



## Bee Landscape Road Map

Developing a Bee Landscape together

# What can businesses do?

Social network

Inspiration & Learning

Ecological network

Costs & Added value

*This brochure offers businesses more information on how they can support the habitat and populations of pollinating insects and why it is crucial to collaborate with other parties. The brochure is an integral part of the Bee Landscape Road Map and describes success factors for realising a bee landscape.*

### **Alarming decrease in wild pollinators, many species endangered**

Our wild pollinating insect populations (wild bees, hoverflies, and butterflies) are in distress. There are around 20,000 different species of wild bees worldwide, of which around 2000 species live in Europe! A global study by IPBES from 2016 showed that wild pollinators have declined in occurrence and diversity at local and regional scales in North West Europe and North America. In Europe for example, 9 per cent of the bee and butterfly species are endangered and 37 per cent of the bee

populations and 31 per cent of the butterfly populations are declining.

Many people take initiatives to help these insects but local measures are not enough. Cohesive regional measures are vital to creating a so-called bee landscape – an area where many wild pollinator species can find sustainable habitats.

Businesses can contribute significantly to such a bee landscape, for example by adding flower borders on and around their premises.

### **Collaboration increases effectiveness**

Nobody can change the nature of a bee landscape single-handedly. For that, you need to collaborate. Public authorities, businesses, and civic organisations can learn from each other and coordinate measures to make them cohesive. This will certainly increase the impact on pollinators.

### **Greenery to foster sustainability and climate adaptation**

Many businesses have sustainability as one of their CSR focal points, and public authorities and certification institutes increase the requirements in this area. However, most measures implemented by businesses focus on sustainable energy and the overall environment. Adding greenery is often overlooked.

Besides that, the changing climate leads to certain challenges businesses may have to deal with, such as battling heat, flooding, and pest infestations (e.g. the oak processionary caterpillar).

By creating greener business sites and buildings, companies can make their efforts regarding sustainability visible to all and they support climate change-oriented adjustments.

**Businesses also benefit from flower-rich greenery:**

- Visitors and residents appreciate a green and more flowering commercial/industrial estate;
- It offers a visible way of showing the public and employees that you care about nature inclusivity and socially responsible entrepreneurship.

- The site becomes more attractive to go for a short walk during breaks: reducing absenteeism;
- Fewer bothersome insect infestations;
- Greenery lowers the temperature and improves water drainage;
- Collaborations with other organisations lead to new opportunities.

'A **Connected Landscape**' is a ribbon of flower borders with, here and there, nesting places in e.g. stepping stones, and which connects different pollinator 'bed & breakfast' areas.

Small, flower-rich '**Bee Fuel Stations**' are spots where pollinators can quite literally refuel (forage: pollen and nectar) as they look for a new habitat.



A '**Bee landscape**' stimulates a dense and diverse pollinating insect population. It includes at least one bed & breakfast area. A bee landscape is also a collaborative partnership of multiple parties.

A '**Bed & Breakfast area**' is what we call a robust and more or less connected living environment where a broad range of pollinating insect species can live sustainably.

**How can businesses help pollinators?**

**Pollinators enhance the public space**

Businesses can improve pollinator habitats in various ways, even by taking small and affordable measures:

- **Replace outdoor tiled, tarmacked, and gravelled areas with colourful greenery**  
This creates space for flowers to grow, providing food and shelter for pollinators. Apart from that, it livens up the outdoor space, reduces the temperature during hot weather (heat stress), and improves water drainage.
- **Replace (expensive) smooth lawns with (cheaper) flower-rich grass**  
A cut green lawn offers no food for wild pollinators. Maintenance is expensive as it needs mowing more than 10 times per year. By replacing (part of) the lawn with flower-

rich grass, the area only needs mowing a few times per year, which is cheaper and pollinators will be happy.

- **Become a partner in a bee landscape or join a local bee initiative**  
Increase the return on your efforts and impact on the landscape: For example, by collaborating with your neighbouring organisations in a bee landscape.
- **Choose planting that provides nectar and pollen**  
Many plants and trees planted in gardens don't offer any food for pollinators. Get advice from a landscaping/gardening expert and choose bee-friendly planting and seeds.
- **Make your building nature-inclusive**  
Create green and herb-rich roofs. Grow indigenous climbing plants and espaliers against walls. They provide food and nesting spots for wild pollinators. A bee hotel against a south-facing wall or on the roof offers additional nesting options.



Heineken Zoeterwoude (photo: Fabrice Ottburg)

## Concrete activities

The Bee Landscape Road Map describes success factors for the development of a bee landscape. One of the key factors in this is ensuring balanced development of the four 'returns' a bee landscape offers. Businesses may consider the activities listed below:

### Social network

- Joining a bee landscape as site owner, inspirer, coordinator/director, or financial backer;
- Getting informed about the policies affecting pollinators of public authorities and nearby businesses and organisations;
- Finding a person who is passionate about helping pollinators within your organisation or elsewhere to have a bigger impact together.

### Inspiration & Learning

- Organising field trips, lectures, and knowledge exchange;
- Promoting the ambitions and initiatives via websites, newsletters, and social media;
- Making other (preferably local) businesses enthusiastic about joining initiatives.



Red and white clover (photo: Greg Larcombe)

### Example

#### Optical fibre network also becomes a pollinator habitat network

The company E-Fiber installed optical fibre networks in many of the Dutch municipalities. One of the company's goals is sustainable and responsible entrepreneurship. Outside built-up areas, trenches are dug in road verges into which the optical fibre cables are placed. After the installation, the replaced soil is always seeded with grass.

In 2020, the installation of the new optical fibre network was scheduled for several municipalities in West-Brabant in The Netherlands. As it happened, many of the public authorities, businesses, and organisations had joined hands in the West-Brabant Bee Landscape. Naturally, the network partners saw a golden opportunity: seeding the refilled road verges with flowering herbs instead of regular grass seed would add long ribbons of forage habitats for pollinators!

The bee landscape network quickly contacted E-Fiber and the company responded very enthusiastically. E-Fiber joined the bee landscape and instantly took action. It changed its own policy and conditions, so now they seed road verges with a mix of red and white clover wherever they work. This choice was perfect because these indigenous herbs offer lots of food for wild pollinators, the seeds can be sown all year round, and clovers also prevent the growth of creeping thistles.

The result: a food habitat ribbon for pollinating insects of no less than 500 km by 2021! And for 2022, another 500 km of flower-rich road verges are scheduled.

This great example shows how a new optical fibre network for residents also becomes a food habitat network for wild bees and other pollinators. A wonderful win-win situation at hardly any additional costs!

### Ecological Network

- Enabling experiments and example projects at your premises and promoting positive results;
- Monitoring pollinators and the measures that you take;
- Creating an opportunity map for pollinator measures;
- Developing an action and execution plan for pollinators together with the social network;
- Ensuring the diversity of measures: more food as well as more nesting options for pollinators.

### Costs & Added Value

- Making someone within the organisation available for participating in a bee landscape or local bee initiative;
- Enabling measures for pollinators through, e.g., funding or providing space on site;
- Evaluating the costs and added value for pollinators. Also, consider the effect a greener environment has on absenteeism and the company's overall appearance.

### How to start?

A Bee Landscape Road Map and an accompanying manual have been developed for businesses wishing to get started on developing a bee landscape.



Bee hotel

These tools can help new bee landscapes in the process of building up an effective social network and developing a sustainable landscape where pollinators can thrive. For existing bee landscapes and bee initiatives, these tools can help to assess and improve the development progress.

Over the past years, a lot of knowledge on pollinators has also been collected and made available for people and organisations wishing to help improve the living conditions for bees and other pollinators:

<https://ipbes.net/assessment-reports/pollinators>

The assessment report of the intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services on pollinators, pollination and food production. S.G. Potts, V. L. Imperatriz-Fonseca, and Ngo H. T. (eds.).

<https://www.fao.org/pollination/en>  
FAO's Global Action on Pollination Services for Sustainable Agriculture

<https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/display/EUPKH/EU+Pollinator+Information+Hive>  
EU pollinator Information hive

Interesting subpages:

<https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/display/EUPKH/Actions+in+my+country>

Member States' initiatives to support wild pollinator populations

<https://wikis.ec.europa.eu/display/EUPKH/Get+involved>

Get involved: a series of technical guidance with recommendations for action for citizens, invasive alien species managers, local authorities and cities, farmers, businesses and public authorities.



## Bee Landscape Road Map

### Colophon

The Bee Landscape Road Map Manual is part of the 'Supporting Pollinators' toolbox, developed by [www.kennisimpulsbestuivers.nl](http://www.kennisimpulsbestuivers.nl). This research programme is funded by the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, and executed by Wageningen Environmental Research, in cooperation with Naturalis Biodiversity Center en EIS Kenniscentrum Insecten.

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Visit [BeeLandscape.org](http://BeeLandscape.org)

### Accompanying knowledge products

- Bee Landscape Road Map
- Bee Landscape Road Map Manual
- 4 Brochures Developing a bee landscape together, directed at:
  - Farmers
  - Businesses
  - Citizen/civic initiatives
  - Regional authorities

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