PESTLE and SWOT Analysis Report

Pilot Area – Municipality of Goes, Inner City

Prepared by: Municipality of Goes

Date: October 2024

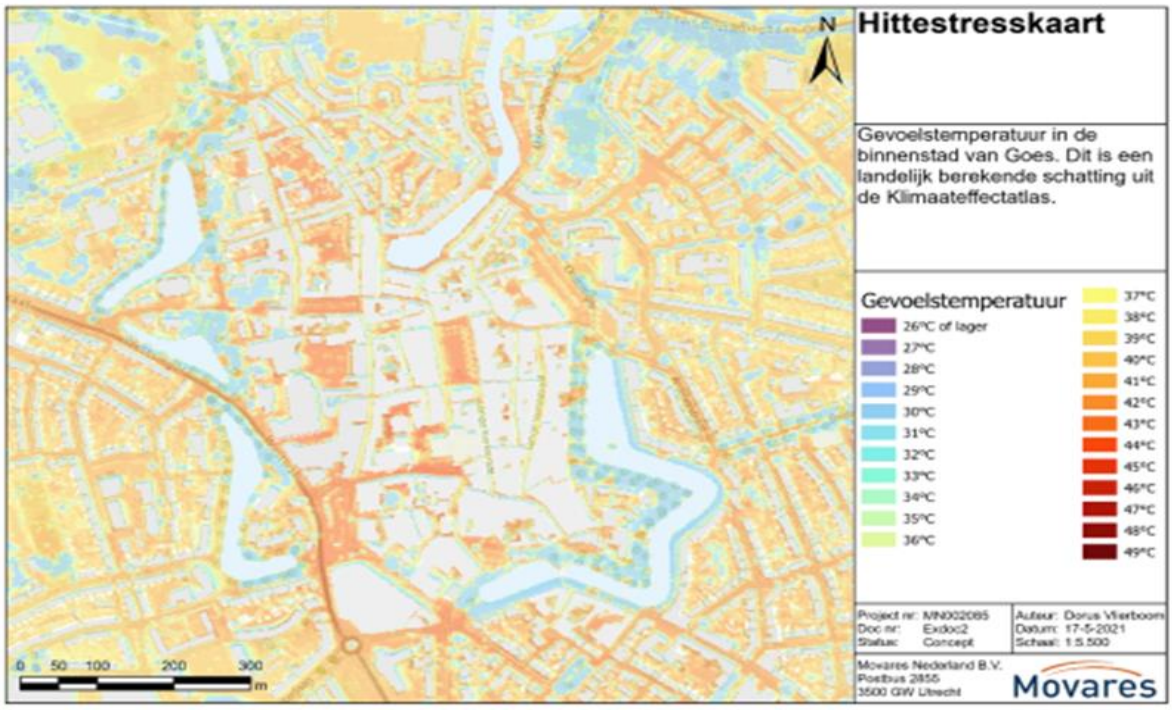
Project Overview

The Cool Neighbourhoods Project in Goes seeks to mitigate heat stress, improve liveability, and enhance biodiversity through the greening of 500 m² of public space. This report provides a PESTLE analysis (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legal) for the inner city of Goes, focusing on transforming public spaces into cooler, greener areas. A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis is also conducted to guide strategic decision-making and ensure effective project implementation.

Summary

Goes' inner city faces significant heat stress challenges, exacerbated by urbanisation and a lack of existing green spaces. The city plans to introduce nature-based solutions, such as greening surfaces and façades, to cool the neighbourhood while increasing biodiversity. Although the project faces economic constraints and technical challenges like buried cables, community participation and collaboration with the municipality offer promising avenues for success. The pilot will test innovative cooling techniques to create a more liveable, sustainable urban environment.

Image 1 - Heat stress identified in the Inner City of Goes



PESTLE Analysis

Political

- Increasing political awareness of the need for climate adaptation in urban areas.
- Growing emphasis on developing a local climate adaptation strategy, supported by the city council.
- Internal collaboration between various municipal departments is essential for achieving the project's full potential.
- Capitalising on nearby development projects presents an opportunity to integrate the greening initiatives.

Economic

- Rising costs of materials and labour due to inflation may affect the project's budget and scale.
- Success depends on securing subsidies from Interreg, the municipality, and other funding sources.
- Potential to encourage residents and businesses to invest in climate adaptation through financial incentives.
- Long-term savings from energy efficiency, maintenance, and improved water management could justify initial investment in greening.
- Enhanced green spaces are likely to boost local business activity and property values, though they may also increase housing affordability challenges.

Social

- Growing awareness of heat stress as a public health issue, particularly among vulnerable populations.
- Efforts to raise community awareness and foster participation in climate adaptation are essential.
- Communication strategies need to be clear, accessible, and inspiring to encourage other communities to adopt similar solutions.
- The project aims to include all residents and businesses in the greening initiatives, ensuring accessibility and inclusivity.

Technological

- Technological advancements such as smart irrigation systems and sustainable materials provide innovative solutions for greening public spaces.
- Data collection (e.g., temperature sensors) will help track the effectiveness of the greening interventions.
- Challenges arise from existing infrastructure, such as buried cables and pipes, which may complicate greening efforts.
- Community engagement can be enhanced through digital platforms, allowing for feedback and information sharing.

Environmental

- Greening will improve biodiversity, water management, and reduce the urban heat island effect, contributing to climate change mitigation.
- The pilot addresses increasing environmental risks posed by climate change, such as more extreme weather conditions.

- Long-term environmental benefits include improved air quality, reduced heat stress, and enhanced urban resilience.

Legal

- The municipality's ability to impose climate adaptation obligations is limited; property owner cooperation is key.
- Legal risks may include damage claims from property owners due to the impact of greening on views or access to light.
- Listed buildings in the area may face restrictions on façade greening, requiring careful legal navigation.
- Cooperation with housing corporations and other stakeholders will be necessary to implement changes on privately-owned properties.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Strong political support and growing recognition of the need for climate adaptation.
- Opportunities to implement greening in a densely built, heat-stressed urban area.
- Technological solutions offer scalable and innovative ways to mitigate urban heat.
- Community engagement is fostered through clear communication and inclusive participation.

Weaknesses

- Economic constraints may limit the scope of the project, especially in low-income areas.
- Potential lack of interest from local entrepreneurs and businesses, reducing overall participation.
- Existing infrastructure (e.g., cables, pipes) poses technical challenges for greening efforts.
- Dependence on the city council for timely decision-making and funding support.

Opportunities

- Advancing technology offers new possibilities for cooling urban areas and improving liveability.
- Collaboration with housing corporations and government bodies can strengthen climate adaptation strategies.
- Small, affordable interventions (e.g., mobile greenery, shade sails) can provide immediate relief and build momentum for long-term projects.
- Demonstrating the inclusivity and accessibility of the solutions can inspire other cities to adopt similar approaches.

Threats

- Rising material and labour costs due to inflation could delay or limit the project.
- Economic deprivation in the community could deprioritise climate adaptation efforts in favour of more immediate needs.
- Legal and ownership issues with housing corporations or real estate owners may create barriers to implementing necessary changes.

- Lack of cooperation from key stakeholders, such as property owners, could impede progress.
- Vandalism poses a risk to newly implemented greening measures and could deter future investment.

Picture 1 – Aerial of Inner City Improvement Area

Conclusion

The PESTLE and SWOT analysis for Goes highlights a complex landscape of challenges and opportunities as the city undertakes its greening initiatives. The project's success hinges on various factors, including political will, community involvement, and financial resources. Strong political support for climate adaptation has created an encouraging environment for innovative solutions, but rising costs for materials and labour due to inflation threaten to constrain budgetary flexibility.

The analysis reveals that community engagement is both a strength and a necessity for success. By actively involving local residents, businesses, and stakeholders, the project can foster a sense of ownership and commitment to sustainability. However, economic deprivation and competing priorities within the community pose challenges that may detract from collective efforts toward climate adaptation.

Legal complexities, particularly concerning property rights and the need for cooperation from housing corporations and private owners, could complicate implementation. Building robust partnerships and establishing clear communication channels will be essential to navigate these hurdles effectively. Furthermore, vandalism remains a significant threat that could undermine the long-term viability of the greening initiatives. By engaging the community in stewardship and monitoring efforts, the city can help mitigate these risks.

In conclusion, the Cool Neighbourhoods Project in Goes represents a vital opportunity to enhance urban liveability, improve biodiversity, and combat heat stress through strategic greening efforts.

Recommendations

Enhance Public Awareness

- Implement community workshops and awareness campaigns on the importance of climate adaptation and greening initiatives to build a supportive public narrative.

Strengthen Technical Expertise

- Invest in training for local staff to manage the technical challenges related to greening, particularly around existing infrastructure.

Foster Community Engagement

- Develop strategies to engage vulnerable populations and encourage broader community involvement in decision-making processes.

Secure Additional Funding

- Explore alternative funding opportunities at national and EU levels to ensure the project's financial sustainability.

Collaborate with Other Municipalities

- Partner with neighbouring cities to share resources, knowledge, and best practices for urban climate adaptation and greening.

Address Legal and Ownership Issues

- Work closely with housing corporations and real estate owners to facilitate cooperation and ensure the smooth implementation of necessary changes.

Implement Vandalism Prevention Strategies

- Develop a community stewardship programme to encourage local ownership of greening initiatives and establish monitoring mechanisms to mitigate vandalism risks.