

Investment into nature survey results: Private sector has multiple reasons to act on nature crisis, but confused by options

New insights reveal both rising interest and persistent confusion around investment options.

A recent survey launched at UKREiiF 2025 by Nature North and Accelar Limited, gathered views from organisations across the built environment and infrastructure sectors. The findings show a promising shift: businesses are increasingly recognising the wide-ranging value of nature-based projects, driven by factors such as climate urgency, brand alignment, regulatory compliance and growing expectations from customers and employees.

Yet despite this momentum, many organisations remain unsure how to navigate the complex landscape of funding mechanisms and nature investment schemes. The lack of a clear track record in nature investment is a key barrier, underscoring the need for simplification and better guidance.

"We partnered with Nature North on this research to better understand how the built environment and infrastructure sector views UK nature. It's encouraging to see that the industry and its investors increasingly recognise the co-benefits that nature delivers - something we prioritise when supporting organisations in their green transition. At the same time, we recognise the need for collaborative action to make revenues and project impact easier to navigate." Chris Fry, Managing Director, Accelar

"Nature North is committed to building meaningful partnerships with Northern businesses and business organisations. By developing a shared understanding of impacts and dependencies on nature, we can work together to accelerate action. This collaboration is vital - not only for nature recovery, but also for unlocking opportunities that support economic growth, business resilience, public health and social wellbeing." Steph Hepworth, Project Manager, Nature North

Nature Investment: A Growing Economic Opportunity

- The World Economic Forum estimates nature-positive business practices could generate £8 trillion in global value by 2030, creating hundreds of millions of jobs.
- Nature markets are already valued at £78 billion globally, offering significant potential for private and institutional investors.
- Regional modelling for York, North Yorkshire, and West Yorkshire suggests enhancing natural capital could deliver £2.3 billion in GVA and £2.2 billion in avoided risks and new opportunities.

Why Businesses Are Acting Now

Survey respondents cited a diverse mix of motivations for supporting nature-based initiatives:

- Climate and nature crisis: Responding to the urgency for environmental action
- Brand alignment: Reflecting sustainability in corporate identity
- Compliance: Meeting regulatory requirements
- Customer expectations: Aligning with consumer values
- Revenue generation: Unlocking new business opportunities
- Local connection and impact: Supporting community-led environmental efforts
- Employee expectations: Attracting and retaining people through purpose

“The goal of protecting and enhancing biodiversity represents a significant commitment within Electricity North West’s Environmental Action Plan. We are actively managing our network estate to enhance habitats and we have established partnerships both locally and regionally to contribute to a net gain in biodiversity in our operating area. We also recognise that the early adoption of nature-based solutions will play a valuable role in protecting our critical infrastructure in the future.”

Richard Mosson, Biodiversity Manager, Electricity North West - from [Investing in Nature for the North: A Strategic Plan for A Nature Positive Regional Economy](#)

The responses reveal a varied range of motivations behind organisational support for nature-based projects; underscoring that there is no single, dominant driver. Instead, businesses are increasingly recognising the wide-ranging value these initiatives offer. This is a promising trend.

While factors like climate science, regulatory requirements and brand alignment with environmental values remain influential, many organisations are also responding to growing expectations from customers and employees. This signals a broader and encouraging shift in market attitudes toward nature and sustainability, alongside recognition of how interlinked these co-benefits are.

Nature Projects Businesses Are Supporting

Organisations shared their engagement with a wide range of UK and international nature initiatives:

- Direct action to mitigate and manage environmental impact
- UK-based Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) projects
- Voluntary UK nature recovery efforts
- UK nature carbon projects (e.g. woodland creation, peatland restoration)
- International voluntary and carbon-focused nature projects

These efforts demonstrate how environmental stewardship is becoming embedded in business strategy, delivering tangible co-benefits for nature, climate and communities.

“The long-term success of our business, customers, wider society and economies depends on the health and resilience of nature and its biodiversity. We have long recognised this at Aviva and were one of the first insurance companies in the world to introduce a specific Biodiversity Policy. Through our actions on nature and climate, we have found that engagement is vital to achieve our ambitions, including local and regional partnerships, and we continue to support nature-based solutions in the North, and across the UK.”

Thomas Viegas, Nature Strategy Lead at Aviva – from [Investing in Nature for the North: A Strategic Plan for A Nature Positive Regional Economy](#)

What You Can Do

- **Partner** with Nature North. Explore the [strategic plan](#) for a nature-positive regional economy: Investing in Nature for the North. Email: stephh@naturenorth.org.uk
- **Collaborate** with Accelar. Discover consultancy services and digital tools like the Sustainability Business Tracker, BNG Finder and acra: Visit [Accelar](#) or Email: info@accelar.co.uk
- **Join Rebuilding Nature.** Nature North and Accelar are proud members of the Rebuilding Nature Alliance, working to create a physical nature network that supports wildlife, improves environmental quality and strengthens climate resilience. Visit [Rebuilding Nature](#).