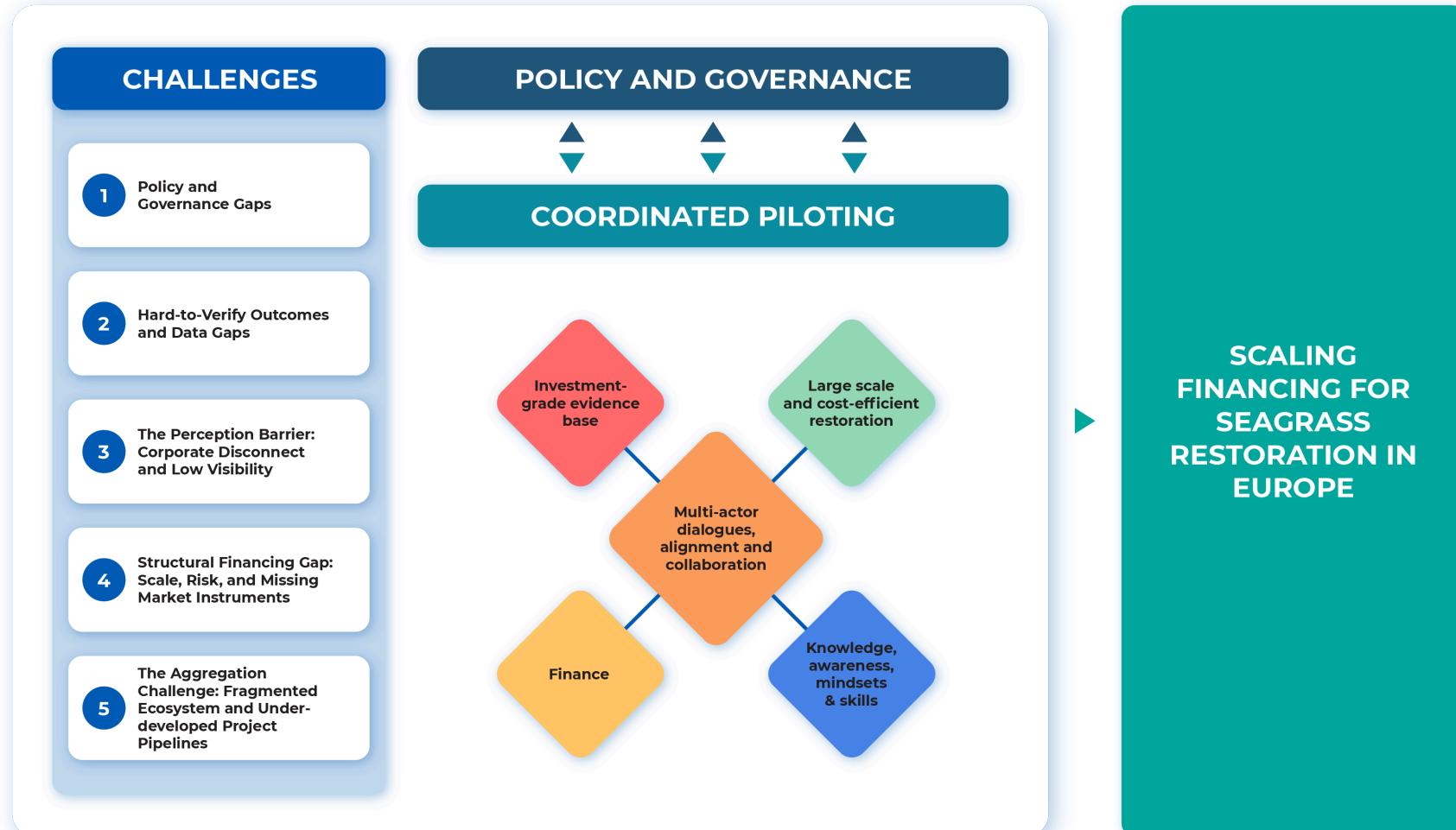
This report does not claim to be exhaustive. It reflects the insights shared by a broad cross-section of the European seagrass restoration community, and we acknowledge that specific issues and perspectives may not be fully captured.

Methodology

The insights from this report have been collated from the following sources:

- The 2nd European Seagrass Restoration Workshop in Arcachon (ESRW2, April, 2025): Direct input from over 40 participants at a collective intelligence workshop focused on financing seagrass restoration, organized by the ARTEMIS project. Participants jointly identified challenges and solutions across four pre-validated pathways:
 - Current funding mechanisms and opportunities are insufficient to meet the needs for large-scale and long-term seagrass restoration.
 - The private sector and its customer base have limited awareness of seagrass ecosystems and their importance, which hinders investments.
 - Seagrass restoration efforts are currently small in scale, which limits opportunities for large private-sector investors.
 - Inconsistent policies, regulations and financial incentives generate uncertainties about the long-term prospects of seagrass restoration projects.
- UN Ocean Conference 2025 | Peer-2-Peer Roundtable "Scaling Up Posidonia Conservation: Insights from Practice and Policy": The session highlighted enabling conditions for accelerating marine restoration including financing and was organized by the ARTEMIS project with contributions from the French Biodiversity Agency (OFB), Engie Foundation, Mediterranean Posidonia Network (MPN).
- Final curation by ARTEMIS project partner Bax Innovation.

Financing Seagrass Restoration at Scale: A Visual Framework of Key Challenges and Solutions



Five Challenges to Scaling Seagrass Restoration Finance

1. Policy and Governance Gaps

Fragmented and inconsistent governance

Inconsistent interpretation of the EU Nature Restoration Regulation (NRR), overlapping mandates between fisheries, spatial planning, and environmental authorities, and unclear seabed ownership or leasing rights create uncertainty for investors and project developers. This lack of coherence discourages cross-border collaboration and limits the formation of large-scale, multi-country restoration portfolios (European Commission, 2024; WEF, 2025a).

Short policy horizons and shifting priorities

Seagrass restoration operates on ecological timelines that span decades, yet most policy cycles and funding instruments remain bound to 3 to 5 year windows. Changing political priorities, combined with the politicization of environmental agendas can lead to discontinuity and weakened trust. This short-termism translates into policy volatility, deterring private and institutional investors who require predictable frameworks for long-term commitments.

Unclear responsibilities and weak accountability

Governance gaps persist between public and private actors. Unclear responsibilities between national agencies, regional authorities, and NGOs leads to inaction, duplication in some areas and neglect in others. The absence of defined custodianship frameworks - identifying who maintains, monitors, and reports on restored areas - undermines the durability of restoration outcomes.

2. Hard-to-Verify Outcomes and Data Gaps

Limited scalability and cost efficiency

Restoration techniques and their efficiency are still labor-intensive and site-specific, with current methods not being cost-effective enough for large-scale replanting. Without technological innovation, such as mechanized planting systems or automated monitoring, per-hectare costs remain high. This prevents scaling to the hundreds of hectares required for meaningful climate and biodiversity impact and financial sense.

Valuation and data interoperability gaps

Despite relevant advances in natural capital accounting frameworks, marine ecosystems remain poorly represented, data is hard to collect and valuation is complex. The lack of interoperable datasets - linking ecological, economic, and social indicators and the technical inconsistencies between them (e.g. different resolutions, timescales, and measurement systems such as grids or rasters) prevents integration of seagrass benefits (e.g. carbon sequestration, coastal defense) into corporate reporting and into investment models (Blue Economy Observatory, 2025).

Barriers to applied Research, Development and Innovation transfer

Academic institutions lead most restoration research, but translation into scalable industrial applications remains slow. Limited private-sector participation in seagrass-related R&D consortia as well as limited consultation of private sector needs by academia hinders innovation diffusion, resulting in a persistent gap between scientific capability and commercial readiness and scale.

3. The Perception Barrier: Corporate Disconnect and Low Visibility

Low societal and political visibility of seagrass

Seagrass ecosystems remain largely invisible to the general public's imagination, overshadowed by more visible ecosystems such as forests and terrestrial wetlands. Policymakers and citizens seldom connect seagrass decline with tangible consequences like reduced fishery yields, coastal erosion, or water quality degradation. This invisibility translates into weak public and political demand and underinvestment in restoration.

Fragmented understanding across sectors

Scientists, restoration practitioners, and financial institutions often speak different "languages." Ecological outcomes are expressed in extent, condition and flow metrics, while financiers seek quantifiable risk-return indicators. The absence of shared frameworks or "translation mechanisms" limits mutual understanding and cross-sector collaboration (WEF, 2025a).

Corporate blind spots

Few companies clearly identify and recognize their dependencies and impacts on marine ecosystems within materiality assessments or supply-chain risk analyses. When considered, seagrass is often perceived as a niche or experimental field, offering limited reputational or financial returns in comparison to terrestrial ecosystem restoration.

Education and capacity deficits

Formal education and professional training options in ocean finance, environmental economics, and marine ecosystem restoration are limited. This scarcity of professionals who can bridge ecological science, economics, and finance hinders mainstream adoption and perpetuates institutional inertia, leading to a shortage of expertise needed to deliver natural capital projects at scale.

Institutional and cultural misalignment

Trust deficits persist between communities of practice and the prospective market. Scientists are often skeptical of private-sector motives, fearing greenwashing, while investors frequently lack the tools and frameworks to recognise and capture the intrinsic value of nature beyond financial returns.

4. Structural Financing Gap: Scale, Risk, and Missing Market Instruments

Systemic underfunding and fragmented capital flows

Global spending on ocean protection remains around €1.1 billion annually—barely a tenth of what is needed to meet the 30×30 targets (Campaign for Nature, 2025). Within Europe, the biodiversity financing gap exceeds €65 billion per year (European Commission, 2025b). Funding for seagrass restoration is dominated by public and philanthropic sources, which are insufficient to achieve large-scale impact.

Small and non-bankable project profiles

Most seagrass initiatives are experimental pilots under 10 hectares, supported by research grants or local NGOs. Such projects lack the size, continuity, and standardized risk assessments that institutional investors require. Without aggregation or portfolio approaches, transaction costs remain high, and projects cannot access mainstream capital markets (WEF, 2025a).

High perceived risk and lack of de-risking instruments

Restoration outcomes depend more on multiple (external) ecological and climatic variables than more traditional capital investments, making them difficult to insure or guarantee. The absence of blended finance vehicles or risk-sharing mechanisms, leaves investors exposed, standing as core barriers across nature-based finance (WEF, 2025a).

Absence of clear revenue models

Seagrass restoration generates substantial public goods - carbon sequestration, flood protection, fisheries productivity - but current schemes make it hard to monetise these benefits. Without mature blue-carbon or biodiversity-credit methodologies, or other revenue-generating models beyond grants, projects struggle to generate predictable cash flows and scale. The absence of verifiable market instruments reinforces dependence on short-term grants.

Misaligned financial incentives

Conventional finance rewards short-term profit cycles, while ecological restoration operates over decades. Capital allocation frameworks do not yet price resilience, avoided losses, or natural-capital appreciation. Without integrating these into risk assessment, investment shcemes and reporting standards, nature-positive investments will remain marginal.

5. The Aggregation Challenge: Fragmented Ecosystem and Underdeveloped Project Pipelines

Fragmented stakeholder ecosystem

The seagrass restoration landscape is characterized by isolated pilot projects, fragmented data systems, and competition for limited funding. Coordination across the quadruple helix - government, academia, business, and civil society - remains limited, leading to inefficiencies and missed opportunities for collective action.

Lack of aggregation and investable pipelines

Few intermediaries exist to bundle projects into large-scale, diversified portfolios. The result is a 'missing middle': projects are too small for institutional finance yet too large for philanthropy. This gap mirrors a broader challenge identified by WEF (2025a); the absence of structured intermediaries (e.g. NGO's, Conservation funds) capable of translating ecological projects into investment-grade assets.

Lack of Portfolio-Level De-risking

Restoration projects are typically isolated, small-scale, and highly localized, making them susceptible to site-specific ecological and climatic risks. The absence of a regional seascape approach to aggregate projects prevents risk diversification and deters institutional investment that requires a minimum scale and reduced exposure.

Integrated Solutions for Scaling Seagrass Restoration Financing

Scaling seagrass restoration finance hinges on seven mutually reinforcing solution areas in response to the five challenges identified. **Policy and governance frameworks (1)** will provide the regulatory clarity, institutional stability, legitimacy and trust needed to unlock public and private capital, supported by **coordinated piloting (2)** to test and validate new models under real-world conditions, and to inform policy development and reform.

Progress across the remaining five pillars - **multi-actor collaboration (3), an investment-grade evidence base (4), large-scale and cost-efficient restoration (5), innovative finance mechanisms (6), and knowledge and skills development (7)** - must be pursued in parallel and through close coordination. Multi-actor collaboration must continue to allow the bridging of expertise and priorities across the quadruple helix; a strengthened evidence base will underpin both ecological credibility and investor confidence; and efforts to unlock restoration at scale will rely on cost reduction, aggregation, polishing innovative finance prototypes and serious cross-sectoral upskilling and knowledge development.

Policy & Governance

Lock in Multi-Year Commitments and Continuity

Marine restoration needs mechanisms that secure long-term commitment beyond political and financial cycles. Governments must adopt binding, multi-year frameworks that align restoration objectives with the longer timelines of ecological recovery, ensuring that progress endures beyond election terms.

National restoration plans mandated under the EU Nature Restoration Regulation offer a critical opportunity to institutionalize such continuity, embedding restoration obligations that transcend political turnover.

Equally important is the role of local communities and enduring coalitions of practice. Restoration efforts supported by coastal communities, local authorities, NGOs, and research networks often demonstrate impressive resilience to political change. Empowering these groups to co-design, monitor, and steward restoration sites builds ownership and continuity that can outlast electoral cycles, maintaining momentum even when political priorities shift, notwithstanding the clear link between political agendas and available budgets for specific action areas.

Promote policy coherence across realms

Improving coherence across policy and governance levels and clarifying responsibilities was identified as a critical must-have moving forward. Establishing horizontal and vertical coordination mechanisms linking EU, national, and regional policy implementation is essential in aligning restoration objectives across related policy areas such as fisheries, spatial planning, climate adaptation, and finance. Within this framework, clear role definitions and accountability mechanisms are essential. Multi-stakeholder agreements or stewardship compacts can formalize who maintains, monitors, and reports on restored areas, while shared governance platforms can facilitate coordination between public institutions, private actors, and local communities.

Stimulate market growth through policy and regulation

Clear regulation is essential to the creation of high-integrity markets. Without a strong policy foundation, voluntary efforts risk fragmentation, inconsistent standards, and limited investor confidence. Regulation can set the guardrails for accountability, while ensuring environmental integrity, and creating the predictability needed to attract long-term finance. Financial institutions and corporations welcome such regulatory clarity, seeing it as a prerequisite for credible market growth. As some participants pointed out, many are already preparing for forthcoming nature-related requirements and view well-designed regulation as essential to establishing a level playing field and to unlocking large-scale private investment.

The emerging EU Roadmap towards Nature Credits presents an opportunity to shape high-integrity, well-governed markets that channel investment into marine and coastal restoration. By embedding nature-positive outcomes within a clear regulatory framework, the EU and Member States can help ensure that market mechanisms evolve within defined environmental and social safeguards, avoiding the loss of credibility that unregulated markets often face. However, compliance mechanism similar to the EU's Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) should be considered. Recent deregulatory trends, such as the dilution of corporate disclosure requirements under the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), risk diluting investor engagement in nature markets and compromising progress towards the EU's environmental goals.

Governments can play a decisive role by promoting integrated nature reporting, in line with international reporting frameworks, such as those by the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD).

Current policy frameworks support seagrass restoration, but we now need clear investment guidelines that align with conservation needs. To produce tangible results, we need a transparent set of rules, robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks and practical tools that enable private sector investment in seagrass conservation and restoration. These mechanisms should have measurable ecological outcomes and benefit both practitioners and companies while informing evidence-based policy making.

Arnaud Terrisse

Plan Bleu

Accelerate the development of national or regional codes for seagrass restoration & financing

Developing standardised codes for seagrass restoration will help establish credible methodologies for project design, measurement, and verification - essential for unlocking investment at scale. National or regional codes can provide clear guidance on ecological baselines, monitoring requirements, and social safeguards, ensuring that projects meet consistent quality standards.

Such codes can ultimately serve as trusted reference points for financiers, certification bodies, and restoration practitioners, signalling environmental integrity and creating a transparent pathway for integrating seagrass restoration into mainstream climate and biodiversity finance. Seagrass can learn from other use cases, such as efforts to develop a UK Seagrass Code, or the UK's Peatland Code.

Explore alternative legal mechanisms

Innovative legal frameworks can strengthen long-term stewardship and open new pathways for financing marine restoration. While not yet formally recognised in most jurisdictions, treating seagrass and other coastal ecosystems as critical infrastructure offers a powerful framework for integrating ecosystem services into national resilience planning and public finance systems.

Emerging legal models also offer potential. The Mar Menor lagoon in Spain, Europe's first ecosystem to be granted legal personhood, illustrates how legal recognition can elevate the protection and governance of natural assets. While complex to implement, such frameworks can clarify custodianship, embed ecological rights, and encourage co-management between governments, local communities, and financial actors.

Coordinated piloting

The World Economic Forum's latest report "Finance Solutions for Nature: Pathways to Returns and Outcomes" identifies 10 priority solutions to mobilise finance for nature, ranging from nature credits and debt-for-nature swaps, to sustainability-linked loans and thematic bonds. Piloting early stage financing solutions linked to seagrass restoration and conservation actions is key to validate and scale them.

A portfolio of 10-15 high-profile demonstration projects across Europe

could generate practical lessons on governance, financing, monitoring, and community engagement. These pilots should make use of the instruments foreseen under the upcoming Multiannual Financing Framework for 2028-2034, including those promoted through the EU Roadmap towards Nature Credits.

On-the-ground results resulting from pilots should inform the refinement of policies, regulatory measures, and funding models. Knowledge-sharing platforms and alliances such as ESRA, the EU Restoration Knowledge Hub, Mission Ocean and Waters communities, the Sustainable Blue Economy Partnership, and Biodiversa+ can provide channels for exchange, peer learning, and alignment between practitioners and policymakers.

Multi-actor dialogues, alignment and collaboration

As depicted in Figure 1, multi-actor collaboration was identified as a key central piece to articulate a wider combination of action areas that are needed to scale seagrass restoration financing.

Effectively bringing together niche sets of expertise and resources from across the quadruple helix (e.g. restoration science, ecology, scientific monitoring, project finance, crediting, policy). Each actor brings distinct knowledge, priorities, and tempos that must be bridged to break silos and ensure approaches that are simultaneously ecologically sound, financially viable, and enduring. This type of multi-stakeholder and multidisciplinary collaboration is key to advance an agenda that no single actor could achieve alone.

The workshops underscored the need for an institutionalised multi-actor platform - a central coordination and dialogue mechanism that fosters alignment, shared learning, and joint action across sectors and geographies. Such a platform could function as an umbrella organisation connecting initiatives, avoiding duplication, and strengthening coherence.

In my experience, real progress is made when all sectors collaborate to co-create solutions, which is both more inclusive and more effective. Co-creation is powerful because it transcends the confines of individual sectoral approaches. By adopting a more holistic and collaborative approach to finding solutions, we can benefit from the collective intelligence, skills and resources of everyone involved.

Richard J. Lilley

European Seagrass Restoration Alliance (ESRA)

Investment-grade evidence base

Map priority and suitable locations

Where should investments actually go? As the demand for investable restoration portfolios builds up, it is crucial that the offer of restoration projects follows suit. Priority (i.e. relevance) and suitable (i.e. highest chances of success) areas for seagrass restoration must be clearly mapped and showcased through, for example, online marketplaces. Building on existing spatial data and national marine plans, competent government agencies should lead the identification and validation of opportunity areas in collaboration with academia and local actors. These should ideally be large in scale in order to fit into investors' minimum ticket sizes and portfolio requirements. Critically, pressures must be removed before any kind of intervention, following the conservation hierarchy.

Fill investment-oriented knowledge gaps

This includes generating robust data on the ecological, economic, and social impacts of restoration, while also identifying and assessing entry points of seagrass restoration values within corporate value chains and investment options. This was consistently identified as a must-have in creating tangible value propositions. The seagrass community should draw on existing frameworks such as LEAP (Locate, Evaluate, Assess, Prepare) developed by the Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) to guide this process. Piloting with ocean-dependent sectors - such as fisheries, tourism, and offshore energy - will be essential to demonstrate practical applications and investment relevance (or not).

A coordinated, multi-disciplinary research effort should further prioritise data that enables investors and project developers to assess costs, benefits, and risks with confidence, including quantifying co-benefits for local communities, fisheries, and biodiversity.

When investors weigh their options, seagrass restoration is most likely not on the top of their list. Or on their list altogether. Realistically they have no idea what seagrass is. The key is to showcase the full spectrum of socio-economic benefits that seagrass delivers. Achieving this requires a shared language between scientists and investors. That's where MRV comes in by establishing clear metrics and indicators that both sides can understand, debate, discuss, and ultimately agree upon.

Martin Georgiev
Denkstatt EY

Strengthen MRV systems in line with investor requirements

Developing robust Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) systems aligned with investor expectations is critical to build confidence and credibility in seagrass restoration finance. These systems should be co-designed with financial actors and independent assurance providers to ensure consistency with ESG disclosure standards, due diligence processes, and impact reporting frameworks.

Leveraging existing sustainability frameworks and crediting methodologies for seagrass-based blue carbon and biodiversity projects (e.g. Verra's VM0033 or Plan Vivo's Biodiversity Standard) can guide these developments.

Large-scale and cost-efficient restoration

Project aggregation for seascape-level impact and enhanced bankability

One of the most promising avenues to scale seagrass restoration finance identified is the aggregation of restoration sites across regions. By developing seascape-level projects that integrate multiple coastal ecosystems, stakeholders can demonstrate larger-scale results that are compelling to wider audiences. This approach enables the combination of ecosystem services -such as biodiversity, water purification, and carbon sequestration - thereby diversifying revenue streams and improving risk profiles for investors.

Regional collaboration can also facilitate the sharing of data, methodologies, and resources, creating consistency and efficiency across individual projects.

Marine habitats are highly interconnected and under cumulative and intensifying pressures, meaning we can no longer afford to restore sites in isolation. Through the Solent Seascape Project, we recognise that planning, monitoring and investing at scale enables coordinated restoration efforts that are resilient, cost-effective and capable of reversing long-term trends of decline.

Rosalie Wright
Blue Marine Foundation

Further develop remote and autonomous restoration systems

High costs of seagrass restoration projects is still a major bottleneck to scaling. This is especially true for subtidal seagrass species, which require action by specialised divers. To achieve large-scale, cost-effective restoration, the development of remote and autonomous technologies will be key. Innovations such as automated seeding, underwater drones, and remote monitoring platforms can dramatically reduce labor and logistical costs.

Demonstration pilots can showcase how automation reduces per-hectare costs and accelerates restoration timelines, paving the way for large-scale, “industrial-like” implementation.

Develop a robust supply chain for large-scale action

Scaling seagrass restoration requires the establishment of regionally integrated supply chains that can consistently provide the biological materials, logistical support, and skilled workforce needed for larger-scale operations. These supply chains must encompass the production and transport of key restoration inputs, such as seagrass shoots, seedlings, and genetic material, alongside the necessary infrastructure for collection, storage, and distribution.

Currently, this infrastructure is largely absent and will need to be developed from the ground up. Key elements of this supply chain include nurseries, scientific stations, transport logistics, and skilled labor forces. Building this capacity at a regional level will be essential to ensure consistent, scalable delivery across diverse restoration sites at the same time.

Equally important are genetic considerations. Ensuring that restoration efforts maintain and enhance genetic diversity is crucial to the long-term health and resilience of seagrass meadows. Genetic material used in restoration must be carefully sourced and adapted to local environmental conditions, preventing the risks associated with outbreeding depression or reduced adaptability to stressors.

Refine restoration knowledge to enhance long-term success

Scaling restoration must be matched by a continuous improvement of knowledge to ensure the durability and ecological integrity of restored meadows. This includes refining genetic diversity considerations, and planting techniques, improving understanding on local ecological thresholds, and strengthening community engagement and stewardship models that underpin long-term maintenance. Multi-actor platforms should help here by providing one-stop-shops for the latest knowledge, evidence and upskilling opportunities.

Validate key investment drivers

A critical step toward attracting sustainable (i.e. at scale and long-term) finance for seagrass restoration is validating what economic, ecological, and social drivers are suitable to define a real case for private or public investment. This includes identifying how restoration can contribute to corporate value creation through risk reduction, supply chain resilience, and enhanced ESG performance, as well as broader societal benefits.

Innovative Finance Mechanisms

Validate key investment drivers

A critical step toward attracting sustainable finance for seagrass restoration is validating what economic, ecological, and social drivers are suitable to define a real case for private or public investment. This includes identifying how restoration can contribute to corporate value creation through risk reduction, supply chain resilience, and enhanced ESG performance, as well as broader societal benefits.

Test and scale financial prototypes

Building on global best practice, the seagrass community should continue actively testing, validating and then scaling financial prototypes. This includes nature credits, sustainability-linked loans, bonds and direct agreements with corporates as part of nature-positive or beyond value chain mitigation project portfolios. The seagrass restoration community should also explore the development of special purpose vehicles (SPVs) and other legal structures that can manage risk, enable blended finance, and combine public grants with private investment.

Pilots should focus on creating bankable products with sustainable business models that align ecological realities with investor expectations, recognising that value may not always derive from carbon alone, but from a mix of biodiversity, blue carbon, and coastal protection outcomes. Testing and iterating these models in collaboration with interested buyers, sellers, financial institutions, and philanthropic funders will help align the supply of restoration projects with market demand, providing valuable live market insights to guide scaling efforts.

Pool public and private resources

To move from isolated initiatives to a coordinated investment ecosystem, specific funding mechanisms pooling public, private, and philanthropic capital should be established to de-risk early investments. Over time, pooled mechanisms could evolve into dedicated restoration finance facilities, directly supporting pipeline development and implementation at scale. The upcoming Multiannual Financial Framework for the 2028-2034 period and the implementation of the EU's Roadmap towards Nature Credits offer a unique opportunity in this sense and should consider including mechanisms such as the European Investment Bank's Natural Capital Finance Facility (NCFF), which focused on urban settings.

*ARTEMIS is contributing to the need for validated models to finance seagrass restoration by developing a biodiversity and blue carbon credit scheme for *Posidonia oceanica* in the Mediterranean. RDI funding is proving to be essential in de-risking early-stage pilots like our project's before scaling action to new locations.*

Pere Giralt
Bax Innovation

Knowledge, Awareness, Mindsets and Skills

Mainstreaming concepts and definitions

Bridging communication gaps between science, policy, and finance starts with extending seagrass literacy. A common language grounded in transparent definitions, metrics, and methodologies is needed to align expectations between public authorities, industry, NGOs, and academia. Workshop participants emphasised that such clarity is essential to overcome persistent fragmentation in how restoration value and outcomes are framed. They called for co-design processes that bring together actors from across the quadruple helix to establish shared terminology, operational standards, and delivery timelines.

Foster a holistic appreciation for seagrass

The workshop discussions made clear that seagrass restoration must be understood and communicated as an integrated socio-ecological and economic opportunity, not solely an environmental activity. Participants stressed the importance of emphasising multiple co-benefits including carbon sequestration, biodiversity enhancement, fisheries productivity, tourism potential, and community well-being.

A systems perspective was repeatedly raised as crucial: connecting land-based pressures such as agricultural runoff or coastal development with marine ecosystem health, and showing how seagrass restoration contributes back to climate resilience, food security, and sustainable livelihoods.

Awareness must go beyond individual behaviour change to a shared societal responsibility for long-term stewardship of the sea. For Posidonia, that means a narrative rooted in science and Mediterranean culture that makes an often-invisible habitat visible in public consciousness and decision-making.

Marcial Bardolet

Government of the Balearic Islands

Drive upskilling across the quadruple helix

A strong consensus emerged around the need to invest in skills, training, and institutional capacity to support the scaling of restoration. Participants proposed mapping skills gaps across the EU and build technical, financial, and governance capabilities across all stakeholder groups.

Priority training areas include marine ecology and restoration science, finance and investment-readiness, MRV and data systems, policy and permitting, and community engagement. Several contributors proposed creating regional practitioner networks or “labs” to facilitate shared learning, standardisation, and the translation of research into practice.

Participants also encouraged the development of vocational and postgraduate programmes dedicated to marine natural capital and blue restoration finance, while the private sector could play a role in offering placements or exchange opportunities that combine ecological and commercial skillsets. Professional accreditation, and youth engagement were seen as critical to attract and retain new talent in the sector.

References

Campaign for Nature (2025) Mind the Gap: Financing Ocean Protection. Campaign for Nature.

European Central Bank (2023) Living in a world of disappearing nature: physical risk and the implications for financial stability. Occasional Paper Series. doi:10.2866/670314

European Commission (2020) EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030. Brussels: European Commission.

European Commission (2021) EU Climate Law (Regulation (EU) 2021/1119). Brussels: European Commission.

European Commission (2024) Nature Restoration Law Adopted by Council (Press Release IP/24/3886). Brussels: European Commission.

European Commission (2025a) EU Blue Economy Report 2025. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

European Commission (2025b) Towards an EU Roadmap for Nature Credits. COM(2025) 349 final. Brussels: European Commission.

European Environment Agency (EEA) (2024) Financing Nature as a Solution. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

HIRSCHBUEHL, D., PETRACCO, M., NEUVILLE, A. and SANCHEZ ARJONA, I. (2025) The EU economy's dependency on nature. In: VASILAKOPOULOS, P. (ed.) European Commission, Ispra. JRC140003.

Ocean Panel (2022) Ocean Finance: Financing the Transition to a Sustainable Ocean Economy. Ocean Panel Secretariat.

OECD (2024) The Blue Economy in Cities and Regions: A Territorial Approach. OECD Urban Studies. OECD Publishing, Paris.
<https://doi.org/10.1787/bd929b7d-en>

Randone, M. et al. (2025) Safeguarding Mediterranean seagrass Blue Forests from anchoring damage. WWF Mediterranean Marine Initiative (MMI).

Reuters (2025) 'UN talks delivered a drop in ocean finance; policy change needed to save sea', Reuters, 25 June.

UNEP (2022) Blue Carbon Ecosystems: Opportunities for Climate Action. Nairobi: United Nations Environment Programme.

Unsworth, R.K.F. et al. (2022) 'A changing climate for seagrass restoration', People and Nature, 4(2), pp. 197–210.

World Economic Forum (2025) The Global Risks Report 2025. 20th Edition. Geneva: World Economic Forum.

World Economic Forum (2025a) Finance Solutions for Nature. Geneva: World Economic Forum.

World Economic Forum & Oliver Wyman (2025) Nature Positive: Corporate Assessment Guide for Financial Institutions. Geneva: World Economic Forum.



ARTEMIS

Interreg
Euro-MED



Co-funded by
the European Union

For more information, contact:



Lisa Wiatschka

l.wiatschka@baxcompany.com

Pere Giralt

p.giralt@baxcompany.com

Ramon Scholl

r.scholl@baxcompany.com

Design

Mathis Fay

m.fay@baxcompany.com

Lead Partner



Arnaud Terrisse

aterrisse@planbleu.org

Alice Wittevrongel

awittevrongel@planbleu.org

With support from



Govern de les Illes Balears

