

BMW Foundation
Herbert Quandt

COLLABORATIVE ACTION PLATFORM BRAZIL



**A REPORT
ON PROJECT
DEVELOPMENT**

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Future Urban Living – Addressing Tensions

What Is At Stake?

As urbanization accelerates and the climate crisis intensifies, the future of our cities hangs in the balance. Without rapid and just adaptation, entire metropolitan areas will face escalating human, economic, and ecological losses. Future Urban Living will be defined by our ability to plan based on risk, integrate nature into infrastructure, and coordinate multiple stakeholders toward a common direction. This trend is highlighted in the UNHabitat World Cities Report 2022, which indicates that more than half of the global population already lives in urban areas. The report further notes that this share will continue to rise in the coming decades, reaching an estimated 68% by 2050—an increase of 2.2 billion people¹. Such expansion intensifies pressure on natural resources and amplifies vulnerabilities, as seen in cities like Tehran in Iran, where authorities have considered relocation due to water scarcity—a critical warning about the ecological limits of urban living.

Pressures And Challenges In Brazil

¹ UN UN Brazil (2022). ONU-Habitat: População mundial será 68% urbana até 2050 [UN-Habitat: World population will be 68% urban by 2050]. Available at: [\[Link\]](#). Accessed on: Oct 31, 2025.

In Brazil, urbanization is even more pronounced: according to the 2022 Census conducted by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), 87.4% of Brazilians—approximately 177.5 million people—live in urban areas².

² IBGE News Agency (2024). Censo 2022: 87% da população brasileira vive em áreas urbanas [2022 Census: 87% of the Brazilian population lives in urban areas]. Available at: [\[Link\]](#). Accessed on: Oct 31, 2025.

With most of the population concentrated in cities, many municipalities still lack the infrastructure required to address floods, heat waves, and water scarcity. This concentration heightens climate and socioenvironmental risks, which in turn exacerbate inequalities and expose underserved neighborhoods to higher levels of vulnerability. The Urban Adaptation Index (UAI), a study conducted in Brazil by the University of São Paulo (USP), corroborates this

scenario, showing that 54.1% of municipalities have low adaptive capacity to climate change. The findings reinforce the urgent call for solutions that combine innovation, planning, and social justice³.

Source: Movimento Atingidos por Barragens [Movement of People Affected by Dams – MAB], 2022.

From Vision To Coordination

The accelerating pressures of urbanization and climate change demand stronger cross-sector cooperation. In this context, the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt launched the Collaborative Action Platform in Brazil (CAP) in 2024 in response to growing urban challenges—from rapid urbanization and inadequate infrastructure to deep-rooted social inequality. Through integrated approaches like better urban planning, resilient infrastructure, and nature-based strategies, CAP helps cities adapt to climate change and deliver tangible benefits to their communities. The Platform originated from two workshops held in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, which brought together more than 40 organizations, including companies, public institutions, research centers, philanthropic entities, and social movements. From the outset, these meetings demonstrated the collaborative and inclusive spirit that guides the initiative.

Ambition: To foster a sustainable future for urban life through Nature-based Solutions (NbS), aiming for equitable climate adaptation.

More than a standalone initiative, the Collaborative Action Platform functions as an orchestrator of an ecosystem focused on Future Urban Living, connecting individuals, organizations, and companies that share a common commitment: ensuring Future Urban Living on a changing planet. This report is intended for public and private leaders, social entrepreneurs, researchers, and citizens who believe that addressing climate change and advancing urban adaptation require collective action, innovation, and purpose. The following pages present the key reflections, results, and lessons learned during the Platform's first year—a journey that illustrates how collaboration can translate into tangible impact. The next chapter explores the key challenges of urban life, before examining how the Platform addresses them through practical solutions, collaborative networks, and new models of shared leadership.

³ Jornal da USP (2025). Índice revela municípios com maior dificuldade de adaptação às mudanças climáticas [Index reveals municipalities with the greatest difficulty in adapting to climate change]. Available at: [\[Link\]](#). Accessed on: Oct 31, 2025.

Source: Circuito Urbano 2022, promoted by UN-Habitat Brazil
Camila Nogueira/UN-Habitat Brazil.

***Nature-based Solutions (NbS)** are actions that use natural processes and ecosystems to address urgent challenges—such as water scarcity and the impacts of extreme climate events—while generating benefits for biodiversity, socioeconomic development, and human well-being.

The Challenges Of Urban Living

Cities are hubs of opportunity, culture, and development, but they also concentrate some of the most complex social and climate vulnerabilities of the 21st century. How we plan and manage urban centers will shape the future of the planet and the well-being of billions of people. Three structural challenges demand immediate attention:

1. Those Who Suffer The Most Are The Ones Living Where The City Planned The Least

In Brazil, 16.4 million people—equivalent to 8.1% of the national population—live in favelas and urban communities (IBGE, 2022)⁴, often located on hillsides or along riverbanks, areas most vulnerable to flooding, landslides, and extreme heat. In these neighborhoods, poor housing conditions, dampness, mold, and limited sanitation infrastructure affect residents' health and reinforce inequalities. Climate change intensifies these challenges, disproportionately impacting those with the least infrastructure and the least representation in urban decision-making.

⁴ IBGE News Agency (2024). Censo 2022: Brasil tinha 16,4 milhões de pessoas morando em Favelas e Comunidades Urbanas [2022 Census: Brazil had 16.4 million people living in Favelas and Urban Communities]. Available at: [\[Link\]](#). Accessed on: Oct 31, 2025.

2. Planning Gaps And Limited Municipal Budgets Constrain Climate Adaptation And Resilience

Fewer than 13% of Brazilian municipalities demonstrate strong institutional capacity and have adequate legal frameworks to address climate adaptation. Only 36.9% of municipalities have a municipal housing plan, suggesting that efforts to address vulnerability and risk in the housing sector remain insufficient⁵.

⁵ RegeneraRS (2025). Relatório Anual 2024-2025 [2024-2025 Annual Report]. Porto Alegre, 2025. Available at: [\[Link\]](#). Accessed on: Oct 31, 2025.

3. The Absence Of Preventive Action Increases Both Risks And Costs

The 2024 floods in Rio Grande do Sul—the most severe in the country's history—affected 478 municipalities, displaced approximately 580,000 people, and resulted in losses estimated at R\$88.9 billion⁶. This event illustrates the human and economic costs of delayed action, and highlights the urgency of investing in urban resilience before disasters strike.

Understanding these challenges is the first step toward action. They demonstrate that building cities that are more equitable, resilient, and prepared for the future requires collaboration, innovation, and shared purpose. This is where the Collaborative Action Platform comes in, turning reflection into coordinated action. By promoting Nature-based Solutions and advancing equitable climate adaptation, the Platform seeks to address urban and climate challenges in an integrated manner. In the following chapters, we explore how this network is translating ideas into practice and contributing to the advancement of Future Urban Living.

⁶ RegeneraRS. Relatório Anual 2024-2025 [2024-2025 Annual Report] Porto Alegre, 2025. Available at: [\[Link\]](#). Acesso em: 31 out. 25.

Collaborative Action Platform

Turning Insights Into Impact

To address the challenges outlined in the previous chapter, the Collaborative Action Platform began its journey with a gathering called Challenge Hub. The event brought together leaders from government, the private sector, academia, philanthropy, and civil society to collectively envision the future of sustainable urban life in Brazil. During the meeting, participants explored how to build inclusive, regenerative, and people-centered cities capable of integrating nature, innovation, and social justice. These discussions identified four complementary and interdependent areas of action that translate the Platform's vision into practical objectives.

The first area recognizes that transformation begins at the territory level. **Local Leadership** is central to driving change: the more prepared and connected community leaders are, the greater their capacity to advance sustainable solutions. Yet leadership cannot be sustained without resources. The **Innovative Finance** area therefore seeks to overcome the limitations of traditional funding models and develop new mechanisms that enable locally led initiatives and Nature-based Solutions (NbS) to scale. By connecting investors, philanthropic foundations, and development banks with community organizations, climate investment can become a catalyst for meaningful urban impact.

With strengthened leadership and new financing flows in place, the next step is to influence broader systems. The **Public Policy & Advocacy** area aims to position Nature-based Solutions as a core element of urban and climate policymaking, fostering cross-sector alignment around a shared agenda for a just transition. Finally, lasting transformation requires communication and collective learning. The **Communication & Narrative** area focuses on translating experiences into accessible and inspiring knowledge, giving visibility to good practices that strengthen the ecosystem and spark further initiatives.

- **Innovative Finance**
- **Public Policy & Advocacy**
- **Communication & Narrative**
- **Local Leadership**

Source: CAP EVOLUTION Report, 2025.

To turn these areas into concrete action, the Platform structured three interconnected implementation mechanisms:

Working Groups: linked to the four areas of action, these groups function as thematic spaces where participants co-create strategies and translate ideas into concrete plans and actions.

Supported Solutions: existing initiatives that receive technical, institutional, and financial support from the Platform. Three solutions with strong potential for impact and collective learning were selected: Observatório das Baixadas, the Solução Natureza Program by Fundação Grupo Boticário, and RegeneraRS, each representing distinct dimensions of urban and climate transformation. Observatório das Baixadas contributes citizen-generated knowledge and strengthens community leadership; Fundação Grupo Boticário advances the concept and practice of Nature-based Solutions (NbS); and RegeneraRS supports the reconstruction and regeneration of resilient territories.

Strategic Interventions: mentoring, capacity-building, and international coordination actions designed to strengthen supported initiatives and expand the reach of the collaborative ecosystem.

The following diagram summarizes the structure of the Collaborative Action Platform. It illustrates how the ecosystem connects through four areas of action implemented through concrete mechanisms that transform ideas into collaborative initiatives with real impact. More than a program, the Platform functions as an orchestrator of an ecosystem, connecting knowledge, resources, and people toward a shared ambition: building the Future Urban Living through collaboration, climate adaptation, and Nature-based Solutions.

Collaborative Actions and Projects

Implementation Mechanisms

Supported Solutions
Working Groups
Strategic Interventions

Areas of Action

Local Leadership
Innovative Finance
Public Policy & Advocacy
Communication & Narrative
Working Groups

Ecosystem

CSOs
Private Sector
Private Foundations
Universities
Public Sector

Collaborative Action Platform

In the chapters that follow, we will explore each area of action and illustrate how these mechanisms function in practice.

Local Leadership

Within the Collaborative Action Platform, local leadership has become more than a workstream: it has evolved into a movement dedicated to strengthening the voices of those who live and innovate in the most vulnerable territories. It is rooted in a simple yet powerful idea: the better prepared and more connected local leaders are, the greater their ability to influence public policy and reshape the future of cities. Guided by this perspective, the Local Leadership Working Group—led by Mariana de Paula (Instituto Decodifica) and Pierre-André Martin (Ecomimesis) with the support of Observatório das Baixadas—focused on training and empowering grassroots leaders on the climate adaptation frontline, thereby translating climate justice from principle into practice.

One of its most significant contributions is financial support for activities in the COP30 Yellow Zones, an effort that decentralizes climate debates and brings the voices of Belém's vulnerable communities to the center of international discussions. The group also supported the event “De Olho no Clima”, held on Caratateua Island by Observatório das Baixadas in partnership with UNICEF. The meeting brought together young people from low-lying communities in the Amazon to discuss green job opportunities and the use of artificial intelligence in local climate solutions.

The group also enabled the participation of female leaders—a Black woman from the Perifa Connection Network and an Indigenous woman from the Amazon—at COP30, reinforcing the Platform's commitment to diversity, equity, and representation. These experiences are currently being documented through an audiovisual production that will soon be released, helping ensure that local leadership becomes visible and inspiring.

The vision that climate adaptation is only equitable when built together with those who experience its impacts resonated across the Platform's network. An example of this synergy emerged through the collaboration between Observatório das Baixadas and Fundação Grupo Boticário: Observatório das Baixadas shared its experience in community communication and

citizen science, enabling the Foundation to strengthen the integration of climate justice into its Nature-based Solutions initiatives.

This collaboration reflects what the Platform does best: creating connections that reshape both thinking and action. As a result, local leadership has increasingly been recognized as a powerful engine of innovation and impact, capable of inspiring new policies and initiatives.

The Platform also expanded opportunities for these leaders through training and visibility opportunities, including participation in the BMW Foundation's The Leaders Collaboration Forum in Germany, which brought together representatives of the three supported solutions—Observatório das Baixadas, Fundação Grupo Boticário, and RegeneraRS—as well as a pitch training program delivered by a specialized consultancy. These experiences demonstrated that local leadership grows stronger when territorial voices engage with global networks, expanding their influence and capacity to inspire transformation.

In the next section, we present the Platform-supported solution that best illustrates this approach in practice: Observatório das Baixadas, which has been transforming community knowledge and locally generated data into new benchmarks for climate adaptation and urban justice in Brazil.

Observatório das Baixadas

Observatório das Baixadas emerged in the Amazon with an ambitious purpose: to transform community voices, local knowledge, and data into influence. Operating across the coastal lowlands of Pará—among the Brazilian regions most vulnerable to climate change—the initiative connects science, territory, and social participation, becoming an important reference in climate justice, adaptation, and urban resilience.

Among its key innovations is the Atlas das Baixadas, an open-access digital platform that maps socio-environmental vulnerabilities and climate risks in territories across Brazil (<https://atlasobxmobile.netlify.app/>). The platform highlights critical areas, such as vulnerable communities and hydrological risk zones, offering valuable information to support climate adaptation strategies for both policymakers and citizens.

The organization is also developing "De Olho no Clima", a platform focused on environmental education in vulnerable neighborhoods. The tool aims to help communities interpret climate data and monitor environmental risks. Together, these initiatives democratize access to information, connect science and territory, and strengthen community resilience.

According to Andrew Leal:

"Our understanding is that climate adaptation is only effective when it is built with and by the people who experience risk on a daily basis. Citizen participation through these tools is not simply about collecting data, but about strengthening community autonomy so that adaptation solutions are viable and appropriate to each territory, combining technical knowledge with ancestral practices that already work locally."

With the support of the Collaborative Action Platform, Observatório das Baixadas achieved a significant leap in both scale and institutional maturity. Technical support helped refine the Atlas's participatory methodologies, establishing structured frameworks for community engagement and data collection.

Financial support enabled the expansion of the team and the scaling of in-person workshops to new regions beginning in 2026, with activities planned in Cametá (PA), São Luís (MA), and Maceió (AL).

The Platform's support also opened doors to international spaces. The organization began participating in strategic global events, such as SB62 in Bonn, Germany, expanding its learning network and building connections with other climate adaptation initiatives. In addition, Observatório das Baixadas participated in COP29 in Azerbaijan and COP30 in Belém, including involvement in the organization of the COP das Baixadas. Another key outcome has been the strengthening of strategic partnerships fostered through the Platform's network. Observatório das Baixadas consolidated collaborations with national and international institutions and funds, such as the Agbara Fund for Black Women and the KondZilla Institute, increasing its visibility, credibility, and fundraising capabilities.

In this way, the Collaborative Action Platform's support has not only strengthened Observatório das Baixadas but also positioned it as a legitimate voice for the Amazon and Brazilian marginalized communities in global debates on climate adaptation and justice. The initiative reflects the Platform's broader ambition: empowering local leadership capable of influencing national and international agendas by connecting data, culture, and community to transform the future of cities.

Source: [instagram.com/observatoriodasbaixadas/](https://www.instagram.com/observatoriodasbaixadas/).

Innovative Finance

Transforming cities and advancing climate adaptation requires resources, yet access to financing remains one of the main barriers for organizations working in vulnerable territories. In response to this challenge, the Innovative Finance Working Group was established with the mission of bridging the gap between global capital and frontline leaders. Led by Greta Salvi (European Union in Brazil), the group brought together experts, investors, and community organizations to explore a fundamental question: why do resources fail to reach those who need them most? Early discussions revealed structural barriers ranging from excessive bureaucracy and the disconnect between funders and local realities to a lack of financial instruments tailored for grassroots initiatives.

It was against this backdrop that Gaio Jorge, founder of the Coletivo Criação and delegate for the Atlantic Forest Biome at COP30, brought a new perspective to the group: that of someone who experiences the challenges of marginalized urban communities on a daily basis. His contribution served as a pivotal turning point for the initiative, helping shift the narrative toward recognizing these territories as active agents of climate adaptation rather than merely beneficiaries.

This perspective was further developed during the research process coordinated by Gaio. Through interviews and analysis, it became clear that barriers to funding were not merely technical, but structural—rooted in historical inequalities that continue to prevent Black, Indigenous, and marginalized communities from accessing the same resources and opportunities available to other territories.

The process of listening and analysis led to the development of the report “Adaptação e Periferias: Estratégias para um Financiamento Justo”, launched during COP30 in Belém. The document reflects a perspective grounded in marginalized urban communities, combining lived experience, contextual sensitivity, and attentive listening to local realities. It presents practical recommendations for community organizations, investors, and policymakers. Key guidance includes:

- Strategies for identifying funding opportunities, structuring projects, establishing partnerships, and strengthening financial governance;
- Approaches for bridging the gap between impact-driven investors and territory-based initiatives;
- Examples of best practices and innovative mechanisms, such as climate microcredit and blended finance, aimed at inspiring new solutions tailored to marginalized urban contexts

As Gaio Jorge emphasized:

“It is essential to influence and mobilize investors so they look at Nature-based Solutions in marginalized urban neighborhoods, understand their specific contexts, and expand access to resources for those who need them most.”

The study was developed in collaboration with initiatives representing different dimensions of climate action in Brazil: Horta Maria Angu, which illustrates the potential of community solutions and urban agriculture as concrete responses to the environmental crisis; the Climate Justice Program, by Greenpeace Brazil, which brought reflections on the need to incorporate racial and territorial equity into financial flows; and RegeneraRS, which shared lessons on the management of philanthropic funds and the challenge of balancing scale, agility, and social impact in the reconstruction of territories affected by disasters. These contributions reinforce the report's cross-sectoral nature and the commitment of the Collaborative Action Platform to connecting grassroots experiences with institutional investment structures.

Ultimately, the report goes beyond a technical study. It is an invitation to rethink how climate finance operates—placing territories at the heart of decision-making and promoting investment models that prioritize equity, accessibility, and inclusion.

Teia de Soluções (Web of Solutions): When Collaboration Accelerates Impact

The spirit of the Platform's Innovative Finance group also materialized in another initiative within the ecosystem: Teia de Soluções – Resiliência Climática RS (Web of Solutions for Climate Resilience in Rio Grande do Sul). Although the initiative had already been under discussion before the creation of the Platform, it was within this collaborative space that the partnership between Fundação Grupo Boticário and RegeneraRS gained the alignment, energy, and momentum needed to move the initiative forward.

Together with the Southern Regional Development Bank (BRDE) and FAPERGS, the initiative launched a call that mobilized R\$18 million to support nature-based projects aimed at the recovery and climate adaptation of coastal municipalities and areas affected by the 2024 floods in the state of Rio Grande do Sul.

The program was structured around two complementary pillars: Adaptation in Action, focused on infrastructure, ecosystem restoration, and disaster prevention; and Science for Adaptation, dedicated to applied research and integrated water resource management. The call attracted a high volume of applications and mobilized significant financial resources, demonstrating the potential of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) as catalysts for reconstruction and resilience. This collaboration between Fundação Grupo Boticário and RegeneraRS offers a compelling model of governance. While Fundação Grupo Boticário provided technical leadership, RegeneraRS played a key role as a territorial connector, linking funding mechanisms with local realities and needs.

RegeneraRS

RegeneraRS emerged during the historic 2024 floods in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, when the Gerdau Johannpeter family, moved by the devastation across the state, recognized that emergency responses alone would not be enough. Rebuilding Rio Grande do Sul would require a more structured effort, combining resource mobilization with a long-term vision for the region's future. With this goal in mind, the Helda Gerdau Institute—a nonprofit association created by

the family to amplify positive social impact initiatives—partnered with Din4mo to design an innovative model for orchestrating resources. Soon, companies such as Gerdau and Vale joined the project, and over the first year, additional partners came on board, including the Baumgart family, Grupo Fleury, and Grupo +Unidos (Alcoa, Qualcomm, Microsoft, and Sylvamo).

This broad articulation reflects a shared understanding: that rebuilding Rio Grande do Sul requires a collective, cross-sector effort, bringing together businesses, philanthropic actors, and civil society in a common commitment to regeneration. RegeneraRS stands out for combining a strong focus on impact with a commitment to generating knowledge for the future. Rather than simply financing projects, it seeks to catalyze resources, accelerate solutions, and build a network capable of learning from crises and making strategic leaps toward more advanced responses—overcoming historical gaps while speeding up the state's regeneration. At the core of this vision is the concept of leapfrogging: instead of rebuilding what was lost, it supports solutions that allow Rio Grande do Sul to move forward in its regeneration process with greater efficiency, innovation, and reduced environmental impact.

The Collaborative Action Platform supported RegeneraRS primarily by strengthening the fund's management and communication processes. The first step involved a mentorship process led by Sense-Lab, which supported RegeneraRS's Impact, Learning, and Communication team in structuring its impact theses and improving how its results and lessons could be communicated. Following this, the Platform supported the engagement of a monitoring and evaluation specialist to refine performance indicators, systematize information, and strengthen the communication of outcomes.

According to Manuela Fonseca, Impact, Learning, and Communication Coordinator at RegeneraRS: "The Platform helped us greatly in improving how we communicate our results and how we monitor and evaluate existing projects—something that will continue well beyond this report."

This work resulted in stronger governance for funded projects and laid the foundation for the RegeneraRS Annual Report, whose design was also supported financially by the Platform. The report consolidated the fund's main achievements and became a key tool for transparency and partner engagement. RegeneraRS was also integrated into the Platform's

broader ecosystem of solutions, participating in exchanges and global visibility spaces such as the Leaders Collaboration Forum in Germany—an experience RegeneraRS itself highlights as one of the most inspiring moments of its journey within the Platform.

At the same time, RegeneraRS has been advancing the development of CoalizãoS, an effort to expand cross-sector collaboration for the resilient reconstruction of the state. In this process, Sense-Lab provided methodological support for structuring the project development team, assisting with process mapping and management tools. Through this journey, RegeneraRS has established itself as an example of innovation in climate governance, demonstrating that rebuilding can also mean an opportunity for transformation. By supporting the institutional development of the fund and facilitating connections with new partners and global networks, the Collaborative Action Platform reinforces its role as a catalyst for collaboration and the scaling of solutions, advancing a model of equitable and resilient reconstruction capable of inspiring Future Urban Living across Brazil.

IMAGE

Catalytic Fund

We allocate resources to education, housing, business, and urban solutions, prioritizing innovative, structural projects with scalability and the potential to attract co-financing.

PRIORITY AREAS. REGENERARS ANNUAL REPORT, 2025

Public Policy & Advocacy

We have seen how innovative finance can accelerate Nature-based Solutions (NbS). But what if governments themselves formally recognized these solutions as an essential component of urban infrastructure, establishing targets, policy guidelines, and dedicated budget allocations for their implementation? This is precisely the ambition of the Public Policy & Advocacy Working Group, created to ensure that the ideas emerging from the Collaborative Action Platform do not remain isolated initiatives, but instead evolve into lasting public policies and legal frameworks.

The group is led by Laura Astrolabio, a lawyer and MA in Public Policy and Human Rights, specialist in public policy advocacy, and co-founder of the A Tenda das Candidatas Instituto, with technical support from Luciana Nery, an expert in Nature-based Solutions. Together with specialists and representatives from Brazil's Ministry of the Environment, the group set out to address an important challenge: consolidating a Brazilian concept of Nature-based Solutions. Its main outcome was the development of a white paper proposing legal and policy foundations for formally incorporating NbS into Brazil's climate adaptation policies. In essence, a white paper functions as a bridge between science and policymaking: it provides evidence, legal interpretation, and concrete pathways for governments to translate ideas into public policy instruments. In the case of NbS, this formalization establishes a solid legal basis enabling municipal, state, and federal authorities to incorporate these approaches into climate adaptation strategies, public budgets, and housing and environmental programs.

The group's work begins with a simple but powerful insight: although the international concept of NbS is widely endorsed by the United Nations (UN), its meaning must also reflect the Brazilian reality, including its biomes, inequalities, and traditional knowledge. As stated in the paper:

“Adopting and institutionalizing a Brazilian concept of Nature-based Solutions is a civilizational choice. It means recognizing nature as an ally—not an obstacle—in building a more just, resilient, and sustainable future.”

According to Laura Astrolabio, translating the concept of NbS into the Brazilian context also means valuing traditional knowledge systems and strengthening social and political awareness around the topic. For her, the debate in Brazil cannot be limited to adapting imported models; it must recognize the diversity of territories and the historical contribution of Indigenous, quilombola, and other traditional communities to the protection of ecosystems. Climate justice, she argues, requires democratizing knowledge and ensuring the inclusion of these actors in decision-making spaces. From this perspective, NbS are not merely technical solutions, but also cultural, social, and political expressions of a balanced relationship with nature. In this sense, to ensure that Indigenous voices were meaningfully included, the group engaged a researcher of Indigenous studies who conducted interviews with community leaders and incorporated their perspectives into the final document. Delivered to the Ministry of the Environment in November 2025, the paper outlines three key recommendations:

- Institutionalize the Brazilian concept of NbS through a Presidential Decree and an Ordinary Law, guaranteeing legal certainty and institutional continuity for national climate adaptation strategies.
- Embed climate justice and territorial diversity as guiding principles, recognizing ancestral and community knowledge systems (Indigenous, quilombola, riverside, and urban communities) as pillars of local innovation, aligned with the Platform’s Local Leadership working group.
- Establish financing mechanisms and participatory governance mechanisms, integrating NbS into housing, sanitation, and infrastructure plans with binding targets, climate budgets, and social oversight, particularly attentive to gender and racial equity dimensions.

These recommendations position NbS not only as environmental solutions, but as pathways toward social justice, linking nature, economic development, and human dignity. The group's work represents a decisive step in moving the Platform's agenda from experimentation to structural transformation.

The white paper reinforces that the cities of the future will only be sustainable if they are also institutionally grounded, with clear legal frameworks, defined responsibilities, and guaranteed social participation.

IMAGE

This vision—that nature should play a central role in urban infrastructure—strongly resonates with the trajectory of Fundação Grupo Boticário. For more than three decades, the institution has worked to promote biodiversity conservation and advance Nature-based Solutions in Brazil. The convergence between the Foundation's longstanding work and the purpose of the Collaborative Action Platform reflects a shared ambition: expanding the adoption of NbS as a strategic pillar for climate adaptation and the future of cities. In the next chapter, we will explore how Fundação Grupo Boticário has been translating this commitment into concrete action, combining science, technology, and social engagement to advance a new agenda for sustainable urban transformation.

Fundação Grupo Boticário

Fundação Grupo Boticário is one of Brazil's leading environmental institutions, with more than 35 years dedicated to biodiversity conservation and the advancement of sustainable solutions. Recognizing that a healthy environment underpins both social well-being and a strong economy, the organization currently focuses its efforts on climate adaptation, water security, and coastal and marine resilience.

Over the years, Fundação Grupo Boticário has become a key advocate for Nature-Based Solutions (NbS), translating science into public policy, social engagement, and scalable climate adaptation models. Through its Solução Natureza Program, the Foundation works across four complementary areas of action to advance NbS: project incubation, public awareness and

engagement, financial mobilization, and legal frameworks. This integrated approach positions the institution as a bridge between technical knowledge and public action, linking companies, governments, and communities around a shared vision: a more resilient, greener, and more inclusive urban future.

IMAGE

Source: [Fundação Grupo Boticário](#).

Participation in the Collaborative Action Platform reinforced the Foundation's role of coordination and mutual learning. Within the Platform's ecosystem, the organization played a strategic role in advancing awareness and engagement around the NbS agenda. At the same time, interaction with other supported solutions generated valuable learning opportunities. The exchange with Observatório das Baixadas, for instance, expanded the Foundation's engagement with citizen science, recognizing the importance of community-generated data as a foundation for climate adaptation strategies. This more territorial perspective strengthened the Foundation's connection to the broader climate justice agenda, bringing technical debates closer to the lived realities of communities most affected by environmental challenges.

As summarized by Rubiane Spina, from Fundação Grupo Boticário:

"Our experience with the Platform was transformative because it placed us on the other side of the table. We are usually the ones offering support and mentorship, but this time we were the beneficiaries. This shift allowed us to see our own institutional challenges differently. We joined without fully knowing what the Platform was, simply willing to contribute and raise awareness about the topic, but we ended up finding a space for genuine exchange. It became a process of listening, reflection, and collective learning."

Communication & Narrative

In collaborative networks, knowledge is what ensures that action leaves a lasting legacy. With this in mind, the Communication & Narrative Working Group was created to capture, organize and amplify the learnings generated through the Collaborative Action Platform, transforming lived experiences, partnerships, and outcomes into narratives capable of inspiring new actors and strengthening the ecosystem.

Led by Heiko Spitzeck, Director of the Sustainability Center at Fundação Dom Cabral, the group was guided by a simple but fundamental belief:

“Without consolidating learnings and sharing them widely, our progress toward more sustainable urban living will remain limited.”

Guided by this perspective, the group worked to document the Platform's entire journey, compiling interviews, reports, and reflections from the other working groups and shaping them into this publication. The report captures the key lessons and results from the Platform's first cycle. Launched at pre-COP events in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, and also showcased at COP30 in Belém, the document is one of the most strategic outcomes of the Communication & Narrative working group: more than a record of activities, it serves as a collective memory, an evaluation tool, and a source of inspiration for future partnerships, public policies, and new cycles of collaborative action.

Throughout the process, the group also identified spontaneous collaborations that emerged from interactions between supported solutions and Working Groups, highlighting the network's role as a living space for collective learning. Examples such as the partnership between Observatório das Baixadas and Fundação Grupo Boticário, which brought together citizen science and Nature-based Solutions, or the engagement between RegeneraRS and new financial partners illustrate how the Platform generates value beyond its planned actions, fostering transformative connections across territories, knowledge systems, and stakeholders.

Complementary initiatives have also helped amplify the impact of the Communication & Narrative group by extending the reach of the Platform's key findings and messages. A notable example is the documentary video produced by BBC StoryWorks, presented in the following section. The film highlights how local voices are increasingly shaping the global debate on climate adaptation and urban justice, reinforcing the Collaborative Action Platform as a living ecosystem of connections and shared learning capable of driving meaningful change.

Transforming Cities – Collaborative Action Platform Brazil

Image from the video Transforming Cities

Collaborative Action Platform Brazil, available on the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt YouTube channel.

The video, titled Transforming Cities – Collaborative Action Platform Brazil (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mXNJVNQfbpk>), was produced by BBC StoryWorks Commercial Productions for the BMW Foundation Herbert Quandt as part of the second edition of the Transforming Cities series, presented by C40 Cities. Filmed in Belém, the documentary shifts the focus from technical debate to the role of local leadership in driving climate solutions. Its significance lies in bringing global visibility to a multi-stakeholder initiative that links community-led innovation (Observatório), catalytic investment (FGB and Regenera), and strategic global engagement (CAP). In doing so, the film highlights a central message: the most transformative responses to the climate crisis often emerge from the base of the social pyramid.

Orchestrating The Ecosystem: Key Elements For Success

Addressing climate adaptation requires more than isolated initiatives—it requires coordination across sectors, institutions, and knowledge systems. The Collaborative Action Platform was created to play precisely this role: orchestrating a multi-stakeholder ecosystem, aligning actors, initiatives, and resources around a shared ambition – strengthening climate adaptation through Nature-based Solutions (NbS) while advancing a new vision for sustainable urban living. More than simply connecting projects, the Platform operates as an integrative agent that aligns perspectives, builds bridges between sectors, and translates collective ambition into concrete action.

Over the course of its journey, the Platform has developed orchestration structures and instruments that ensure strategic alignment, diverse participation, and operational fluidity, transforming the complexity of the network into a coordinated system for collective learning and impact.

Defining The Architecture: Roles And Responsibilities

The Platform's architecture was designed to bring together complementary strengths across organizations and sectors. Sense-Lab provided the technical and methodological backbone in the first cycle, structuring collaborative processes, facilitating dialogue among partners, and systematizing the learning generated throughout the initiative. Within this ecosystem, partner organizations are both beneficiaries and collaborators: while receiving technical and financial support, they also bring valuable expertise, practical experience, and territorial legitimacy. Three initiatives illustrate how these complementary roles translate into action. Fundação Grupo Boticário anchors the Nature-based Solutions (NbS) agenda, linking scientific innovation with advocacy and policy engagement; Observatório das Baixadas strengthens the role of citizen knowledge and local expertise, reinforcing the social dimension of climate adaptation; and RegeneraRS

demonstrates how innovative financing models can support resilient reconstruction and territorial recovery.

To ensure technical coherence, diversity of perspectives, and transparent decision-making, the Platform relies on an Advisory Council composed of experts and leaders from multiple sectors. Members include Aline Odara (CEO of Agbara Fund), Bruna Helena Barros, Bruno Girardi (Impact Investment Director at SITAWI), Cecilia Polacow Herzog (PhD candidate at the University of Lisbon and specialist in Nature-based Solutions), Fernando Thiers (Principal at Boston Consulting Group), and Thereza Paiva (former Secretary of Science and Technology of the City of Rio de Janeiro and professor at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro).

The Council helps align strategic priorities, review key initiatives, and provide constructive feedback on the outputs generated by the Working Groups. Its work strengthens the Platform's legitimacy while ensuring that each step of the ecosystem balances technical rigor with collaborative innovation. Together, these elements create a continuous flow of value: from scientific knowledge to territorial practice, from territorial experience to public policy, and from policy innovation to financial mechanisms, forming a virtuous cycle of learning and impact.

IMAGE

Source: BMW Foundation.

From Design To Delivery: Mechanisms That Drive The Ecosystem

Three key mechanisms connect the Platform's design to concrete implementation. The Working Groups, linked to the Platform's four areas of action, function as spaces for co-creation and experimentation. Within these groups, participants collectively develop shared strategies and outputs, such as the financing guide, the white paper, agendas for local leadership, and communication materials. The Supported Solutions serve as the Platform's living laboratories: existing initiatives selected for their potential to generate both impact and learning. In this cycle, they include Observatório das Baixadas, focused on citizen science and local leadership; Fundação Grupo Boticário, advancing Nature-based Solutions; and RegeneraRS, which applies innovative models for resilient reconstruction.

Finally, Strategic Interventions—such as mentorship programs, capacity-building activities, and international partnerships—help accelerate the maturity of supported solutions and connect them to broader collaboration networks. In doing so, they continuously feed the ecosystem with new insights and learnings.

Collaborative Governance And Incentives

The Platform operates through a collaborative, inclusive, and learning-oriented governance model. Decisions are shaped in multi-stakeholder workshops that bring together technical experts, researchers, businesses, public institutions, and community leaders. This format allows each area to advance in alignment while preserving the autonomy and identity of the participating initiatives.

Sense-Lab played a central role in coordinating and sustaining the collaborative routine, acting far beyond providing technical support to solutions and Working Groups. Functioning as a true orchestrator of an ecosystem, it organized regular meetings, enabled dialogue among participants, and systematized learnings and deliverables. Transparency and continuous knowledge exchange were maintained through simple mechanisms for documentation, sharing, and results tracking.

According to Andrew Leal, from Observatório das Baixadas: **“The meetings always had the support of Sense-Lab, which even assisted us directly with operational matters. The methodologies used in both in-person and online workshops received their direct assistance, including methodological templates that we applied in the Atlas das Baixadas workshops. Sense-Lab’s participation was fundamental.”**

This work reinforced Sense-Lab’s role as a key facilitator and connector of the Platform, ensuring fluid collaboration processes, high-quality deliverables, and coherence across the ecosystem.

In addition to governance structures, the Platform combines financial support with opportunities for visibility and learning. Technical assistance, territorial coordination grants, and seed funding help remove barriers and accelerate initiatives, while mentorship programs, exchanges, and opportunities for public engagement strengthen leadership recognition and

participation. Together, these elements create an environment of trust and shared responsibility—a living ecosystem where ideas evolve into action, and action into collective impact.

Among these mechanisms, particular emphasis should be given to the Advisory Council, collaborative initiatives between supported solutions and Working Groups (Collabs), and Strategic Interventions, which operate in an interconnected manner helping align visions, disseminate knowledge, and sustain the implementation of the Platform's supported solutions. Through this collaborative architecture, combining strategic guidance, shared work spaces, and targeted interventions, the Collaborative Action Platform has established itself as a coordinating hub for an ecosystem of impact, capable of aligning diverse purposes around a shared agenda of urban transformation and climate resilience.

Collabs

Within the Collaborative Action Platform, Collabs are where collaboration becomes action. Designed as living laboratories, they connect initiatives, territories, and organizations to co-create solutions for climate adaptation and sustainable urban living. During the Platform's first cycle, these collaborative spaces translated dialogue into concrete partnerships among the supported solutions, reinforcing the Platform's role as a catalyst for a broader ecosystem of collaboration.

The partnerships that emerged between Observatório das Baixadas, Fundação Grupo Boticário, and RegeneraRS—such as the Web of Solutions—illustrate how the Platform fosters synergies that expand the reach of individual efforts while generating systemic impact. These collaborations reveal one of the Platform's most important strengths: its capacity to inspire relationships that go beyond planned outputs. When organizations connect around shared purpose, data, and territorial knowledge, solutions emerge organically—transforming networks into collective results and strengthening the ecosystem shaping the Future Urban Living.

Future Urban Living

Future Urban Living begins today. Climate impacts are already reshaping daily life: longer heat waves, extreme rainfall, water scarcity, landslides, and floods that disrupt entire neighborhoods. Unless climate adaptation becomes central to both public and private decision-making, many cities—particularly those located in vulnerable, riverside, coastal, or low-lying areas—may shrink drastically or even disappear. The cost of inaction, in human, economic, and environmental terms, will far exceed the investments required today to prevent and adapt. Yet the future of cities is not predetermined; it is being shaped by the choices we make, the alliances we build, and the solutions we choose to support. The Collaborative Action Platform emerged from this very conviction: that Future Urban Living requires collective effort among governments, businesses, communities, scientific institutions, and civil society. No single actor holds all the answers, but each holds part of the solution.

Lessons from the Platform's first cycle demonstrate the power of collaboration. When local leadership is empowered, when financing becomes more inclusive, when public policies incorporate nature, and when knowledge is shared, cities begin to transform. The three solutions supported by the Platform—Observatório das Baixadas, Fundação Grupo Boticário, and RegeneraRS—embody this vision, showing how citizen science, Nature-based Solutions, and resilient reconstruction can converge within a single ecosystem of impact.

IMAGE

Source: Artesano.

Equally important were the Working Groups, which translated dialogue into action. Focused on Local Leadership, Innovative Finance, Public Policy & Advocacy, and Communication & Narrative, these groups structured the Platform's technical and conceptual foundations. They developed methodologies, generated key outputs, and built bridges between actors who previously operated in separate spheres.

The Platform has demonstrated that complex ecosystems can indeed be orchestrated. By bridging technology and territory, innovation and equity, and data and lived experience, it generated tangible outcomes and new pathways for collective action. The next challenge is scale. Each new city, territory, or partner joining the network expands the Platform's capacity to drive impact. The foundations are now in place: collaborative governance, integrated action mechanisms, and a diverse community committed to ensuring Future Urban Living on a rapidly changing planet.

For those who believe that equitable climate adaptation, greener cities, and resilient communities are a shared responsibility, the Platform extends an open invitation: join the journey. Bring your knowledge, your data, your perspective, and your energy to strengthen the collaborative ecosystem shaping Future Urban Living. Building more just and sustainable cities is a shared endeavor—and it is already underway.

IMAGE

Source: [Engenharia Hoje, 2021](#).

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Supported Solutions:

OBSERVATÓRIO DAS BAIXADAS

<https://www.observatoriodasbaixadas.org/>

Instagram: @observatoriodasbaixadas

FUNDAÇÃO GRUPO BOTICÁRIO

<https://fundacaogrupoboticario.org.br/>

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REGENERARS

<https://regenerars.org/>

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