

Context & Challenges

The project in the Spessart region implements strategic measures to combat biodiversity loss and address critical hydrological challenges in Hesse and Bavaria, Germany: water scarcity and flooding. By creating a network of wetland habitats, including ponds, wet meadows, and floodplains. The project simultaneously pursues objectives in the areas of water management, biodiversity, resilience, and climate protection. The area is part of the main river basin.

Project objectives

- Groundwater recharge and stabilization of water availability by slowing runoff,
- Reduction of flood risk by increasing water retention capacity and reducing peak runoff volumes,
- Improvement of water quality through natural filtration of pollutants,
- Creation of a network of wetland habitats (ponds, wet meadows, floodplains),
- Increasing the resilience of an old mixed forest,
- Improving habitat quality for endangered species such as the black stork and amphibians.

Actions to be taken

Hydrological

- Creation of a system of several small, interconnected ponds,
- Surrounding drainage ditches will be filled to connect the ponds and create permanent wet meadows in the surrounding area.

Ecological

- Removal of shrubs and trees to create ponds,
- Stabilization of the microclimate by increasing humidity and cooling the environment, thereby reducing heat stress on flora and fauna,
- Improvement of the nutrient cycle and carbon sequestration, thereby strengthening the ecosystem's role in mitigating climate change,
- A source of food and water for wildlife.

Monitoring

- The project involves long-term management and monitoring, backed by EcoTree's more than 10 years of experience in European nature restoration projects.

201 Ha
Total area

10 years
Monitoring

17
New ponds

Expected benefits

- Improved water retention and groundwater recharge.
- Promotion of habitat connectivity.
- Significant improvement in habitat quality for the rare black stork.
- Provision of vital water sources for wildlife.
- Creation of spawning grounds and habitats for amphibians and insects.
- Reduction of flood risk for downstream communities such as Gräfendorf through the decentralized storage of excess surface water.
- Improvement of water quality through natural filtration of pollutants and reduction of sediment load in rivers.
- Natural climate protection through strengthening the resilience of the ecosystem.

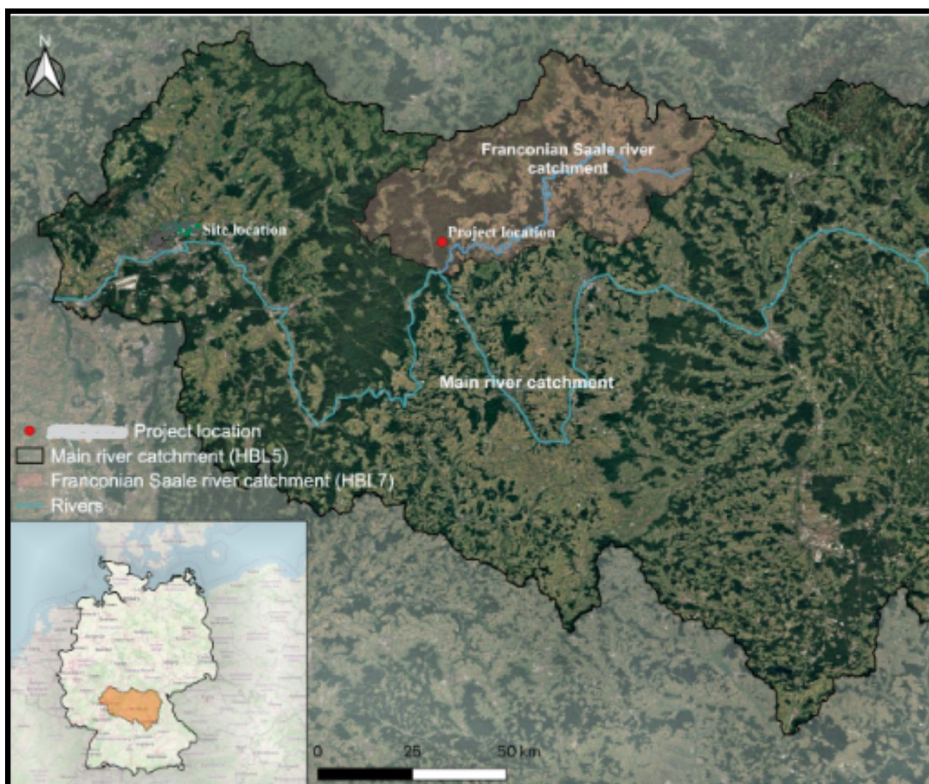
Impact assessment

Through measurable, traceable, and mapped actions, this project enables companies to document their commitment to sustainability in line with their CSRD and ESRS obligations.

A key feature of the project is the pilot testing of the [Volumetric Water Benefit \(VWBA 2.0\)](#) methodology. This methodology enables an assessment of the project's positive impacts on water retention and groundwater through the implemented measures. The impacts are measured in comparison to a baseline scenario in which the project would not be implemented.

CSRD & ESRS

- Relevant to **ESRS Standards E1 – Climate, E3 – Water, and E4 – Biodiversity and Ecosystems**
- Enables the documentation of specific restoration measures, supported by scientific monitoring.
- Provides measurable indicators (groundwater recharge, restored area, created habitats, observed species, etc.).



Aerial view of the project site in the Spessart region in relation to the main river basin.

Calendar*

2025-2026	Planning and securing the sites
2026-2027	Project implementation, planting, and baseline monitoring
Long term	Ongoing Monitoring for at least 10 years

** The timeline for implementing the agreed-upon measures may change due to operational constraints, weather conditions, and the speed at which funding for these measures can be secured.*



Images from the project area



EcoTree in a nutshell

European Leader in Nature-Based Solutions, EcoTree allows individuals and companies to commit to the environment by supporting protection, sustainable management and ecosystem restoration projects in Europe.