

8 July 2026



6th Regional Stakeholders' Meeting of the NCAO Project

How to fight drought, protect peatlands, and plan urban forests? Insights from the 6th Regional Stakeholders Meeting in Świętokrzyskie. KIELCE, POLAND - On January 20, 2026, the Department of Regional Development and the Department of Environment and Climate of the Marshal's Office of the Świętokrzyskie Region hosted the 6th Regional Stakeholders Group meeting for the **NCAO - Nature-based Carbon Offsets** project. The event focused on translating three years of international cooperation into concrete policy actions for the region.

The meeting served as a vital platform for regional experts, local authorities, and scientific units to discuss how European “Green Deal” inspirations can address local environmental challenges such as water retention and carbon sequestration.

Learning from European Leaders As the project nears its final implementation phase, the meeting highlighted several Good Practices from partner regions that are being adapted to the Świętokrzyskie context:

- **Andalusia (Spain):**The “Tree Bank” and public land catalog (CAPA) which supports small municipalities in climate change adaptation.
- **Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes (France):**The innovative **Pogéis** tool, used for identifying lands for biodiversity compensation and calculating ecological benefits.
- **Central Finland:**Reforms in peatland restoration and wetland protection, drawing inspiration from Polish small retention models.

From Strategy to Funding A key highlight of the session was the presentation of funding opportunities for the “Green Transition.” **Ms. Liliana Krężolek**, NCAO Project Coordinator, summarized the project’s impact on regional policy instruments over the last three years. This was complemented by **Mr. Ireneusz Sobala** from the European Funds Information Point, who detailed available financial instruments under the “European Funds for Świętokrzyskie 2021-2027” program, including loans for Renewable Energy Sources (RES) and energy efficiency.

Building a Resilient Region “NCAO is not just about theory; it’s about providing local governments with ready-to-use tools and financial schemes to achieve carbon neutrality,” emphasized the project team. By integrating nature-based solutions (NbS) into the Regional Environmental Protection Programme, the Świętokrzyskie Region is strengthening its resilience to climate change while fostering sustainable economic growth.

The NCAO project is implemented within the frames of **INTERREG EUROPE 2021-2027** program and co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund of the EU under the project “NCAO - Nature-based Carbon Offsets”, Policy objective 2: Greener Europe, Specific objective: Climate change.

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