

PLANET4B Research Brief

understanding Plural values, intersectionality, Leverage points, Attitudes, Norms, behaviour and social Learning in Transformation for Biodiversity decision making



PLANET4B

Empowering Communities for Biodiversity: Exploring System Mapping and Leverage Points for Transformative Change

Corresponding author: [Blanka Louckova](#), CzechGlobe

Keywords

System mapping, leverage points, transformative changes, interventions

Case studies pave the way

Who needs to be convinced that children with disabilities should have opportunities to connect with nature and experience its closeness? Can a local chef, a religious leader, or a school principal play a key role in preserving biodiversity? Can Amazonian Indigenous communities influence the ecological footprint of Europeans? What could replace fast fashion if we want to protect the planet?

These questions were among those explored by participants of the [PLANET4B case studies](#)

throughout 2024. Through intensive workshops employing creative, arts-based, and deliberative methods, the participants worked to identify intervention points and define action areas within their respective research fields (such as the fashion industry, financial investments, global soy and beef trade, education, and agrobiodiversity) to prioritise biodiversity for a more sustainable future.

The [“Report on the system mapping and leverage points for each case”](#) presents this process and its specific outcomes as applied to the case studies.

Key findings

- **Active involvement** from community members ensures that diverse perspectives are involved in proposed interventions.
- Interventions that **address intent and design within systems** should be prioritised. This includes the advocacy for policy reforms that emphasise sustainability, equity and justice, along with the promotion of educational programs aimed at shifting societal values toward biodiversity.
- **Existing local initiatives and knowledge systems** could be leveraged to create tailored interventions. This approach may involve supporting community-led efforts and integrating local ecological practices into broader sustainability goals.

System mapping and leverage points

The initial phase of the work involves **system mapping**, a method that helps participants understand, analyse, and visualise the highly complex social, economic, and natural systems they are studying.

Building on system analysis, the case study participants were able to identify the most **critical leverage points and intervention methods** for their fields—for example, improving knowledge sharing, fostering community planning processes, redistributing municipal resources, or modifying EU agricultural policies. These measures influence decision-making processes in the respective areas and help prioritise biodiversity.

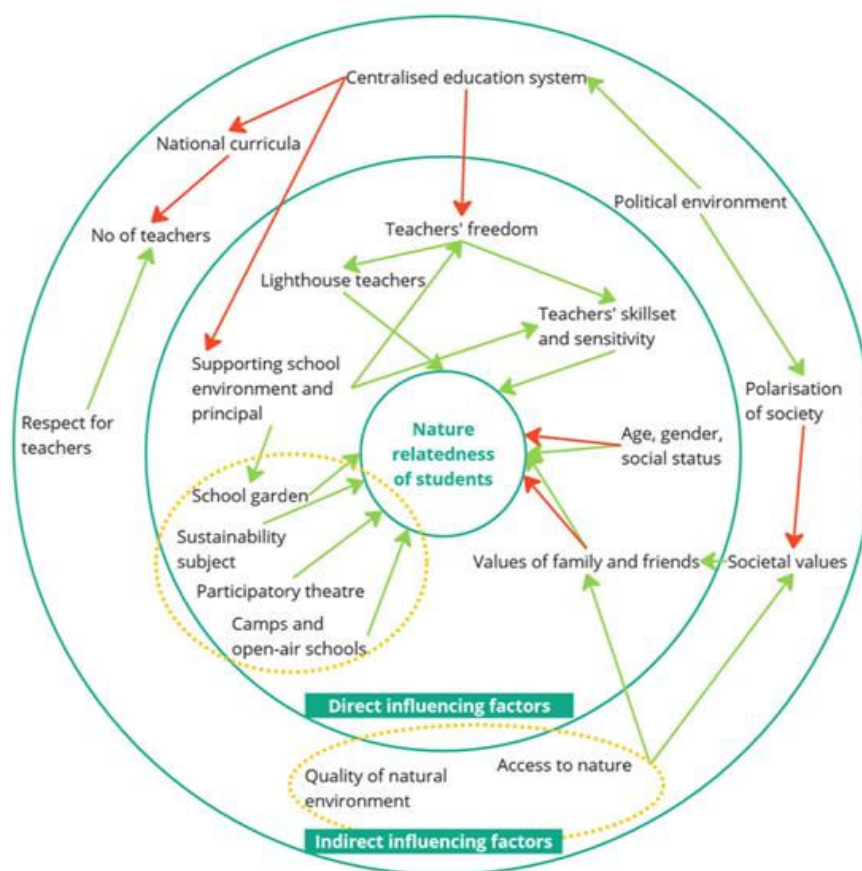


Fig.1. Onion diagram of the Hungarian environmental education case (Author: ESSRG).

Who is the report for?

Given that the methods presented here can be applied across various domains—from small-scale developments and local projects to global systems analysis—and can be adapted to specific needs, we recommend this report to:

- Local civil communities and NGOs
- Project developers
- Businesses and entrepreneurs committed to genuine green development
- Municipalities, local governments
- Researchers

What will you learn from the report?

- The basics of system mapping: how it works with practical examples.
- How to create your own system map: Use theoretical knowledge and detailed case studies to develop a system map for your field, visualised with your own onion diagram.
- How to identify leverage points: Discover methods to pinpoint leverage points in your area of work, supported by detailed and tested step-by-step guidelines.
- Creative, deliberative methods: Explore numerous creative and deliberative methods, their advantages, and applications, so you can integrate them into your work.
- Insights from PLANET4B Case Studies: Gain an in-depth understanding of how case study participants, local communities, and action-based groups tackled their topics and the findings they reached.

Examples include:

The role of school gardens in local communities.

How to bring urban youth closer to nature and the positive effects this can have on biodiversity.

Tools to guide financial investors toward sustainable, biodiversity-friendly developments.

The added knowledge and impact of community nature walks on biodiversity awareness and action.

The potential influence of religion to change agricultural practice.

DOWNLOAD THE
RESEARCH DOCUMENT

About PLANET4B Project

Horizon Europe research project PLANET4B aims to understand and influence decision making affecting biodiversity and to map existing knowledge that explains why certain decisions are made, to understand better how biodiversity can be prioritised in our decision-making.