
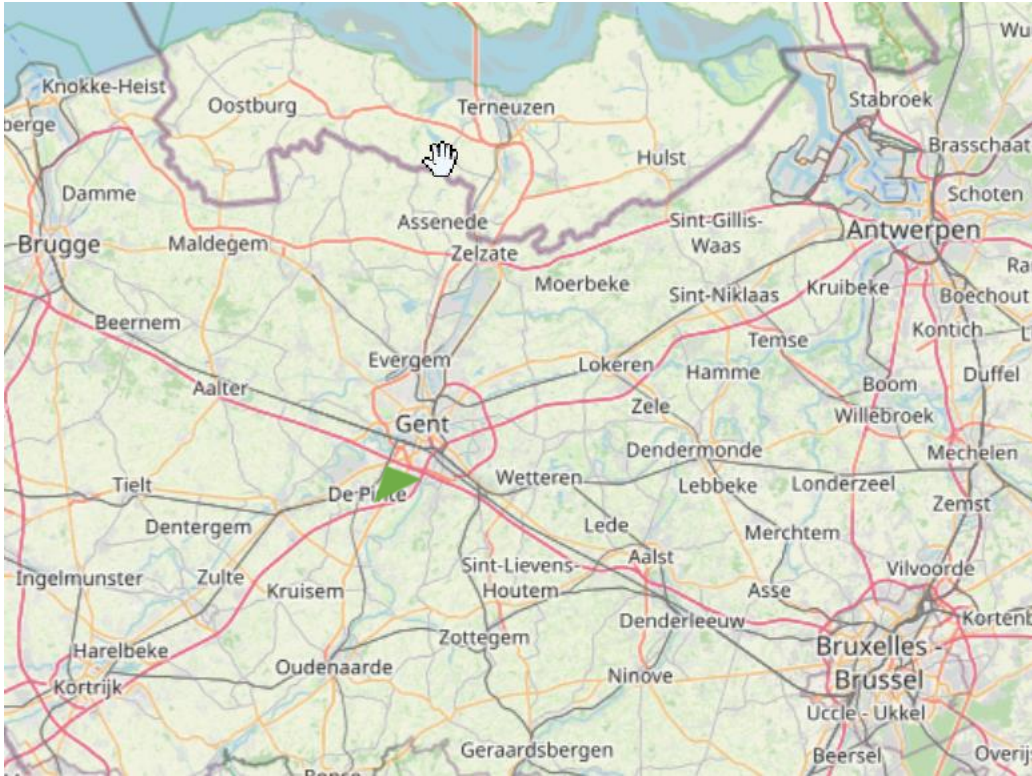
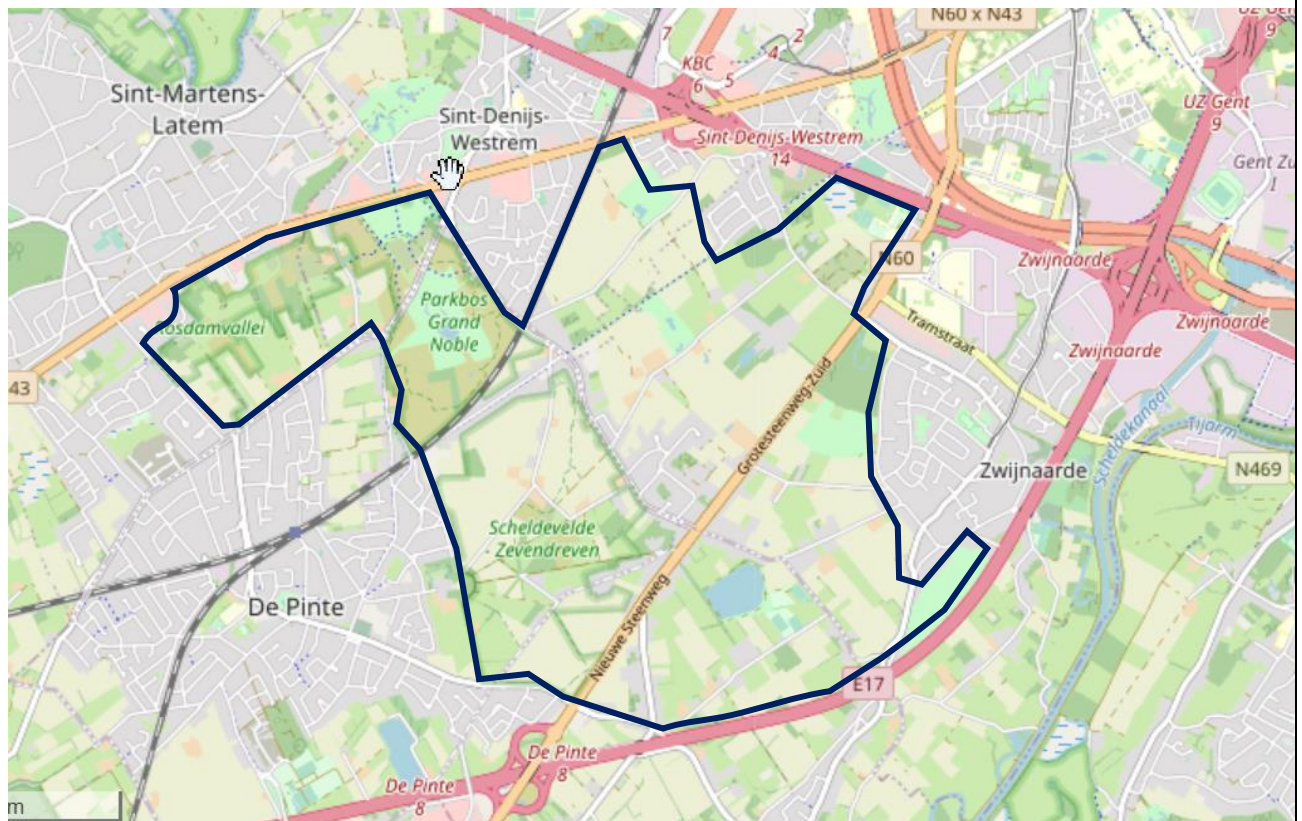


PARKFOREST GHENT – BELGIUM

<p>Section</p>	 <p>CLEARINGHOUSE 中欧城市森林应对方案</p> <p><i>This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 821242</i></p>
<p>1</p>	<p>TITLE OF CASE STUDY AREA: Parkbos Gent (ParkForest Ghent) – http://www.parkbos.be, https://www.facebook.com/parkbosgent/</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>INTRODUCTION</p> <p>The peri-urban forest is a new afforestation at the southern edge of the City of Ghent (Belgium). The area is a mosaic of old and new forests, agricultural land, and historic sites (mainly castles and estates). Planting started in 1996. Realisation started in 2002, with a planned end date around 2023. The main actor is the Flemish Agency for Nature and Forests (ANB), in close collaboration with the Province of East Flanders, the City of Ghent, the Municipalities of De Pinte and Sint-Martens-Latem and the Flemish Land Agency (VLM).</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>KEY FACTS AND FIGURES OF THE CASE STUDY AREA</p> <p>Biogeographic region¹: Atlantic Surface area: 1200 ha Country: Belgium Region/Province: Flanders/East Flanders</p>
<p>4a</p>	<p>LOCATION MAP(S)</p>  <p>The map shows the location of ParkForest Ghent in the southern part of Belgium, near Ghent and Antwerpen. The map highlights the area around Ghent, including municipalities like Oostburg, Terneuzen, Hulst, Assenede, Zelzate, and Moerbeke. The map also shows major cities like Antwerpen, Brussels, and Ghent, and the surrounding region of Flanders.</p>

¹ <https://www.eea.europa.eu/data-and-maps/data/biogeographical-regions-europe-3>



<https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1qRQK4evvqdyHAVY5WstXezPZDFevk2La&ll=51.00156049457446%2C3.661638191976029&z=12>

5	<p>NAME OF MUNICIPALITY AND WEBSITE ADDRESS City of Ghent: http://www.gent.be</p>
6	<p>LEAD ORGANISATIONS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flemish Agency for Nature and Forest (Agentschap voor Natuur en Bos) • Province East-Flanders (Provincie Oost-Vlaanderen) • City of Ghent • Flemish Land Agency (Vlaamse Landmaatschappij) • Municipality of Sint-Martens-Latem • Municipality of De Pinte
7	<p>LOCAL CONTACT(S) Evelyne Fiers, evelyne.fiers@vlaanderen.be</p>
8	<p>PRINCIPLE UF-NBS (Urban Forests as Nature-Based Solutions) ACTION(S)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forest plantations/afforestation
9	<p>OTHER PRINCIPLE NBS ACTION(S) – non-UF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoring brook systems
10	<p>LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS LIST ONLY</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Governing authorities: Flemish Agency for Nature and Forest (ANB). 2. Associations: Civil Organisations, Environmental NGOs and the Farmers association have been involved intensively during the planning process but are actually less involved in the management of the forest. The Nature Conservation NGO Natuurpunt is land owner of a smaller part of the forest (around 45 ha, in the north of the area). The environmental NGO BOS+ (formerly named the Flemish Forest Association – Vereniging voor Bos in Vlaanderen vzw) has been influential in launching the idea and the early awareness raising, communication and planning. 3. Citizens: Some citizens events have been organised during the planning process and during the first years after the establishment of the forest, but the number of events has decreased a bit (walks, festivals). 4. Municipalities: City of Ghent, Municipality of De Pinte, Municipality of Sint-Martens-Latem



	<p>5. Public/private institutions: Public institutions: Flemish Land Agency (VLM), Tourism East Flanders, Agency for Heritage, Road and Traffic Agency. Some private land owners leased their land to the Forest and Nature Agency (long-term lease).</p> <p>6. Park planner and authorities: The afforestation has been planned by the Flemish Agency for Nature and Forest (ANB).</p> <p>7. Technicians for park maintenance/monitoring and to educate and support citizens: Forest management (and limited education) is done by the Flemish Agency for Nature and Forest (ANB).</p>		
11	UF-NBS FRAMEWORK		
a.	UF-NBS typology		<p>Forested areas (urban forest) Large urban park Woodland play area</p>
b.	Integration		<p>The project started with a single focus on afforestation. But following its participatory approach, it became clear that (1) there were diverging territorial issues (flood, noise, traffic ...), and (2) the afforestation project was creating quite some tensions and conflicts. As a result, a more integrated approach was chosen to (1) try to solve or mediate other issues as part of the forest planning process (through NBS or non-NBS), and (2) to mediate the negative impacts of afforestation (mainly regarding landscape protection and agriculture). The integrative aspect of the Parkbos is related to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Integrating NBS for limiting flooding, and to reduce traffic noise pollution 2. Safeguarding agriculture in the long term, by setting aside dedicated areas for agriculture for local farmers 3. Increasing road safety for pedestrians and cyclists (restructuring crossings, developing links for recreational traffic) 4. Providing opportunities for recreation and play 5. Safeguarding historical elements in the landscape and restoring vistas. <p>Lately, the impact of the forest on the climate (mainly urban heat island effect) has been stressed, by integrating the forest into the green-blue climate axis network around the city.</p>
c.	Network/connectivity		<p>The Parkbos is one of the 4 primary green areas around the city of Ghent. The green areas are linked to the city centre through blue-green climate axes.</p>
d.	Multifunctionality		<p>The primary function for the area is green recreation, with creating additional forest resources and additional biodiversity as important secondary functions. Locally, the forest is buffering housing from traffic noise, providing flood areas, and offering play opportunities.</p>
e.	Multi-scale		<p>The peri-urban forest is connected with other green spaces and nature areas through the green axes network. The forest as a whole is providing an answer to regional demands, but locally the forest is providing solutions to local problems.</p>



			<p>The peri-urban forest is part of the larger plan for 5.500 ha of additional urban forests in the Flemish Region (to be realised between 1996 and 2010).</p>
	f. Strategic planning processes		<p>The peri-urban forest is part of the larger plan for 5.500 ha of additional urban forests in the Flemish Region (to be realised between 1996 and 2010), which in itself was included in the Spatial Structure Plan for Flanders (1996 – 2006). The location of the new forest is based on a localisation study (Van Elegem et al. 1997). The necessary changes on the land use plan have been included in the Spatial Development Plan for the Ghent urban region (2005). The project area is included in the regional land restructuring project (1998 – 2007), which allows implementing specific instruments, protocols and budgets.</p>
	g. Inter- and transdisciplinary		<p>The afforestation project includes both an ecological, as a social angle (focussing mainly on recreation, but also on urban agriculture). Due to its integrated approach, multiple disciplines and administrations have been involved (including water management, road and traffic management, heritage management). Citizens and NGOs have been involved in the planning process, but their involvement is much less in the management phase. The only exception is the smaller part of the forest that is owned by Natuurpunt (Nature Conservation NGO), who involves volunteers in the management.</p>
	h. Social cohesion and biocultural diversity		<p>The afforestation project is of social importance, as it provides a place for recreation, sports and play, and social interaction to the local residents and the urban inhabitants. However, the area could be regarded as an example of green gentrification: the immediate surroundings of the ParkForest are the richest quarters in the Ghent periphery.</p>
	i. Governance arrangements	I. Project management structure.	<p>The project is managed by a coordinator who is paid by resources from the Forest and Nature Agency, the city and the municipalities, and the province. The project partners are represented in the project management board. The project coordinator is dealing with communications, public events, and the strategic management and coordination. The Forest and Nature Agency, and the local green space departments, are responsible for the technical greenspace and forest management.</p>
II. Local community engagement and the nature of their engagement.		<p>The local community is engaged through the city and municipal councils. The Nature Conservation organisation Natuurpunt is a civil organisation (not-for-profit) who owns around 45 hectares in the area and is managing this area with volunteers. Further civic engagement is rather specific (for example an athletics club who has the sponsorship/patronage on a jogging path in the forest).</p>	
III. City-scale and/or region-wide governance for the project and/or UF-		<p>The green space department in the Ghent City administration oversees the 4 primary green areas around the city (only one of these is fully managed by the city).</p>	



		NBS (city and regional stakeholders and character of their engagement)	
		IV. National and international governance context (national and international stakeholders and character of their engagement)	The realisation of the peri-urban forest is grounded in the urban forest development strategy included in the Spatial Structure Plan for Flanders (1996 – 2010), which aims at developing 5.500 ha of new urban forests in Flanders. The main responsible actor for this achievement is the Flemish Agency for Nature and Forest (ANB, Agentschap voor Natuur en Bos). In the case of the peri-urban forest in Ghent, the Flemish Agency for Nature and Forests has been one of the initiators, the main funder (including land acquisition and funding planting). The Agency has also been co-funding some of the land acquisition costs and the planting costs for the city of Ghent.
		V. Other (specify)	n/a
j.	Institutional frameworks	I. Project staff responsibilities.	There is only one staff member specifically working for the project: the project coordinator is dealing with communications, public events, and the strategic management and coordination.
		II. Project Management Committee (Y/N) if Y.	Y. The Steering Committee includes the Province, the city, the two municipalities, the Agency for nature and forests, Tourism East Flanders and the Flemish Land Agency.
		III. Frameworks <u>above the project</u> that exert influence on the project and/or UF-NBS e.g. Municipality, National Forestry Department.	The realisation of the peri-urban forest is grounded in the urban forest development strategy included in the Spatial Structure Plan for Flanders (1996 – 2010), which aims at developing 5.500 ha of new urban forests in Flanders. Although this goal has not been reached during the timespan of the Spatial Structure Plan, it has been included in most Coalition Agreements for the Flemish Region since 2000. The most recent Coalition Agreement (2019-2024) has repeated the aim of planting more (urban) forests The peri-urban forest is included in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A nature and forest management plan (running from 2014 to 2037). - A land restructuring project “Leie en Schelde”
		IV. Private companies that work on behalf of/or are embedded within the project.	Few forest areas are still privately owned, but are leased on long-term to the Nature and Forest Agency. Some forest management interventions are outsourced (planting, mowing, ...); some of these actions are done by local farmers, or by social profit organisations that include employees with limited capacities.
		V. Trade representative organisations that are involved in the project	n/a
		VI. Regulatory frameworks that the project operates within (i.e. bylaws, municipal laws,	The project operates within a cooperation agreement between the partners, which is reviewed every 3 year.



		national laws, licences and leases, partnership agreements etc)	
		VII. Other (specify)	n/a
k.	Economic frameworks	I. Community fundraising	Only for the land owned by Natuurpunt (Nature Conservation NGO).
		II. Project delivered services and monies raised by project	n/a
		III. City, regional general funds	Main cost (land purchase) paid by the Flemish government, either through direct purchase, either by co-funding land purchase cost to the municipalities and the Nature Conservation NGO. Operational costs (communication, staff costs for the project coordinator, ...) are also split between all partners, with the Flemish Agency for Nature and Forests covering most budget. Costs for local interventions and management are assigned to the responsible partner(s).
		IV. Special funds e.g. National Lottery, Challenge funds	n/a
		V. National government funds	n/a
		VI. Private sector investment	Only for the land owned by Natuurpunt (Nature Conservation NGO).
		VII. International funds e.g. European Union structural funds, LIFE + etc.	LIFE99 ENV/B/000650 – 904.440 EUR (442.897 EUR co-funded by the EU)
		VIII. Other (specify)	
i.	Sino/European comparative relevance		This could be a good example on how landscape protection, heritage protection, beautification and recreation can be integrated. Although Ghent is a smaller town in the Chinese perspective (350.000 inhabitants in the agglomeration).
m.	UF-NBS valorisation		The area has seen a large increase in visitors (walking, cycling, horse riding) which has inevitably lead to an increase in spending in e.g. riding schools etc. The Parkbos has also been a marketing tool for real estate (both selling existing residences, as for developing new estates). Some small initiatives have been set up, such as a temporary natural camp ground, but the financial impact of this is limited.
n.	Procurement of UF-NBS		No formalised way of procuring or securing ES.
p.	Ecosystem services (list the three most important services being provided in no more than 50 words)		1) the provision of recreation for local residents and visitors (walking, cycling, horse-riding, children's play); 2) biodiversity; and 3) climate services (reducing urban heat island effect).



	q. Renaturing	Reforestation and redevelopment of brook valleys
12	LESSONS AND TRANSFERABILITY (max. 100 words) Parkbos Ghent is a long-lasting afforestation/reforestation project, that has seen interesting changes during its planning and implementation. Starting as a forestry project (with a single focus on increasing the forest area for recreational use), it turned into an integrated landscape restructuring project that integrates forest, agriculture, recreation and landscape heritage with other challenges in the area. Although the project claims to be participatory from the initiation phase, it was more consultation than participation, and specific groups felt to be left out of the participation process (resulting in conflicts with local authorities and farmers). Twenty years later, most actors are happy with the result and see the advantages of the project.	
13	REFERENCES (Harvard style) Maes Koen & Van den Balck Els (2014). Uitgebreid bosbeheerplan Hooglatem – Grand Noble, Parkbos Gent (Gent, De Pinte, Sint-Martens-Latem). https://www.natuurenbos.be/sites/default/files/inserted-files/beheerplan_hooglatem-grand_noble_parkbos_definitief.pdf Van Elegem et al. (1997). Localisatiestudie. Van Gossum, Peter, et al. (2009)"New environmental policy instruments to realize forest expansion in Flanders (northern Belgium): A base for smart regulation?" <i>Land Use Policy</i> 26.4: 935-946.	