get nature positive

From Concrete to Biodiversity

Get Nature Positive – Monitoring Concept

I. General provisions

1. Objectives of monitoring

- Get Nature Positive (GNP) is entitled to verify the impact of the nature projects and the quality of the surroundings of certified properties by means of monitoring. This is done in partnership, in cooperation with the project partner or the investor.
- Monitoring ensures that the nature areas of the nature projects and the green spaces of certified properties are properly maintained, meet the contractually agreed quality and allow biodiversity to develop positively. The nature areas of the nature projects shall be preserved for at least 20 years, if possible 25 years, and the green spaces of certified properties at least for the duration of the contract. For ex-post projects created in advance, offsetting by means of certificates shall take place within 5 years.
- Chapter II applies to the nature areas offsetting the sealed areas for all three certificates. Chapter III applies to the green spaces on site for «Get Nature Positive 30|30» and «Get Nature Positive Premium». For the «Get Nature Positive 100» certificate, the green space on site is not assessed.

2. Timing of monitoring

- Monitoring is carried out at a time that allows the impact of the project to be assessed, e.g. before the first cut in flower meadows.
- Nature areas of the nature projects: monitoring in the 1st, 2nd, 5th, 10th, 15th and 20th year after the contract is signed. For shorter contract terms, the last monitoring may be omitted.
- Green spaces of certified properties: monitoring in the 1st and 2nd year after the contract is signed, then every 5 years. This monitoring also serves as the basis for recertification. GNP is entitled to deviate from these timelines.

3. Auditors

- The person commissioned with the monitoring – hereinafter referred to as the auditor – does not act as an inspector but assesses the project's development objectively and supports the project partner or the investors with their expertise. Sanctions are only considered in serious cases (see II.5 and III.1).
- Suitable auditors are instructed by GNP on how to carry out the monitoring.
- Auditors are fit for fieldwork and have good species knowledge and strong social skills.
- Auditors who assess nature projects of project partners or investors also have a good understanding of the agricultural/forestry system.
- Auditors who assess certified surroundings of properties are particularly familiar with promoting biodiversity in settlement areas.

II. Monitoring of nature projects of project partners/investors

1. Content of monitoring

- The auditor arranges a suitable appointment with the project partner or the investor in advance. Participation in the monitoring is welcome but generally voluntary.
- The auditor obtains information in advance on the nature areas to be assessed.
- If the area is located in the agricultural zone, the project partner shows how the nature areas were registered in the agricultural structural data survey.
- The auditor carries out a field inspection, assessing the nature areas as completely as possible. The assessment is based on the method "Biotope Type Mapping 2024" by Quadra GmbH. Additional provisions set out in the project agreement may also apply. The auditor records occurrences of rare species if they are observed during the field inspection. The auditor also takes photos of each nature area. For dispersed nature areas such as high-stem orchards, one picture of the site is sufficient.
- The project partner or a person responsible for the investor's nature areas is present during the field inspection and provides information on the management of the areas. They inform the auditor of any sightings of special or rare species.
- The project partner or the investor receives initial, provisional feedback from the auditor on the management of the individual areas and on contract fulfilment in general. Any complaints are communicated and their causes are jointly identified in discussion.

2. Recommendations, complaints and violations

- *Recommendations* are voluntary measures to improve the quality of the nature areas.
  Examples: leaving deadwood on trees; reducing excessive spread of dogwood, hazel and alder in hedges; better location for nesting aids, etc.
- *Complaints* are made if the positive development of a nature area is acutely at risk. They lead to binding measures that must be implemented within a set deadline (max. 1 year). Auditors can issue complaints themselves and set implementation deadlines.
  Examples: several newly planted native shrubs or fruit trees die and are not replaced; herbaceous fringe is mown too early; hedge is not maintained professionally; invasive non-native plants spread in an extensively managed meadow, etc.
- *Violations* lead to the permanent destruction of the nature area and constitute a breach of contract. Auditors report violations to GNP promptly. The decision on sanctions lies with GNP.
  Examples: nature area is built over and not replaced; high-stem orchard is cleared; nutrient-poor meadow is fertilized and ploughed or scarified; old trees are destroyed by soil compaction or felled without adequate replacement; large-scale herbicide treatments, etc.

3. Monitoring reports

- The auditor prepares a monitoring report using the template as soon as possible after the field inspection.
- In particular, the report includes:
  - Plan showing all contractually defined nature areas
  - Brief description and condition of the individual nature areas
  - Meaningful photos
  - Species occurrences, recorded separately as "observed on site by the auditor" or "according to the project partner/investor".
  - Recommendations, complaints and violations
  - Statement on contract fulfilment (yes/no/after implementation of measures). The payment of success bonuses (to project partners) depends on this.

- The independent certification body validates the monitoring reports.

4. Publication of the monitoring report

- The complete monitoring report is sent to the project partner or the investor, who may submit proposed changes within 2 weeks.
- The final monitoring report is archived permanently by GNP.
- A summary of the monitoring report is published on the GNP website (without the section on measures, complaints and breaches of contract).

5. Success bonuses and sanctions

- The success bonus can be paid to project partners after a positive 5-year monitoring.
- If complaints are identified that impair the development of nature areas, the success bonus may be withheld until they have been resolved.
- If serious violations are identified that impair the preservation of the nature areas, no success bonus is paid. GNP ensures the replacement of the destroyed nature areas at the project partner's expense. Further sanctions are governed by III 2.2 of the project agreement.
- If nature areas created by the investor themselves no longer exist, the certificate is revoked.

III. Monitoring of the green spaces of certified properties

1. Content of monitoring

- The auditor obtains information in advance on the nature areas to be assessed.
- For the first monitoring and the monitoring for recertification, the auditor carries out an on-site inspection, if possible together with the person responsible for maintenance. All unsealed areas are reassessed and photographed using the method "Biotope Type Mapping 2024 by Quadra GmbH". For dispersed elements such as rows of trees, one picture is sufficient.
- Compliance with the minimum requirements according to the Methodology Document is verified (GNP 30|30: at least 30% of the green space with biotope value ≥ 4; Premium: additionally an average biotope value ≥ 3), including any requirements raised due to the no-deterioration rule.
- The person responsible for maintenance receives initial, provisional feedback from the auditor. This may include recommendations for maintaining and improving quality.
- The monitoring in the second year can be carried out without an inspection: the person responsible for maintenance sends GNP current photos of all green spaces. These are compared with the contract and current aerial photographs.
- If there are doubts about the existence and quality of the green spaces, GNP carries out an on-site monitoring. GNP may also carry out spot checks on site at any time.
- If the minimum requirements are not met, GNP requires binding enhancement measures. These must be implemented within one year and are verified by a follow-up inspection at the investor's expense. If the quality is still not achieved, the following applies: - «Get Nature Positive 30|30»: the certificate is revoked.
  - «Get Nature Positive Premium»: the certificate is downgraded to «Get Nature Positive 30|30», provided its requirements are met; otherwise it is revoked. The nature areas offsetting the sealed areas are preserved in any case.

2. Monitoring reports

- The auditor prepares a monitoring report using the template as soon as possible after the monitoring.
- In particular, the report includes:
  - Plan showing all unsealed areas of a property defined in the target state.
  - Brief description and condition of the individual area types, including reassessment of the biotope values and calculation of the minimum requirements (share with biotope value ≥ 4; for Premium, average biotope value).
  - Meaningful photos
  - Species occurrences, recorded separately as “observed on site by the auditor” or “according to the investor”.
  - Notes on positive and negative developments, recommendations on maintenance.
  - Statement on compliance with the minimum requirements and on contract fulfilment (yes/no/after implementation of measures). GNP decides on any downgrading or revocation of the certificate.
- The independent certification body validates the monitoring reports.

3. Handling of the monitoring report

- The complete monitoring report is sent to the investor, who may submit proposed changes within 2 weeks.
- The final monitoring report is archived permanently by GNP.
- Publication of the monitoring report on these areas is not planned.