



Photo: Anja Matthes

Camp in Amsterdam and Friesland, the Netherlands

May 2025 / Restoration Academy





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Nature Restoration in the Netherlands

- The Netherlands is densely populated, with much farmland and limited wilderness—resulting in fewer opportunities for youth-oriented nature restoration.
- National agencies (Natuurmonumenten, Staatsbosbeheer, IVN Natuureducatie) offer volunteer days for activities like tree planting, heathland maintenance, and wildlife monitoring.
- Young people can also join smaller private rewilding and biodiversity projects, reaching out directly to local initiatives or through schools, universities or internships.
- However, multi-day youth-oriented and/or youth-led restoration camps (like the Restoration Academy project) are rare.



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About the Camp

- Held 8–11th of May 2025: started in Amsterdam, continued in Friesland
- Focus: Demonstrate different stages and processes of peatland restoration and break down the binary between nature restoration in protected areas and the type of restoration that wet farming offers
- Main hands-on activity: seed sowing and plant plugging of typha at Hegewaren paludiculture farm (private) in Friesland
 - The ecosystem benefit of growing typha rather than draining the peatlands for grass is that this wetland crop can help to maintain the peat soil, provide more habitat for wading birds, reduce greenhouse gas emissions as well as offer an alternative income for landowners.
- Other sites visited:
 - Amsterdam Westzaan Polder (owned by Staatsbosbeheer)
 - Nature Reserve Alde Feanen (managed by a regional organisation It Fryske Gea)
 - Dairy farm (private, transitioning to wet cultivation)





About the Camp

- 35 participants, including organizers from partner organizations
- Accommodation: campsite near the paludiculture farm (most stayed in bungalows)
- Transport: travel between sites by bike, boat, bus, and train
 - Note: Extensive travel required a larger budget
- Meals: community kitchen in Amsterdam, volunteer cooks at campsite accommodation, one restaurant dinner on the most active day





Key Resources for the Camp

Organising Team

- 2 coordinators
- 3 core organisers
- 6 youth advisory board members (from Restoration Academy partner countries)

Camp Crew

- 2 volunteer camp cooks
- (1 professional photographer/videographer and 2 volunteer videographers)

Material Requirements

- Meals, transport, accommodation (bungalows/shared rooms, there was also a spare room in case of sickness)
- Restoration equipment (gloves, wellies, waders bought for also future camps; shovels, seed sprayers, watering cans borrowed from the paludiculture farm)
- Binoculars for birdwatching

Non-material Requirements

- Restoration plans from farmers and nature protection agencies
- Expert guidance for restoration activities (seeding and plant plugging)
- Time and effort from the organiser team
- RE-PEAT network for participant outreach



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Camp Budget Summary

Cost Category	Details	Amount (€)
Travel within camp	Train, coach, bikes, car, other	2,267
Accommodation	Hostel in Amsterdam, campsite bungalows in Friesland	4,901
Food	Volunteer-cooked meals plus two dinners out	2,956
Programme	Boat rides (Westzaan Polder and Alde Feanen)	486
Equipment	Waders, wellies, gloves, tents, health and safety, binoculars, other	1,716
Travel to camp	Youth advisory board and team members	1,194
Extra personnel	Photography and videography	3,253
	Total	16,774



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