

Atenor's long-term commitment to biodiversity

Belgian real estate investor Atenor is actively developing an integrated biodiversity strategy for its entire project portfolio. For many years, sustainability - quite rightly - focused mainly on energy performance, CO₂ emissions and embodied carbon, but Atenor now wants to embed biodiversity in a structural way throughout the design, development and delivery of its projects.

According to Alice Herman, Sustainability Manager at Atenor, awareness in the sector is growing rapidly. Atenor aims to take on a leading and pioneering role in this area, particularly in support of its clients.

"Biodiversity has long been something of a 'poor cousin' of sustainability in real estate. Today, however, it is increasingly clear that protecting and restoring biodiversity is essential for people – for their well-being, their health and the quality of the places where they live and work. This is also reflected in discussions at international conferences, and in new European regulations and initiatives such as the TNFD, which help companies measure and manage their impact on biodiversity."

An integrated strategy by 2026

Atenor has already started an in-depth analysis of its projects and activities. Since 2026, Atenor has been working with BeeOdiversity, a biodiversity expert, to develop a biodiversity strategy which has so far been implemented across six projects. Its extension to all projects currently under development is scheduled for 2027, in accordance with an action plan and indicators published the [Annual Report](#).

"We do not want to integrate biodiversity just because it sounds good. We want to approach it in a thoughtful, methodological and scientific way. You could say we are something of a pioneer in Belgium in this field."

Concrete action on projects

This strategy is not just theoretical. On several European projects, concrete measures are already being tested. Atenor is currently experimenting with:

- BiodiverCity certification
- Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

- Biodiversity indicators such as BAF/CBS.
- Systematic support from an ecologist in our projects

Two projects – Beaulieu and Berges de l'Argentine phase 2 (both in Belgium) – are currently going through the BiodiverCity certification process. Although they are still in the design phase, the integration of targeted biodiversity measures is putting them on the right track to obtain this new certification. These measures are:

- Reconnection to the local ecological network through diversified meadows and micro-wet habitats
- Ecological continuities addressed at neighbourhood scale (site permeability, corridors)
- Targeted fauna measures (bat boxes, shelters, openings for insects)
- Reduction of light pollution (adapted spectrum, intensity, and orientation)

In Portugal, the Oriente project is actively contributing to the restoration of an ecological corridor in Lisbon, through targeted interventions that support local species and ecosystems such as large-scale de-sealing of the site to restore soil permeability
Integration and vertical greening across building façades

From green roofs to targeted biodiversity

According to Alice Herman, biodiversity goes far beyond standard measures such as green roofs or insect hotels. Thanks to the analyses carried out with BeeOdiversity and systematic ecological assessments, Atenor is able to identify precisely, which specific ecosystems are under local pressure. Based on this, tailored solutions are implemented that respond to the real needs of each site, such as:

- de-sealing and re-greening of surfaces
- locally adapted plant species
- façade materials that are favourable to biodiversity
- specifically designed nesting boxes.

"It is no longer about installing an insect hotel just because it 'looks good'. It is about implementing the right solution, in the right place. Portugal does not need the same biodiversity measures as Hungary or Belgium."

Architecture also has a role to play. In new projects, particular attention is paid to designing façades that are less smooth and flat, offering more opportunities for wildlife.

Measurable impact

Over the past year, Atenor has collected biodiversity data for most of its portfolio and can already show measurable results, such as:

- improved biodiversity on around 165,000 m² of land – the equivalent of about 24 football pitches
- remediation of more than 296,000 m² of contaminated soil.

These first results provide a solid basis to monitor impact over time and to further refine actions in the coming years.

Biodiversity as the next sustainability challenge

While energy performance still tops the priority list for investors and buyers today, Alice Herman expects biodiversity to play an increasingly important role in the years ahead:

"Energy is still a priority today, and that makes sense. But I hope biodiversity will one day reach the same level of importance. Without biodiversity, we simply will not have anything left to eat. Biodiversity is also closely linked to well-being and quality of life. People are looking for greenery, fresh air and nature around them. Studies show that biodiversity has an impact on health, comfort and productivity."

Atenor aims to create projects that function well, adapt and remain attractive in the long term. In that sense, choosing to put biodiversity at the heart of its approach is a natural next step.