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NICHES Final Newsletter, April 2025

Three productive years have passed, marking the end of the NICHES duration.

The project team has been showcasing that effective stormwater management is essential for building urban resilience in the face of growing climate challenges. Throughout its course, the NICHES project has explored innovative approaches, such as Nature-Based Solutions, to strengthen urban water systems and promote ecological sustainability.

The project officially concluded with a successful **international conference,** bringing together partners, experts, and stakeholders to reflect on key insights and outcomes. It was a fitting finale to a collaborative effort dedicated to shaping more resilient and sustainable cities.

In case you missed our recent achievements, within this newsletter, you will learn more about the NICHES final international conference, the launch of our **policy brief** series, updated **factsheets**, as well as latest **publications**.

NICHES Final Conference

Future of Nature-Based Solutions in Cities

On 24 March 2025, over 50 experts from across Europe and beyond came together for the international online conference ***"Bringing Forward Nature-Based Solutions in Major Cities."*** As the final event of the EU-funded NICHES project, the conference offered a dynamic platform for scientists, policymakers, urban planners, and community leaders to explore how Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) can transform cities into more resilient, biodiverse, and livable spaces.

The conference concluded with a strong call to action: protect what remains, plan wisely, and co-create nature-based futures that work for people, for nature, and for cities.

Did you miss the NICHES Conference? Take a moment to watch the session recordings.

Watch the recordings

The event featured a series of insightful presentations and discussions spanning ecological, hydrological, socio-economic, and governance dimensions of NBS. From case studies in Rotterdam and Barcelona to theoretical frameworks and decision-support tools, speakers highlighted both the challenges and opportunities in implementing NBS at scale. Keynote speakers **Kati Vierikko** (SYKE) and **Niki Frantzeskaki** (Utrecht University) emphasised the importance of biodiversity-friendly water management and inclusive governance frameworks to bridge sectoral divides and promote long-term urban sustainability.

These insights were further discussed in our exciting panel discussions in session 1 with **Dagmar Haase** (Humboldt University), **Nikolai Friberg** (Aarhus University) and **Isabel Seifert-Dähnn** (NIVA), as well as in session 2 with **David Maddox** (The Nature of Cities),

Chantal van Ham (Commonland), **Tom Wild** (University of Sheffield) and **Rebecca Noebel** (SenMVKU Berlin).

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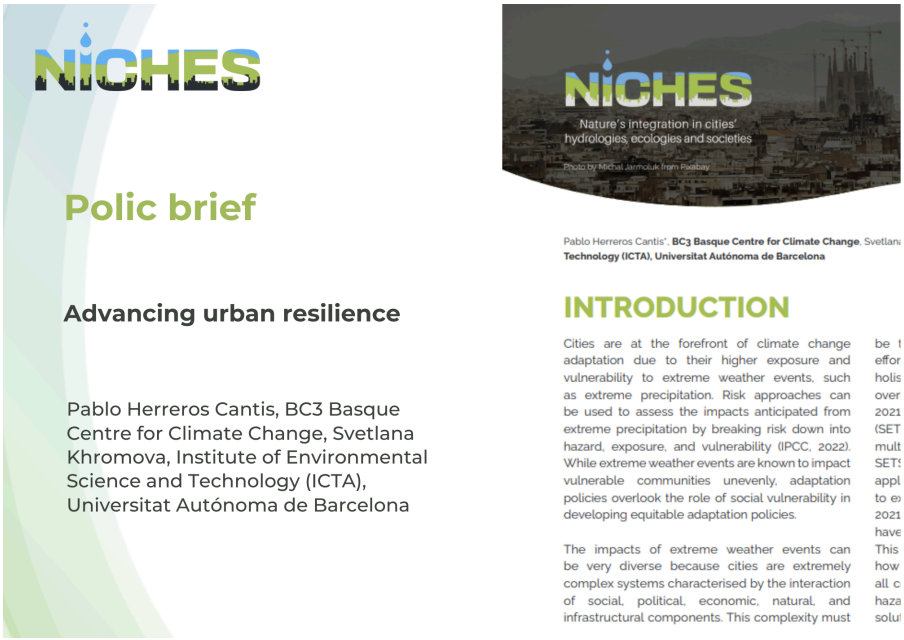
The full set of materials from the NICHES International Conference, including the summary and presentations, is available on our website.

To the materials

Should you find the results from the conference useful, you are welcome to share them within your networks and help us increase our impact!

NICHES releases it's first policy brief



The NICHES project has released its first **policy brief**, presenting key practices for advancing urban resilience. This brief results from a joint collaboration between Svetlana Khromova from the Institute of Environmental Science and Technology (ICTA), Universitat Autónoma de Barcelona, and Pablo Herreros Cantis of the BC3 Basque Centre for Climate Change.

Two more policy briefs are currently in development, with the next one exploring the governance approaches to tackle combined sewer overflows in urban water systems.

To the policy brief

The NICHES fact sheets

The NICHES project has developed a series of fact sheets showcasing the urban water management systems in each of its case study cities. These national fact sheets highlight how the project supports improvements in local water systems. To enhance accessibility and engagement, all materials are available in both English and the respective local language.

Explore the fact sheets

Recent publications

A social-ecological-technological vulnerability approach for assessing urban hydrological risks

We're excited to share that the first **article** from Svetlana Khromova's PhD research, conducted within the framework of the NICHES project, has been published in *Ecological Indicators* journal.

The paper, titled ***"A social-ecological-technological vulnerability approach for assessing urban hydrological risks,"*** presents the spatial analysis developed as part of the NICHES vulnerability assessment, with Barcelona serving as the main case study. It introduces an integrated framework that combines social, ecological, and technological dimensions to better understand urban vulnerability to hydrological risks.

To the paper

Don't miss a beat!

The project might have ended, but our channels remain active and we will continue sharing important updates.

Subscribe to the NICHES social media channels!

NICHES Project

This project was funded through the 2020-2021 Biodiversa and Water JPI joint call for research proposals, under the BiodivRestore ERA-Net COFUND programme, and with the funding organisations: German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, Agencia Estatal de Investigación, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality of the Netherlands.