

# No Net Land Take & Urban Green: compatible or conflicting goals?

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**ESPON**



Co-funded by  
the European Union  
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**vrp** ruimte & planning



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Desesaling in Milano (source: own picture)

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**Some clarification?**

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# NNL, NNLT and NNSS?

- NN **Loss** for Biodiversity and Land Degradation (UN)
  - NN **Land Take** (EC, 2011)
  - NN **Soil Sealing** (EC, 2025)
  - Net **Gain** (UK, Wales)
- 
- **Densification & Desealing combined with renaturalisation** (NBS)
  - Space for new developments shrinks ...
  - Active land policy and projects are crucial!

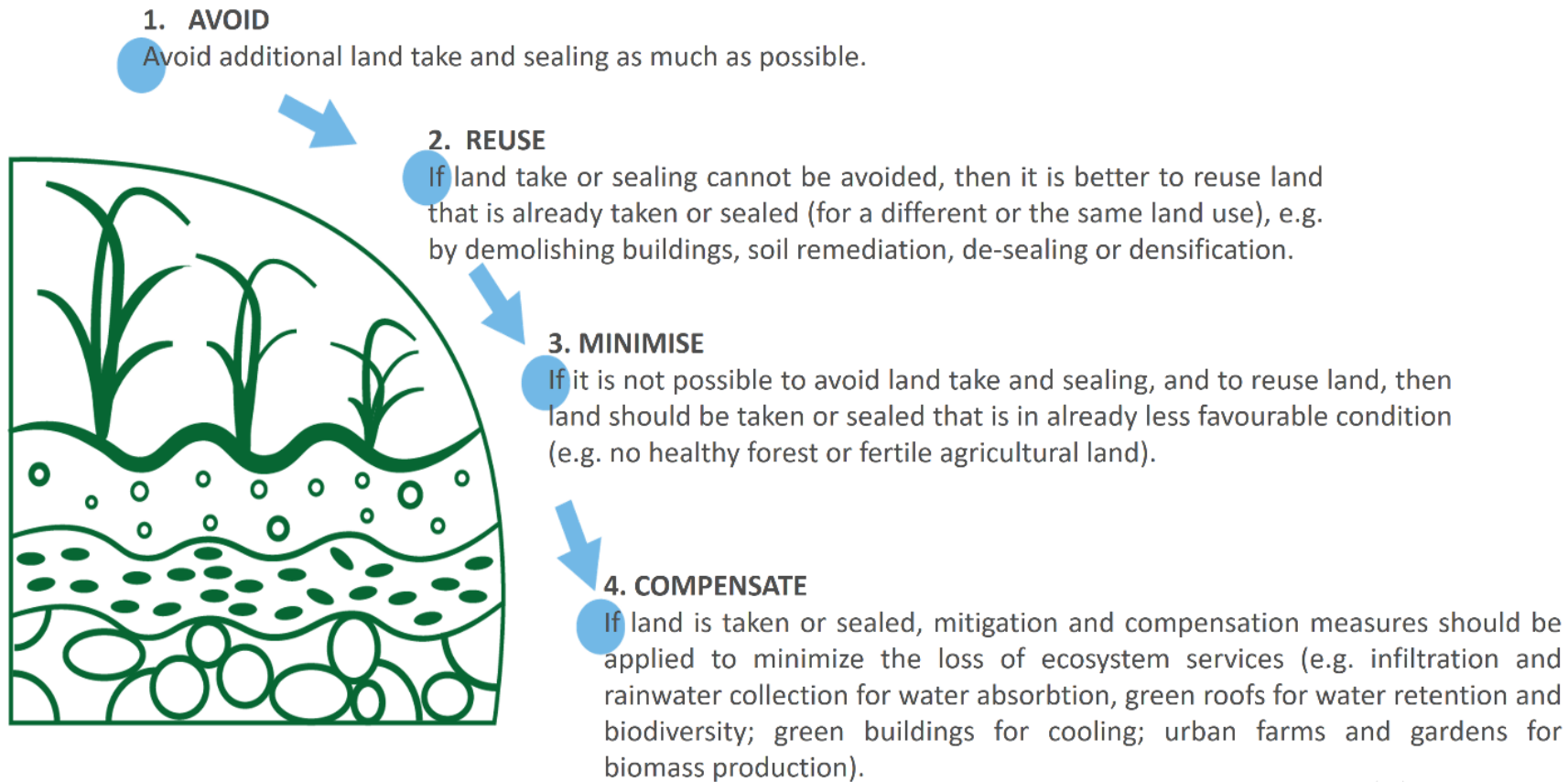
# **The Nature Restoration Law**

- Article 8 Urban ecosystems
- No Net Loss 2024-2030
- Net Gain 2031- ...

# The Soil Monitoring Law

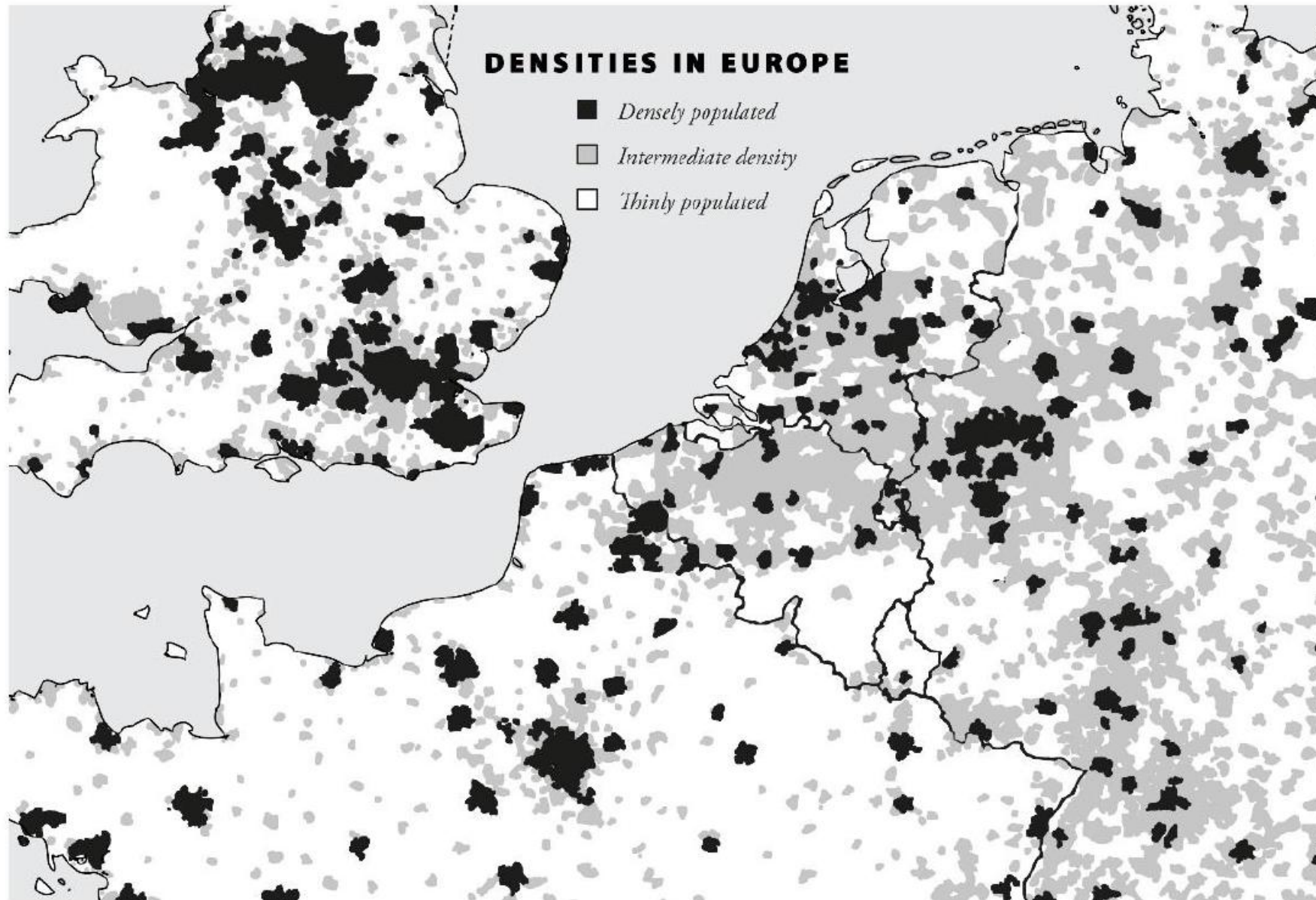
- Roadmap to a Resource Efficient Europe (2011)
- Soil Strategy for 2030 (2021)
- (Soil Health Law)
- Soil Monitoring Law (2025)

# Land Take Mitigation (Article 12)

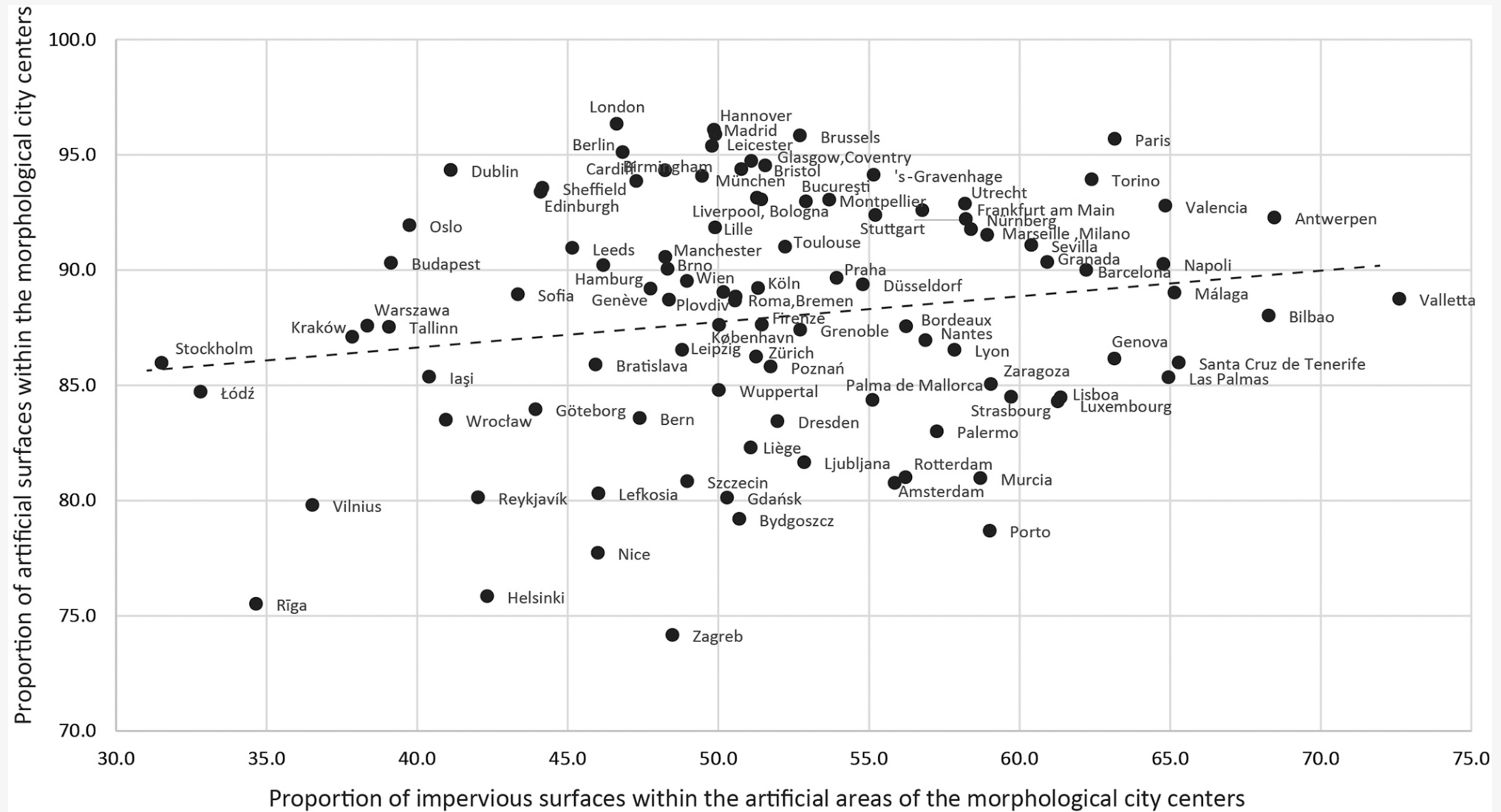


# The Perforated City

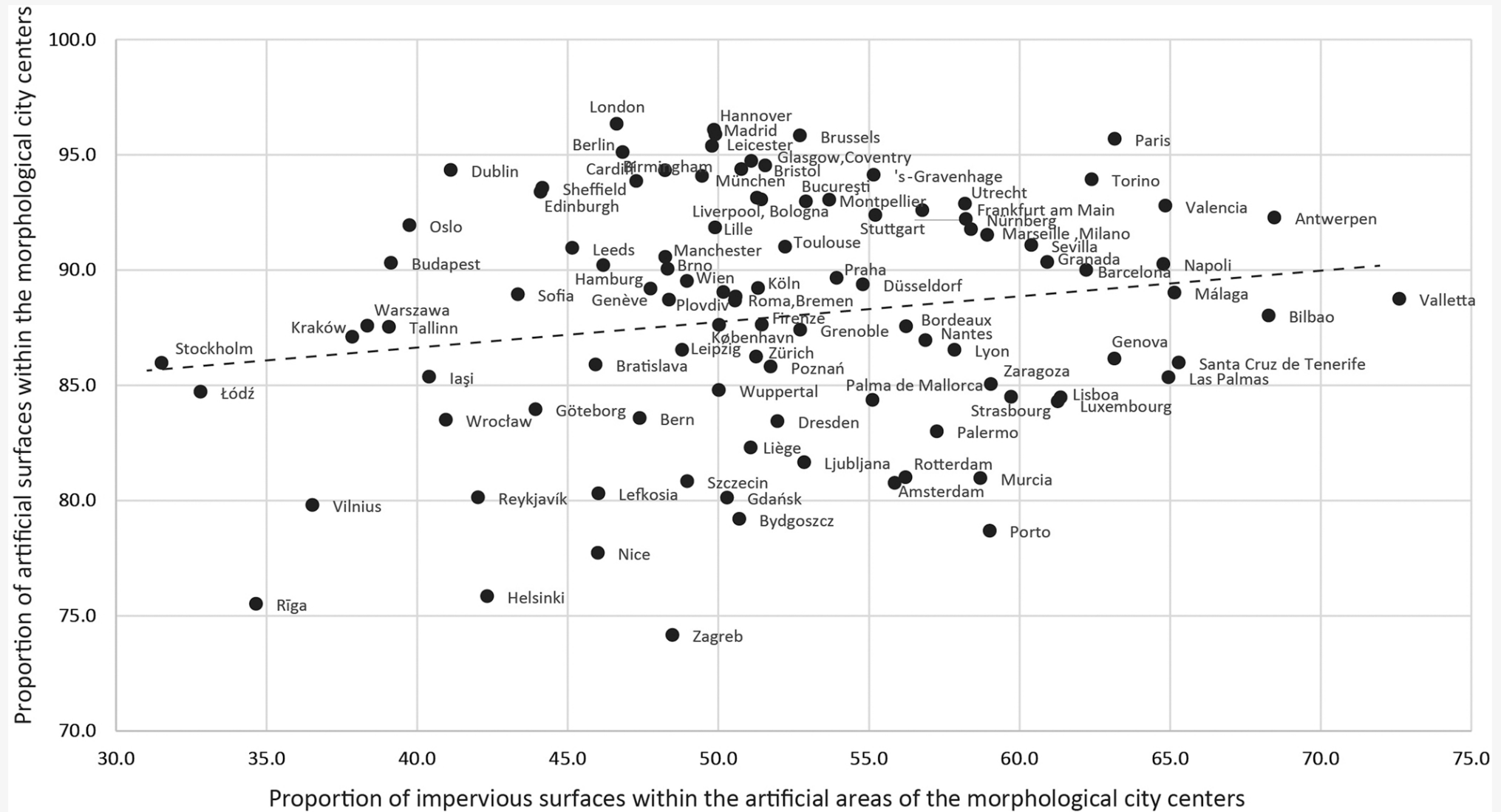
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Source: European Environment Agency, 2014



Source: Decoville & Feltgen, 2023



# Sealing & Desealing in Settlement

## Densification and Land Recycling:

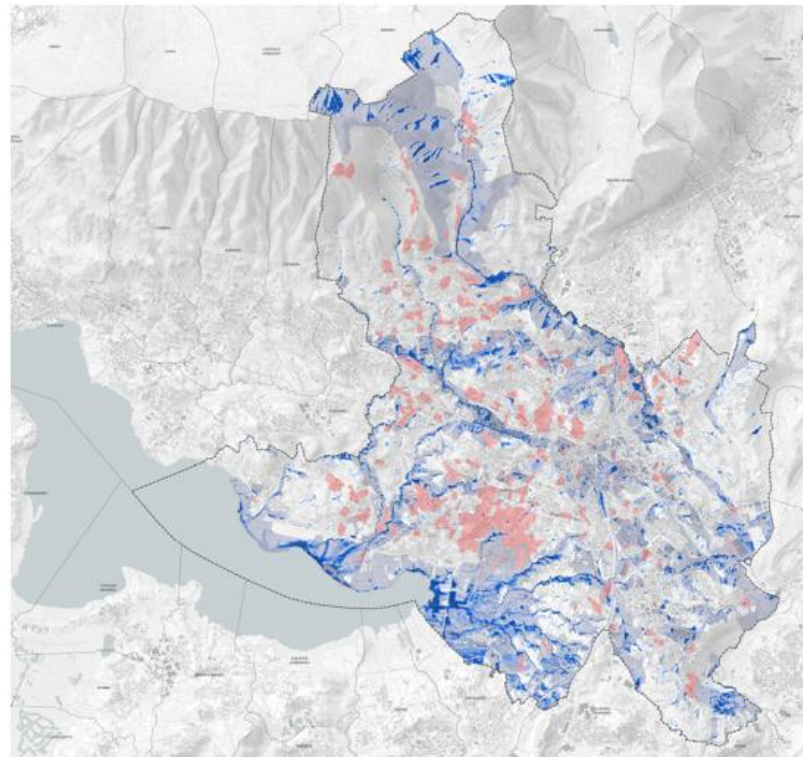
- Densification in space and time dimensions (user-density)
- Densification in design (floor area ratio)
- Low foot-print, Low soil-impact (location trade-off)

## Desealing and Regreening:

- Public roads, parking lots, public domain and buildings (sources)
- Ecological potential (location trade-off)

> Active land policy, compact design and public projects

# Green-Blue Infrastructure (top-down design)



Vulnerabilità idraulica ai fenomeni di pioggia intensa

AREE DI POTENZIALE PERICOLOSITÀ

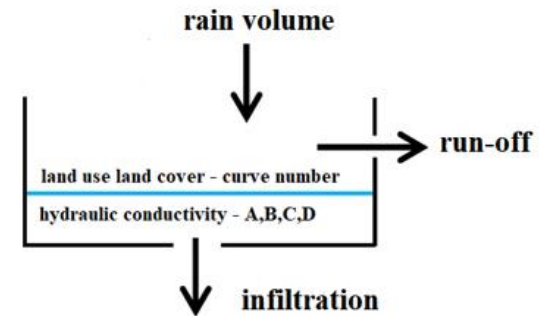
▨ Aree di potenziale ruscellamento

▨ Aree di potenziale accumulo

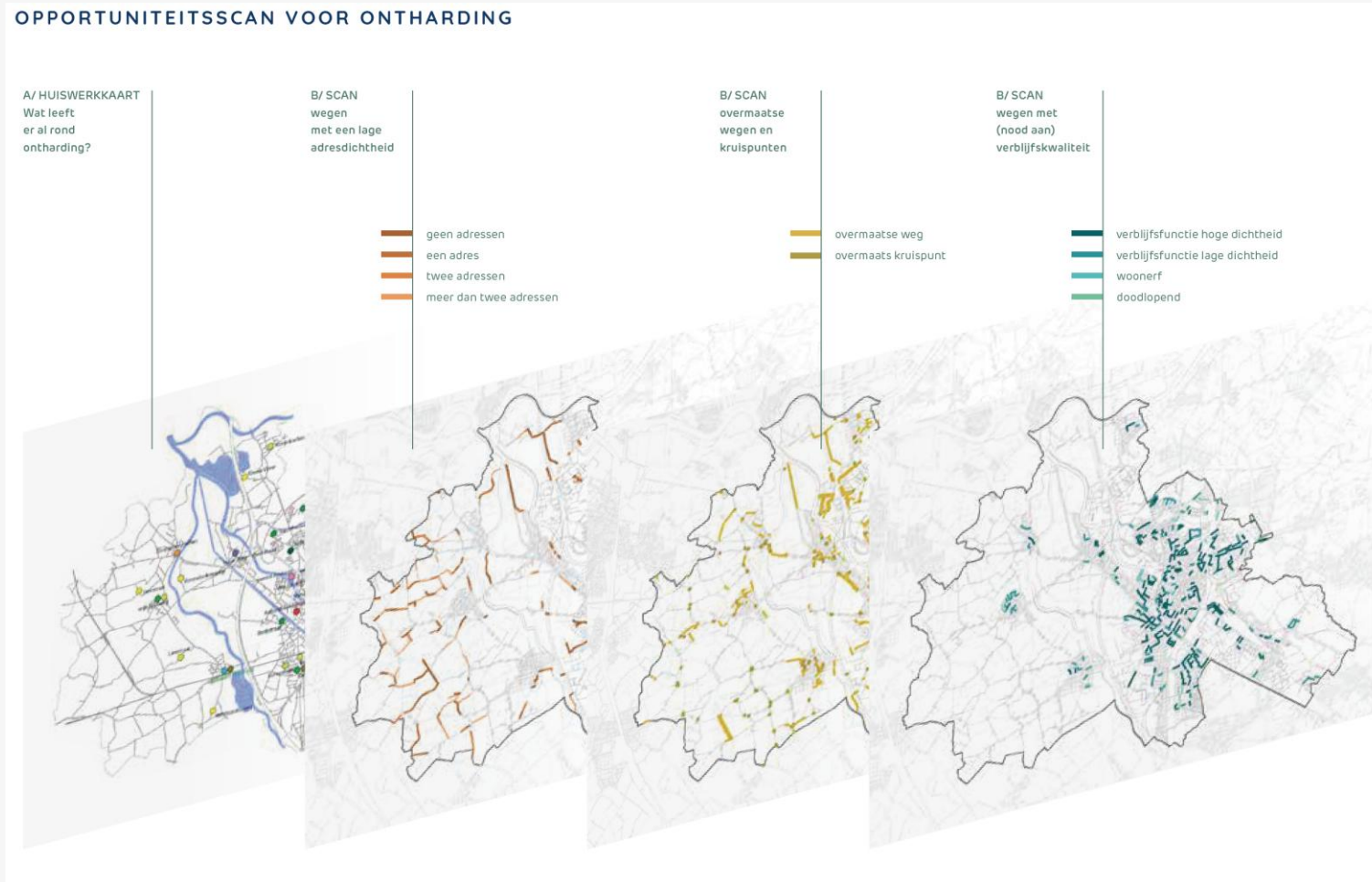
ACCUMULO POTENZIALE DURANTE UN FENOMENO DI PIOGGIA INTENSA

Basso

Alto



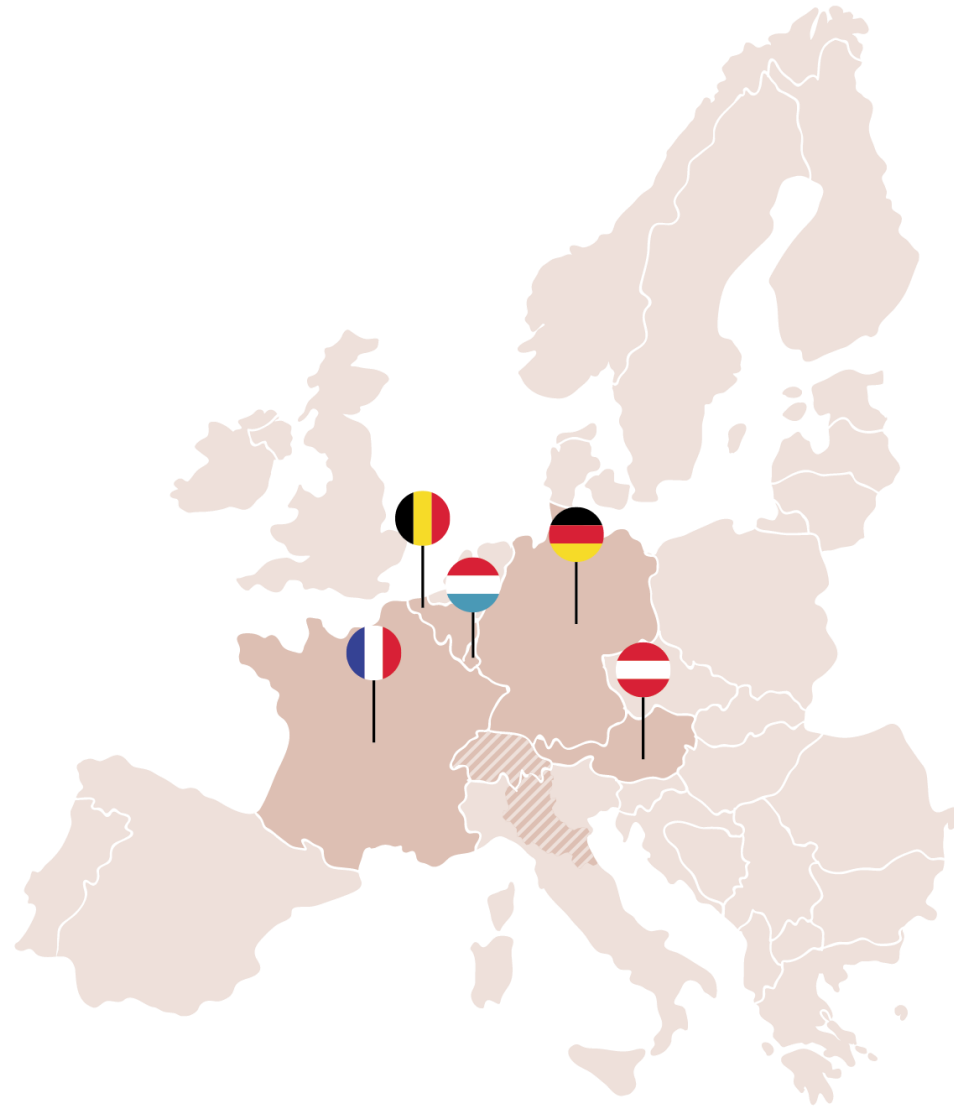
# Desealing Scan (bottom-up opportunities)



Source: Breekijzer

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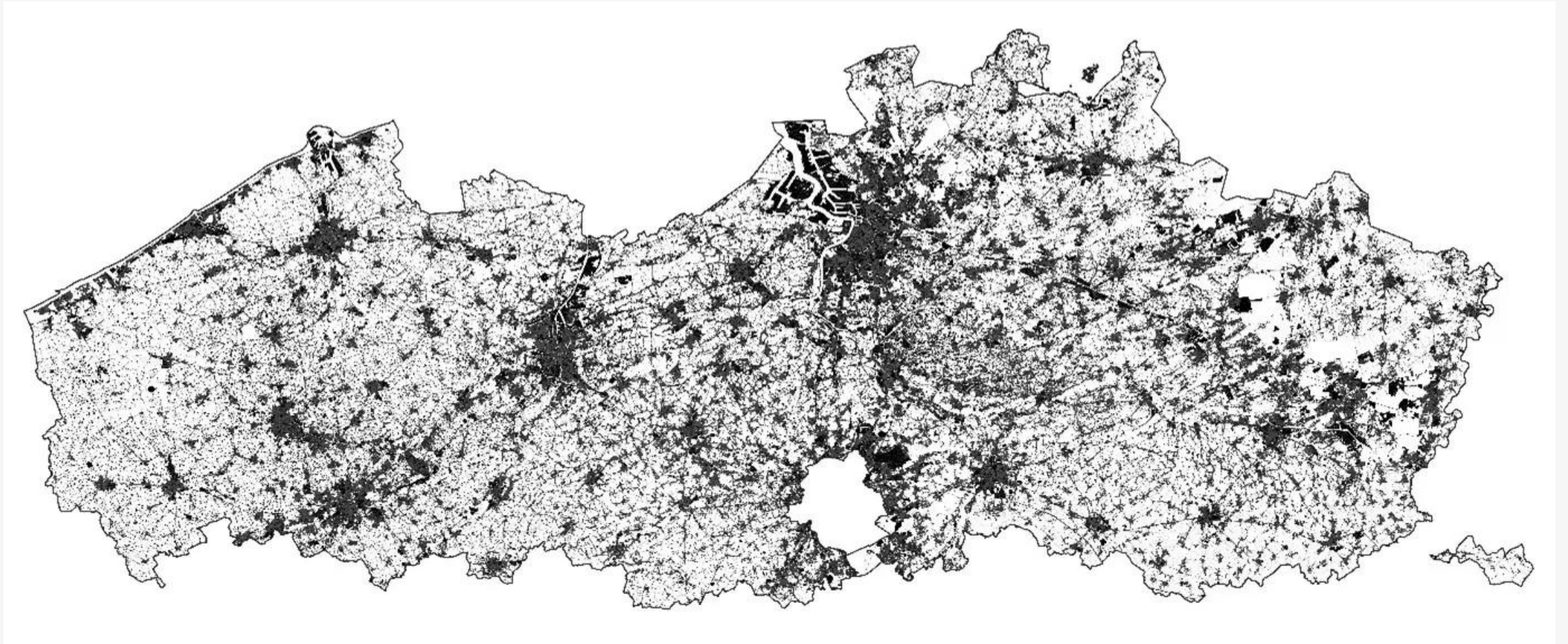
# Leading the way with NNLT



# **Densification & Desealing in Flanders**

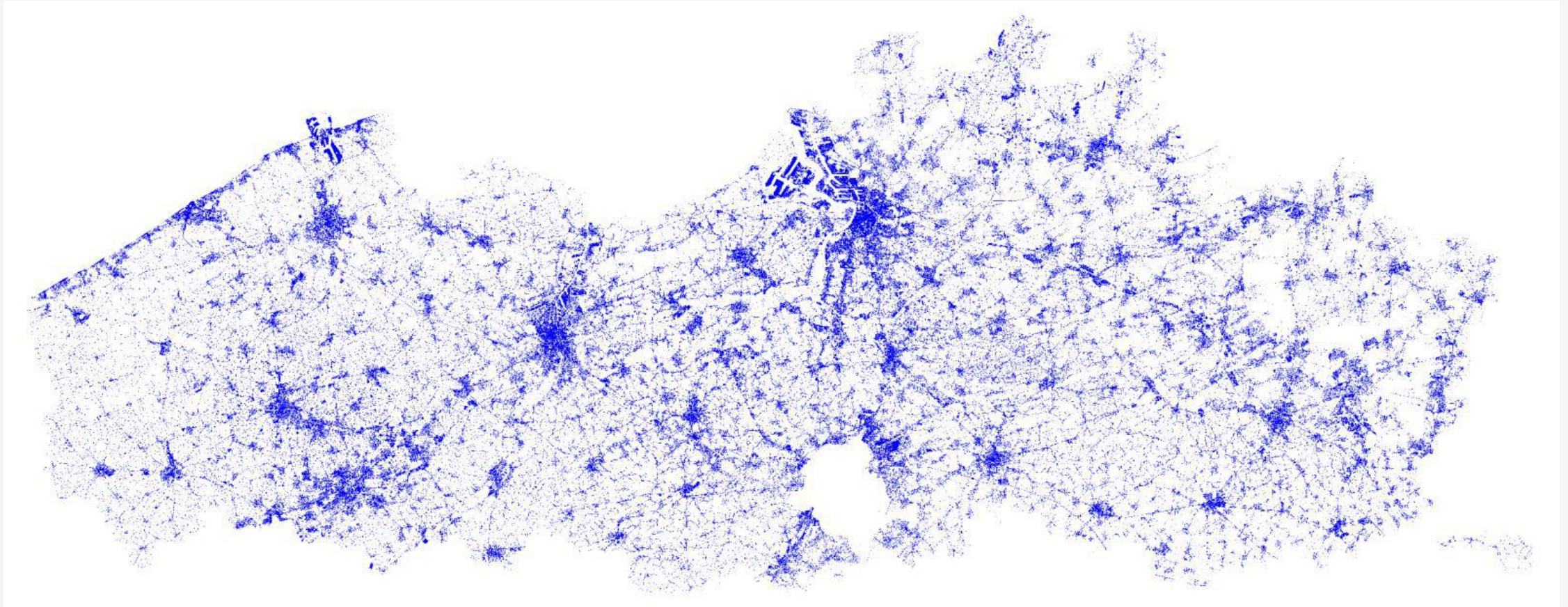
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Flemish region: Settlement area of 32%

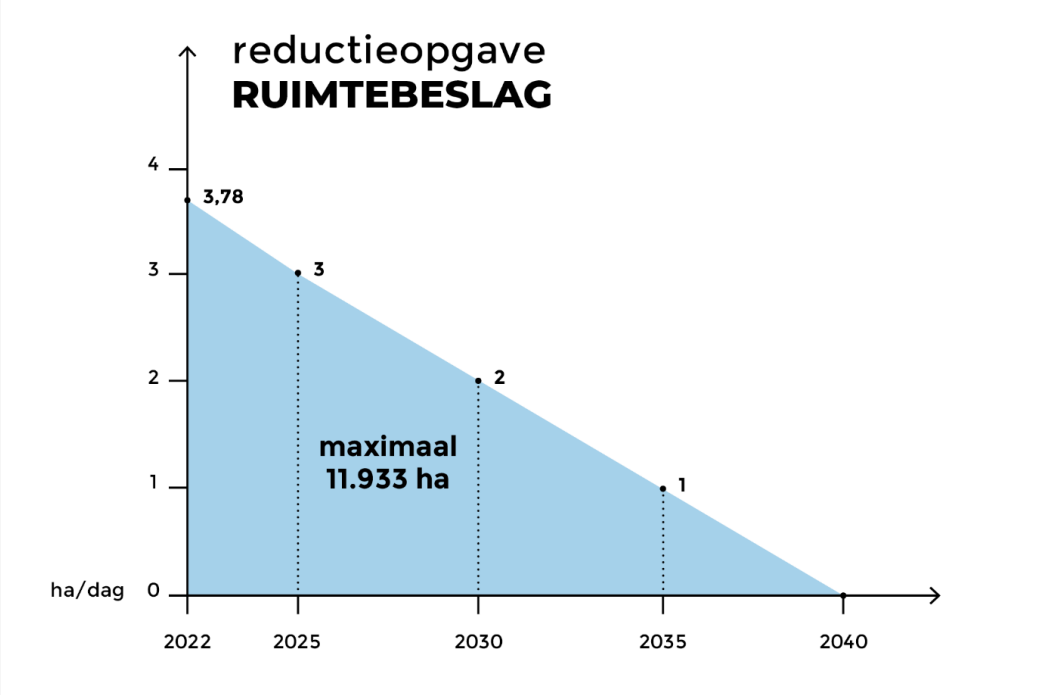


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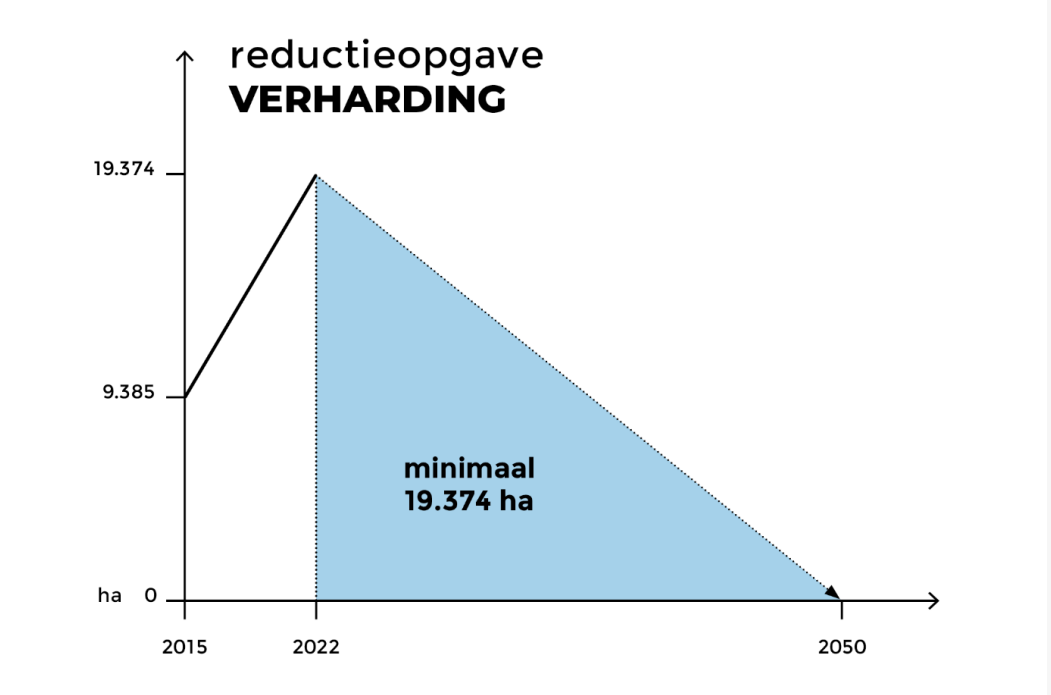
**Flemish region: Soil sealing of 15%**



# NNLT and NNSS For Flanders



REDUCTION OF LAND TAKE



REDUCTION OF SOIL SEALING

Source: HOGENT, 2024 <https://betonmeter.be/media/HOGENT-Rapport-6-Gemeentelijke-reductieopgave.pdf>



# Raising awareness by data

**BETON  
METER**

[Betontoestand](#) [Betonevolutie](#) [Betonrisico](#) [Reductieopgave](#) [Contact](#)

## BetonMeter

Deze Betonmeter biedt op het niveau van elke Vlaamse gemeente een weergave van het ruimtebeslag en verharding aan de hand van 29 indicatoren. Zowel de huidige toestand, de evolutie, als de toekomstrisico's zijn hier in detail voor de 300 Vlaamse gemeenten te raadplegen op basis van de meest actuele, beschikbare data (toestand 2022).

[Bekijk volledig rapport](#)

[Bronnen & methode](#)

[www.betonmeter.be](http://www.betonmeter.be)

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# Some guiding principles?

- Densification requires more public, green space
- Every refitting and project is an opportunity
- Detecting large, single-owner sites
- Volume is needed: 50-60% unsealed? (Yan et al., 2019)
- Spread is needed: the 3-30-300 rule (Konijnendijk, 2021)
- Reuse of urban soils & Native wild vegetation

**Thank you for your attention!**

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# From Green to Grey

Dries De Smet,  
De Standaard newspaper

**ESPON**



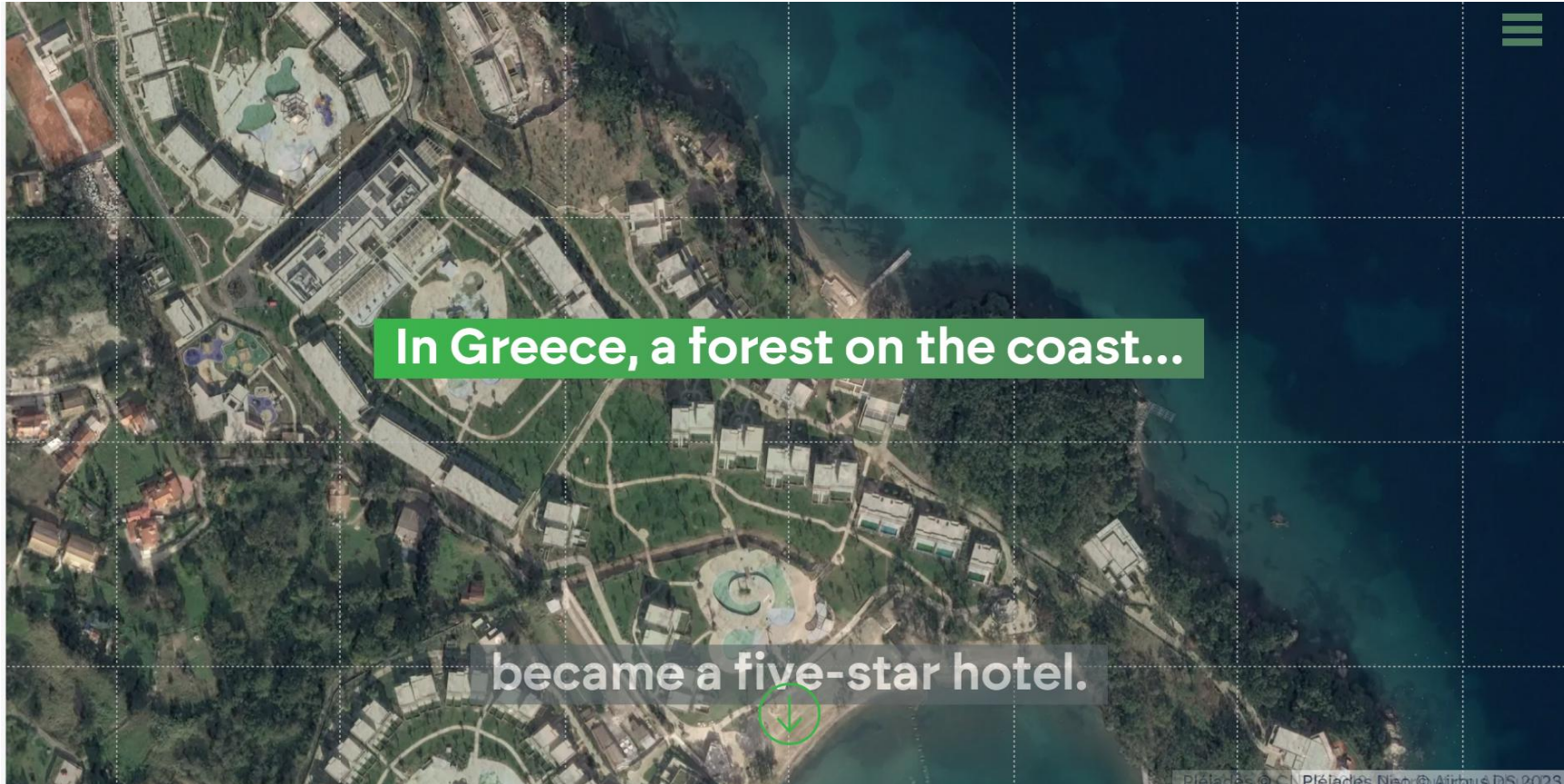
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# From Green to Grey ...



[Green to Grey – How Europe is squandering the little nature it has left](#)

YouTube:

[Green to Grey — revealing nature loss across Europe | #greentogrey](#)



“We cannot live in a stone desert”



Vlaanderen gaat van groen naar grijs: “We hadden niet door hoe snel het ging, tot we deze beelden zagen” | [De Standaard](#)