FACTSHEET

RESPOND at a glance

Respond was founded to build a water-resilient Europe. Working with local partners, Respond develops water projects for companies, starting in Germany and expanding across Europe.

RESPOND by EcoTree

2026	7	6	2024
founded, based in Berlin	current projects	German federal states	first pilot projects

Founding and headquarters

Too much water, too little or too dirty. Floods, droughts and water pollution are becoming direct business risks. Since 2023, Christian Bergius has led EcoTree's business in Germany, Austria and Switzerland as Director DACH. From 2024, he worked with companies, municipalities and researchers to develop the first nature-based water projects, which led to the founding of EcoTree RESPOND GmbH in Berlin in 2026. Today, the eight-person team brings together experience in sales, business administration, finance and the natural sciences.

Projects and federal states

Respond currently supports 7 projects in 6 German federal states. Companies finance measures in peatlands, wetlands and forests that keep water in the landscape.

Methods

Respond combines established methods to assess water risks and benefits for companies and regions, including the World Resources Institute's Volumetric Water Benefit Accounting (VWBA) for measuring project impact: it measures water retention and groundwater recharge in m^3 per year, compared with a baseline scenario without the project. External hydrologists validate the calculations. Respond is developing a risk assessment method to measure how the projects change the risk profiles of sites and companies.

Partnerships

Respond partners with municipalities, state forestry organisations, foundations and biosphere reserves that own or manage the land and put projects into practice on the ground. Research institutions and start-ups support monitoring and technical development.

Clients: companies invest ...

Stadtwerke Karlsruhe

Water and energy utility · Karlsruhe, Baden-Württemberg · since 2024

Project: Rewetting of a 7 ha forest peatland in the Palatinate Forest Biosphere Reserve, Rhineland-Palatinate

Goal: More water retention and groundwater recharge in the region as a buffer against drought stress in summer

Impact: Groundwater level measurably raised; in the record-dry spring of 2025, the peatland was wetter than in 2024 (sensors, satellite data, on-site checks; as of 06/2025)

Term: 10 years

Amazon Web Services (AWS)

Data centres · Frankfurt am Main, Hesse · since 2026

Project: Wetland with more than 20 ponds in the Juliuswald forest, part of a 200 ha project in the Spessart, Bavaria, in the catchment of the river Main

Goal: Strengthen groundwater recharge in the Main catchment, reduces the risk of drought and flooding, helps secure permits for new construction and puts a water strategy into practice

Impact: Following the autumn rains in 2026, the ponds have started to fill with water. Ongoing measurements, including soil moisture data, will show the wider effects over time.

Term: Project start 2026, at least 10 years of monitoring

... land partners and the region benefit

Verbandsgemeinde Dahn / Stadt Dahn

Municipality · Palatinate Forest, Rhineland-Palatinate

Area: 15 ha, degraded forest peatland

Measures: Spruce removed, drainage ditches filled, peat moss reintroduced

Benefit: More groundwater recharge and more water as a buffer against drought stress; peatland protection in a Natura 2000 site, financed for 30 years; 37 breeding bird species recorded in the first year

Funded by: Stadtwerke Karlsruhe and others · **Since:** 2024

Stiftung Juliusspital

Foundation · Spessart, Bavaria

Area: 200 ha project area in the Juliuswald forest

Measures: Filling ditches, creating more than 20 connected ponds; carried out with the forestry office Forstamt VG Gemünden

Benefit: A more resilient forest and better water availability against drought stress; habitat for black storks and amphibians

Funded by: AWS and others · **Since:** 2025