



REGREEN
NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

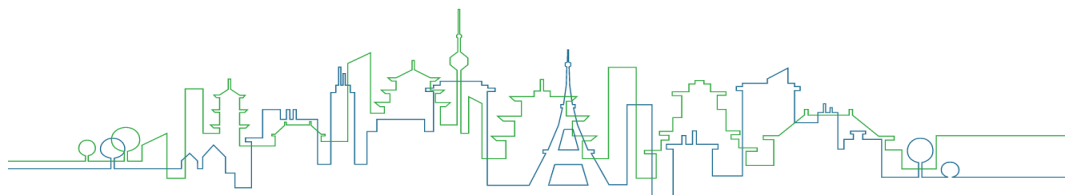
Fostering nature-based solutions for smart, green and healthy
urban transitions in Europe and China

Deliverable N°8.9.

WP N°8 Innovation and Impact Creation

REPORT ON THE REGREEN FINAL CONFERENCE

Authors: **Elena Petsani (ICLEI), Anders Branth Pedersen (AU),
Duncan Russel (UNEXE), Laurence Jones (UKCEH), Ellen
Banzhaf (UFZ), Tomasz Bergier (TSF), Marc Barra (IPR),
Gwendoline Grandin (IPR), Liisa Tyrväinen (LUKE), Benedict
Wheeler (UNEXE), Sally Anderson (AU), Francesc Baró (VUB),
Åsa Ode Sang (SLU), Eugènia Vidal Casanovas (AMB), Julius
Knopp (UFZ), Marie Spanier (MNHN), Francesca Tedeschini
(JR), Mara Sierra-Jimenez (MNHN), Richard Hardiman (RH),
Himansu Mishra (LUKE).**



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement no.821016 This document reflects only the author's view and the Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.



DOCUMENT INFORMATION

GRANT AGREEMENT No.	821016
DOCUMENT TYPE ¹	Report
WORKPACKAGE No. /TITLE	WP8 – Innovation and impact creation
LEAD CONTRACTOR	ICLEI
AUTHORS	Elena Petsani (ICLEI), Anders Branth Pedersen (AU), Duncan Russel (UNEXE), Laurence Jones (UKCEH), Ellen Banzhaf (UFZ), Tomasz Bergier (TSF), Marc Barra (IPR), Gwendoline Grandin (IPR), Liisa Tyrväinen (LUKE), Benedict Wheeler (UNEXE), Sally Anderson (AU), Francesc Baró (VUB), Åsa Ode Sang (SLU), Eugènia Vidal Casanovas (AMB), Julius Knopp (UFZ), Marie Spanier (MNHN), Francesca Tedeschini (JR), Mara Sierra-Jimenez (MNHN), Richard Hardiman (RH), Himansu Mishra (LUKE).
REVIEWED BY	Marianne Zandersen (AU)
PLANNED DELIVERY DATE	31.01.2024
ACTUAL DELIVERY DATE	31.01.2024
DISSEMINATION LEVEL ²	PU

¹ Type: P: Prototype; R: Report; D: Demonstrator; O: Other.

² Security Class: PU: Public; PP: Restricted to other programme participants (including the Commission); RE: Restricted to a group defined by the consortium (including the Commission); CO: Confidential, only for members of the consortium (including the Commission).



Copyright Statement

The work described in this document has been conducted within the REGREEN project. This document reflects only the REGREEN Consortium view, and the European Union is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.

This document and its content are the property of the REGREEN Consortium. All rights relevant to this document are determined by the applicable laws. Access to this document does not grant any right or license on the document or its contents. This document or its contents are not to be used or treated in any manner inconsistent with the rights or interests of the REGREEN Consortium or the Partners detriment and are not to be disclosed externally without prior written consent from the REGREEN Partners.

Each REGREEN Partner may use this document in conformity with the REGREEN Consortium Grant Agreement provisions.

Suggested citation: Petsani, E., et al. (2024) Report on the REGREEN Final Conference. Deliverable D8.9. REGREEN Fostering nature-based solutions for smart, green and healthy urban transitions in Europe and China. Horizon2020 Grant No. 821016. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10582234>



ABBREVIATION LIST

CC	Climate Change
CELAC	Community of Latin American & Caribbean States
CSA	Coordination and Support Action
EDS	Ecosystem Disservices
ES	Ecosystem Services
EU	European Union
GIS	Geographic Information System
HE	Horizon Europe
NbS	Nature Based Solution
RIA	Research and Innovation Actions
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
ULL	Urban Living Lab



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The "Re-greening cities with Nature Based Solutions in Europe and China" conference, organised jointly by REGREEN and CLEARING HOUSE on 28th and 29th of November 2023 in Brussels, convened experts, policymakers, and practitioners to explore and promote the strategic implementation of Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) in urban environments. The event underscored the critical importance of NbS in addressing complex challenges related to climate change, economy, and social aspects.

Key Themes & Outcomes

Strategic Importance of NbS: The discussions highlighted the NbS as a fundamental element in addressing climate change challenges. The European Green Deal was acknowledged as a key initiative recognising the strategic importance of NbS in providing holistic solutions.

Coherence Across Policy Domains: Participants stressed the need for coherence in policy domains, emphasising the integration of NbS into various areas like urban planning, biodiversity conservation, and climate adaptation for effective environmental solutions.

Exchange of Best Practices: The experts emphasised the value of sharing best practices globally, exemplified by the collaboration between the EU and China. Learning from each other's experiences was deemed crucial for advancing NbS implementation.

Community Involvement for Success: Community engagement was highlighted as a key factor for success in NbS projects, with recommendations for policies to encourage and facilitate such involvement.

Secure Funding for NbS Upscaling: Urgency in securing funding for NbS projects was emphasized, recognizing regional funding and initiatives like the EU Missions and Horizon2020 as valuable resources.

Prevention of Fragmented Urban Policies: The necessity to prevent fragmented urban policies was stressed, calling for integrated planning approaches and connectivity in NbS projects for maximum effectiveness.

Political Commitment to NbS: The commitment of the Paris Region to make NbS a political objective set a precedent for sustainable urbanisation, emphasising long-term dedication to environmental sustainability.

Data-Driven Spatial Planning: Innovative approaches showcased the success of data-driven spatial planning decisions for balanced and environmentally conscious urban development.

Urban Living Labs for Collaboration: The establishment of Urban Living Labs was highlighted for fostering collaboration between researchers and practitioners, serving as dynamic spaces for testing and refining innovative ideas.

Policy, Governance, and Institutional Issues: The importance of a balanced approach, challenges in economically vulnerable areas, public participation, and addressing gentrification concerns were discussed as crucial aspects of NbS integration.

Marketplace Initiative

The Marketplace provided a dynamic platform for selected projects to showcase their work, engage with stakeholders, and foster collaboration, bridging the gap between science, policy, and practice.

The conference demonstrated that successful NbS implementation requires collaborative efforts, effective policies, community involvement, and strategic funding. The Marketplace initiative provided a unique opportunity for direct interactions, knowledge sharing, and networking among professionals in the field. The overarching message is to advance the understanding and implementation of Nature-Based Solutions for sustainable urban development.



CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	10
RE-GREENING CITIES WITH NATURE BASED SOLUTIONS IN EUROPE & CHINA: KEY OUTCOMES	15
Nature-Based Solutions: Innovations for Climate Action and EU-China Collaboration (See below the detailed session)	16
Re-greening cities with Nature Based Solutions in Europe and China (See below the detailed session)	17
Enabling Transformation in Urban areas with Nature Based Solutions.....	18
Policy, governance, and institutional issues of the NbS integration (See below the detailed session)	19
Environmental aspects of nature-based solutions and restoration (See below the detailed session)	20
Urban Living Labs: Navigating the NBS Journey through Co-Design in Cities	21
The social and economic values of nature-based solutions and restoration (See below the detailed session)	22
Nature-Based Education: Opportunities, Pedagogies and Challenges (See below the detailed session)	23
Practitioners' perspective on working with nature-based solutions. (See below the detailed session)	24
MARKET PLACE.....	25
DETAILED SESSION INFORMATION.....	26
Nature-Based Solutions: Innovations for Climate Action and EU-China Collaboration	27
Speakers & Moderator	27
Session Format	27
Session description	27
Objective	27
Agenda	28
Details of the activities during the session.....	28
Summary of Discussions	29
Key Take aways.....	29
Re-greening cities with Nature Based Solutions in Europe and China.....	30
Speakers and moderator	30
Session Description	30
Objective	30



Agenda	30
Summary of Discussions	31
Key Take aways.....	31
Enabling Transformation in Urban areas with Nature Based Solutions.....	32
Speakers & Moderator (s)	32
Session Format	32
Session description	32
Objective	32
Agenda	33
Detailed Structure of the session	33
Key Take aways.....	34
Policy, governance and institutional issues of the NbS integration.....	36
Speakers & Moderator	36
Session Format	36
Session description	36
Objective	36
Agenda	37
Summary of Discussions	37
Key Take aways.....	38
Environmental aspects of nature-based solutions and restoration.....	39
Speakers & Moderator (s)	39
Panellists	39
Session Format	39
Objective	39
Session description	39
Agenda	40
Detailed Structure of the session	40
Summary of Discussions	41
Key Take aways.....	42
Ecological quality of restoration activities and nature-based solutions	43
Speakers and Moderators	43
Session Format	43
Objective	43
Session description	43
Agenda	43
Detailed Structure of the session	43
Summary of Discussions	44
Key Take aways.....	45
Urban Living Labs: Navigating the NBS Journey through Co-Design in Cities	46



Speakers and Moderators	46
Session description	46
Agenda	46
Detailed Structure of the session	46
Summary of Discussions	46
The social and economic values of nature-based solutions and restoration.....	48
Moderators & Speakers.....	48
Objective	48
Session description	48
Agenda	48
Summary of Discussions	48
Key Take aways.....	49
Nature-Based Education: Opportunities, Pedagogies and Challenges	51
Speakers & Moderators:.....	51
Session Format	51
Objective	51
Session description	51
Agenda	51
Summary of Discussions	52
Key Take aways.....	52
Practitioners' perspective on working with nature-based solutions.	55
Speakers & Moderators.....	55
Session Format	55
Objective	55
Session description	55
Agenda	55
Details of the activities during the session.....	55
Summary of Discussions	56
Key Take aways.....	57
FIELD TRIPS.....	58
Resilience and adaptive management of urban forestry park – The case of Parc de Woluwe	58
Tervuren – bringing the forest into the built area through renaturation.	58
Introduction to Forest Bathing and Forest Mind	58
ANNEX.....	59
List of Participants	59
Speaker Biographies.....	62



TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Participants at the Re-greening cities with Nature Based Solutions in Europe and China: Bridging science, policy and practice 'event, Credits: REGREEN	10
Figure 2: Keynote speakers setting the scene for the event.	16
Figure 3: Presentation of the key outcomes from REGREEN & CLEARING HOUSE projects.....	17
Figure 4: Exchange between the EU Commission, INTERLACE, CONEXUS, NN+ and NbS EduWorld... ..	18
Figure 5: Experts exchange on policy, governance and NbS integration.....	19
Figure 6: Exchanges on the Interactive Walkable Floormap	20
Figure 7: Cities exchanging their experiences in integrating NbS in the local context.....	21
Figure 8: Exchange of the experts on the social and economic of NbS & Restoration.....	22
Figure 9: Experts exchange on Nature Based Education	23
Figure 10: Practitioners' exchange on the implementing NbS	24
Figure 11: Marketplace: Networking and knowledge sharing.....	25



INTRODUCTION

Within the context of sustainable urban development, the concept of re-greening cities has emerged as a pivotal discourse, addressing contemporary challenges in ecological resilience. This report provides an overview of a two-day event ‘Re-greening cities with Nature Based Solutions in Europe and China: Bridging science, policy and practice’ that was organised on the 28th and 29th November 2023 at Bouche à Oreille in Brussels, Belgium. Stakeholders from Europe, China and Latin America were invited to exchange on the transformative potential of Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) in both European and Chinese contexts. Facilitated by the collaborative efforts of the CLEARING HOUSE and REGREEN projects, active across diverse European cities and collaborative regions in China, the event served as a nexus of science, policy, and practical insights into the fabric of urban development.

The main objective of the event was the strategic utilisation of urban blue and green infrastructure, unravelling its role in fostering sustainable urban and spatial development. The discussions were filled with thought provoking questions, exploring the dynamics of governance structures, strategies for private sector engagement, and avenues for cultivating awareness among decision-makers and citizens. Implicit in these exchanges was a shared commitment to advocate for the integration of NbS in urban planning, aligning it with societal needs such as climate resilience, public health enhancement, and social inclusivity.



Figure 1: Participants at the Re-greening cities with Nature Based Solutions in Europe and China: Bridging science, policy and practice ‘event, Credits: REGREEN

This collaborative undertaking was not restricted to European borders but was enriched by the participation and insights of partner cities in China and Latin America. The confluence of experiences, diverse perspectives, and shared aspirations formed the baseline of this event.

This report aims to provide an overview of the knowledge shared during the event, bringing together the narratives of policymakers, scientists, practitioners, and local authorities who attended the event. The structured narrative unfolds over two days, mirroring the event's agenda and exploring themes ranging from policy and governance complexities to environmental aspects and the societal dimensions of NbS.



In conclusion this report provides an opportunity to share the knowledge generated by a variety of stakeholders. It encourages the policy makers and urban actors to think about the way forward, positioning Nature-Based Solutions at the centre of the systemic transformation that cities are striving for to booster climate resilience.

For a more in-depth exploration of the insightful sessions organised during the event, we invite you to access the detailed resources provided in the [REGREEN project website](#). Click [here](#) to delve into the rich content, summaries, and additional materials from the sessions.



AGENDA

28–29 November 2023

Le Bouche à Orelle, Brussels

(Felix Hapstraat 11, 1040 Etterbeek)



Day I (Tuesday 28 November)

- 8:45 Registration and Check-In
- 9:30 Opening Remarks and Introduction
- 9:35 **Nature-Based Solutions: Innovations for Climate Action and EU-China Collaboration**
Moderator
• Vasileios Latinos (ICLEI)
Speakers
• Marco Fritz (Adaptation Mission Secretariat)
• Vojko Bratina (Delegation of the European Union to China)
• Karin Zaunberger (European Commission)
• Benjamin Caspar (European Commission)
- 10:30 Coffee Break
- 11:00 **Re-greening Cities with Nature-Based Solutions in Europe and China**
Moderator
• Elena Petsani, REGREEN (ICLEI)
Speakers
• Alberto Pozza (REA, European Commission)
• Dr. Marianne Zandersen, REGREEN (Aarhus University)
• Dr. Rik De Vreese, CLEARING HOUSE (European Forest Institute)
• Prof. Bin Zhao, REGREEN (Fudan University)
- 12:00 Lunch Break
- 13:00 **Enabling Transformation in Urban Areas with Nature-Based Solutions**



Moderator

- Elena Petsani, REGREEN (ICLEI)

Speakers

- Paola Lepori (European Commission)
- Dr. Tom Wild (University of Sheffield)
- McKenna Davis (Ecologic)
- Bettina Wilk (ICLEI)
- Ivelina Ivanova (European Schoolnet)

13:45 **Market Place:** Explore various exhibits and projects related to nature-based solutions

14:45 Market Place & Coffee Break

15:00 Parallel Sessions on the following themes

- **Policy, Governance and Institutional Issues: Barriers and Enablers in Nature-based Solutions Governance** (Main room)
- **Environmental Aspects of Nature-based Solutions and Restoration** (White room)
- **Ecological Quality of Nature-based Solutions and Restoration Activities** (Red room)

16:30 **Day In Review: Unpacking the Key Highlights from Today's Sessions**

Moderator

- Prof. Wendy Yan Chen (Hong Kong University)

17:00 Reception [+ Continued Market Place]



Day II (Wednesday 29 November)

- 8:30 Registration and Check-In
- 9:00 **Urban Living Labs: Navigating the NBS Journey through Co-Design in Cities**
Moderators
- Dr. Marianne Zandersen, REGREEN (Aarhus University)
 - Dr. Rik De Vreese, CLEARING HOUSE, (European Forest Institute)
- Speakers
- Dr. Eugènia Vidal Casanovas, CLEARING HOUSE (Metropolitan Area of Barcelona)
 - Prof. Tomasz Bergier, CLEARING HOUSE (Sendzimir Foundation)
 - Gordana Mikulčić-Krnjaja, REGREEN (Velika Gorica Municipality)
 - Gwendoline Grandin, REGREEN (Paris Region Institute)
 - Signe Marie Iversen, REGREEN (Aarhus Municipality)
- 10:00 Coffee Break
- 10:30 Parallel Sessions on the following themes
- [The Social and Economic Values of Nature-based Solutions and Restoration](#) (Main room)
 - [Nature-based Education: Opportunities, Pedagogies and Challenges](#) (White room)
 - [Practitioners' Perspective on Working with Nature-based Solutions](#) (Red room)
- 12:00 **Conference Conclusions and Inspiring Pathways Forward**
- 13:00 Lunch Break (Brown Bag)
- 13:30 [Study Tours](#): Woluwe Park, Forest Bathing/Forest Mind (Parc du Cinquantenaire/Jubelpark), Tervuren (Sonian Forest)
- 17:00 Pick up of luggage at Bouche à Oreille

Find practical information to help you make accommodation and travel arrangements in the city of Brussels [here](#).



RE-GREENING CITIES WITH NATURE BASED SOLUTIONS IN EUROPE & CHINA: KEY OUTCOMES



NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS: INNOVATIONS FOR CLIMATE ACTION AND EU-CHINA COLLABORATION (SEE BELOW THE DETAILED SESSION)



Figure 2: Keynote speakers setting the scene for the event.

Strategic Importance of NbS: The discussions underscored the critical importance of effectively implementing Nature-Based Solutions (NbS) to address challenges related to climate change, the economy, and social aspects. The Green Deal was highlighted as a key initiative recognizing NbS as a fundamental element in tackling these multifaceted issues.

Coherence Across Policy Domains: Participants emphasized the need for coherence across disparate policy domains, stressing the integration of NbS into various policy areas such as urban planning, biodiversity, and climate adaptation. This approach was deemed crucial for providing holistic and effective solutions to complex environmental challenges.

Exchange of Best Practices: The session emphasized the value of exchanging best practices between different regions,

exemplified by collaboration between the European Union and China. Learning from each other's experiences on academic and practical levels was acknowledged as a beneficial approach to advancing NbS implementation globally.

Community Involvement for Success: Community involvement in NbS projects was highlighted as a key factor for success. Policies were recommended to encourage and facilitate community engagement, ensuring that local perspectives and needs are considered in the planning and implementation of NbS initiatives.

Secure Funding for NbS Upscaling: The urgency of securing funding to expedite the deployment of NbS was emphasized. Both regional funding and initiatives like LIFE and Horizon2020 funding were recognized as valuable resources. Policymakers were urged to explore different funding mechanisms to support the upscaling of NbS projects.

Prevention of Fragmented Urban Policies: The necessity to prevent fragmented urban policies was emphasized, with a call for integrated planning approaches. Connectivity in NbS projects, both within urban areas and across regions, was identified as essential to maximize their effectiveness and ensure a coordinated and comprehensive approach.



RE-GREENING CITIES WITH NATURE BASED SOLUTIONS IN EUROPE AND CHINA (SEE BELOW THE DETAILED SESSION)



Figure 3: Presentation of the key outcomes from REGREEN & CLEARING HOUSE projects

Political Commitment to NbS: Paris Region's dedication to making Nature-Based Solutions a political objective signifies a landmark move towards sustainable urbanization. This commitment not only sets a precedent for other regions but also underscores the importance of prioritizing NbS within urban planning frameworks, showcasing a long-term dedication to environmental sustainability.

Strategic De-paving for Sustainable Urbanisation: The Ile-de-France Nature Agency's proactive de-paving strategy is commended as an innovative approach to mitigating non-sustainable urbanization. This strategic exploration serves as a model for regions aiming to develop ecologically sensitive urban landscapes and embrace sustainable urban planning practices.

Data-Driven Spatial Planning: Velika Gorica's use of heat maps for spatial planning decisions represents a forward-thinking, data-driven

approach. Achieving 35% green coverage and incorporating specific tree requirements for new developments demonstrates the success of integrating technology into urban planning for a balanced and environmentally conscious development.

Urban Development Strategies for Improved Water Quality: Aarhus Municipal Plan 2025's focus on improving surface water quality showcases the positive outcomes achievable through targeted urban development strategies. The success of implementing measures influenced by the municipal plan underscores the importance of having a comprehensive roadmap for urban improvements.

Urban Living Labs for Collaboration: The establishment of Urban Living Labs (ULLs) highlights the value of collaboration between researchers and practitioners in the field of urban ecosystem services. These living labs serve as dynamic spaces for testing and refining innovative ideas, fostering continuous learning, and creating a bridge between theoretical knowledge and practical implementation.

International Collaboration for Global Impact: Emphasizing international collaboration, particularly between the EU and China, underscores the global impact of local actions in enhancing urban ecosystem services. Leveraging existing projects and literature contributes substantially to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emphasizing the interconnectedness of urban environments worldwide



ENABLING TRANSFORMATION IN URBAN AREAS WITH NATURE BASED SOLUTIONS



Figure 4: Exchange between the EU Commission, INTERLACE, CONEXUS, NN+ and Nbs EduWorld.

Nature-Based Solutions Landscape and Funding: The session explored the current state of NBS projects, encompassing 74 ongoing projects with a substantial 650 EUR million in funding. Significance was placed on NBS practitioners and their impact on 470 communities. Key recommendations included the need to continue funding NBS and support specific initiatives.

Challenges and Opportunities in NBS Implementation: The speakers addressed challenges in implementing NBS, ranging from political awareness and engagement to effective communication with stakeholders. Emphasised the importance of proactive responses to challenges, coupled with joint public engagement. Key recommendations included deeper local engagement, hands-on practical experience, and broader communication and outreach.

Connections and Networking within the NBS Community: The session explored the importance of connections within the Nbs community and with other sectors and stakeholders. The speakers highlighted the international dimension of connections and

the necessity to consolidate, support, and expand resources, services, and products. Recommendations included fostering collaboration and innovation, promoting NBS through effective communication, and setting up task forces.

Intelligence Gathering and Sharing: The discussion was focused on ongoing intelligence gathering on Nbs, including small-scale projects and initiatives. The speakers recognised the value of top-notch individuals working on NBS. Recommendations centred on using agile approaches to adapt to changing needs, utilising a mix of traditional and innovative methods like videos, comics, and storytelling, and creating a network of hubs for equal access to resources.

Empowerment and Inclusivity in NBS Initiatives: The experts discussed strategies for empowerment, including undoing misconceptions, strengthening gender equality, and making NBS relevant to people's lives. Emphasised the need to consolidate, support, and expand resources in a manner that ensures equal access and inclusivity. Finally, they recommended a reactive and responsive approach to challenges.

Policy Implications and Recommendations for Policymakers: The speakers highlighted the policy implications of the discussions, stressing the importance of aligning Nbs research outcomes with local conditions. They highlighted the need for tailored policies, resource allocation to impactful areas, and reflections from the European Commission as the primary funder. Recommendations included a strategic and scalable approach to policy implementation.



POLICY, GOVERNANCE, AND INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES OF THE NBS INTEGRATION (SEE BELOW THE DETAILED SESSION)



Figure 5: Experts exchange on policy, governance and NbS integration

Balancing Top-Down and Bottom-Up Strategies:

A central theme emerged around the need for a balanced approach that incorporates both top-down and bottom-up strategies in Nature-Based Solutions implementation. Examples from Europe and China served as references, highlighting the inevitability of top-down approaches but also underlining potential pitfalls. The key takeaway emphasised the importance of finding a harmonious balance between centralized planning and grassroots initiatives in the implementation of NbS.

Challenges in Economically Vulnerable Areas:

The session underscored the challenges associated with executing collaborative NbS initiatives in economically challenged regions. Participants stressed the importance of adopting an inclusive approach that accommodates both public and private sectors, particularly in economically strained areas. The theme highlighted the necessity for strategies that address economic disparities to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of NbS projects.

Public Participation and Ownership Dynamics:

Discussions touched upon issues of ownership, public participation, and the crucial role of planners in NbS initiatives. Planners

were positioned as enablers and facilitators, urged to play a more active role beyond informational participation. This theme emphasised the need for dynamic public engagement and ownership dynamics to enhance the success and acceptance of NbS projects within communities.

Mitigating Gentrification Concerns:

Addressing gentrification concerns emerged as a priority, emphasizing the significance of integrating solutions to mitigate potential negative impacts. The discussion explored innovative sustainability approaches within urban development to counteract gentrification effects, aligning with the broader goal of ensuring that NbS initiatives contribute positively to the socio-economic fabric of communities.

Diverse Models for Community Engagement:

The significance of creating common identities and fostering community engagement in NbS projects was highlighted. Diverse models, including cooperatives and community gardens, were discussed as effective means to enhance community involvement. This theme emphasised the need for tailored community engagement strategies that align with local contexts to ensure the success of NbS initiatives.

Key Themes in NbS Policy Implementation:

Identified key themes in NbS policy implementation included conflicts, public-private relationships, and achieving a balance between top-down and bottom-up approaches. Planners were portrayed as catalysts, advocating for a shift beyond merely informational participation. This theme emphasized the multifaceted challenges associated with policy implementation and the critical role of planners in navigating complex landscapes of NbS policy, governance, and institutional challenges



ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS OF NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS AND RESTORATION (SEE BELOW THE DETAILED SESSION)



Figure 6: Exchanges on the Interactive Walkable Floormap

Clear Definitions and Roles: The panel underscored the critical importance of precise definitions of urban forest functions. This clarity serves as a foundational element for effective policymaking and urban planning.

Water Quality Impact: Panellists recognised the pivotal role played by water courses and riparian woodlands in shaping water quality. Aligning with regulatory directives, particularly the EU Water Framework Directive, the discussion emphasised the need to preserve these natural features.

Equity in Access and Education: The panel placed strong emphasis on prioritising equal

access to green spaces, considering spatial disparities. Integration of green space considerations into school curricula emerged as a key strategy for fostering environmental awareness.

Influencing Zoning Plans: Practical insights were shared on the use of land surface temperature heat maps to shape municipal zoning plans. This tool, discussed in the panel, provides valuable insights for informed decisions on urban development and heat mitigation strategies.

Diverse Tools for Analysis: Acknowledging the versatility and value of diverse tools, especially those analysing air quality and canopy cover, the panel highlighted Krakow's experience as a case study. Comparative analysis emerged as a key practice for cities seeking informed decision-making.

Citizen Science and Perceived Traits: The introduction of the My Dynamic Forest app as a citizen science tool assessing perceived traits was discussed. This innovative approach addresses underestimated considerations in urban planning and fosters community engagement in decision-making.

Scenario Planning and Integrated Analysis: The panel explored practical applications of scenario planning for nature-based solutions, particularly in testing plans for air pollution removal. Emphasis was placed on the significance of integrated analysis of multiple benefits, providing a comprehensive understanding for strategic urban development decisions.



URBAN LIVING LABS: NAVIGATING THE NBS JOURNEY THROUGH CO-DESIGN IN CITIES



Figure 7: Cities exchanging their experiences in integrating NbS in the local context.

Fostering Innovation and Expertise Exchange:

Exploring cities, modelling tools, and the benefits of Nature-Based Solutions for education, this session underscores the transformative potential of co-learning. Barcelona exemplifies successful site-specific development, providing a blueprint for collaborative initiatives.

Raising: Advocating for Informed Decision-Making:

International projects champion the benefits of NBS, presenting an opportunity to enlighten citizens and policymakers alike. Recognition of the broader impact on municipalities and regional bodies highlights

the leverage an international effort can offer in policy formulation.

Breaking Silos for Holistic Urban Development:

Encouraging wider collaboration beyond traditional networks, our international projects serve as catalysts for forging new connections. Innovative collaborative forms that transcend silos are essential, acknowledging the interconnected nature of NBS with other municipal actions.

Empowering Solutions through Community Engagement:

Inclusive co-design processes underscore the transformative potential of involving citizens in shaping local NBS solutions. Participatory approaches harness community insights, contributing to informed decision-making.

Shaping Policies for Sustainable Urban Futures:

Strategic integration of NBS in urban planning emerges as a powerful tool. The REGREEN and CLEARING HOUSE projects provide tangible examples of influencing strategic planning globally, inspiring depavement strategies in Paris and shaping greening targets in Velika Gorica. These projects offer benchmarks for instigating and sustaining NBS journeys within urban contexts.



THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC VALUES OF NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS AND RESTORATION (SEE BELOW THE DETAILED SESSION)



Figure 8: Exchange on social and economic of NbS & Restoration

Diverse Tree Values and Stakeholder Communication: The panel discussion emphasised the need to convey diverse tree values effectively, particularly to key decision-makers such as city-level planners and community members. Research highlighted the integration of various perspectives and the use of tools like infographics and summaries to communicate the varied values of trees. The discussion also acknowledged challenges in bridging the gap between expectations and tree management, underscoring conflicts, and communication issues within urban settings.

Economic Evaluation and Simplifying Impact: The choice of the statistical value of life for economic evaluation was explored, with a focus on its simplifying impact on calculations. However, concerns were raised about overlooking the complexity of human life, especially age-related factors. The speakers actively discussed tools and methodologies for economic evaluation, aiming to strike a balance between simplicity and capturing the nuanced aspects of human life in the context of urban tree management.

Data Collection Challenges and Adaptation: The conversation focused on the challenges of data collection, highlighting the adaptation of existing work and the difficulties in implementing surveys, especially in smaller cities lacking infrastructure. The panel discussed the need for a co-design process to

address challenges in defining surveys for biodiversity acceptance, recognizing the importance of adapting tools to diverse regional contexts.

Regional Differences in Perceptions of Tree Benefits: The discussion explored differences in perceptions of tree benefits across regions, considering factors such as government investment and cultural influences. The panel acknowledged the need to tailor urban tree management strategies based on regional needs and varying community expectations, aiming for more effective and culturally sensitive approaches.

Citizen Engagement and Urban Forest Monitoring: A key takeaway highlighted the effectiveness of citizen engagement through a Citizen Science Framework, which facilitated a shared understanding of tree expressions. The study underscored the importance of citizen awareness, appreciation, and involvement in urban forests. The conclusions emphasised the tool's efficacy in uncovering relationships, providing insights for action, and emphasizing the importance of amenity improvements and UF-NBS monitoring and maintenance.

Public Perception of Ecosystem Services: The panel presented findings from a survey comparing public perceptions of ecosystem services (ES) and ecosystem disservices (EDS) in European countries and eastern China. The disparities in values and preferences were attributed to economic conditions, cultural backgrounds, and access to green spaces. Understanding these differences was deemed crucial for tailoring forest management practices to align with the diverse needs and preferences of communities. The insights aimed to inform policymakers on the importance of considering regional and cultural variations in shaping effective urban tree management policies.



NATURE-BASED EDUCATION: OPPORTUNITIES, PEDAGOGIES AND CHALLENGES (SEE BELOW THE DETAILED SESSION)



Figure 9: Experts exchange on Nature Based Education

Challenges in Implementing Nature-Based Education: The panel discussion emphasised the challenges faced by teachers in implementing nature-based education, citing constraints in time, energy, and resources. The discussion underscored the importance of addressing these challenges to successfully integrate nature-based education in public schools, with a recognition that such efforts have the potential to enhance social cohesion within communities and alleviate school segregation.

Importance of Supportive Structures and Collective Efforts: A key theme throughout the discussion was the necessity of supportive structures for successful nature-based education. The panel highlighted the successful integration of nature-based education in public schools, emphasizing the role of City Council backing and external organizations/experts. The collective effort towards effective implementation emerged as a crucial aspect, recognizing that collaboration and external support play vital roles in overcoming challenges.

Parental Influence on School Selection: The discussion brought attention to the increasing influence of parents in selecting schools based on their commitment to nature-based education. The success of schools like Primary School Pierre Brossolette, which gained popularity due to its emphasis on

environmental and biodiversity education, was cited as an example. This theme highlighted the changing dynamics in education preferences, with parents showing a growing inclination towards schools that prioritize nature-based education for their children.

Co-construction and Participatory Approaches: The discussion highlighted the need to involve teachers and students in creating educational tools and building programs, considering the diverse educational contexts and challenges faced by different teachers. The focus was on collaborative efforts in designing and implementing effective nature-based education initiatives, with a recognition that participatory processes enhance the overall learning experience.

Long-Term Perspective and Resource Allocation: The panel discussed the need for resources and support was emphasised, and questions were raised about creating multi-skilled support teams at the municipal, regional, or EU level to aid teachers in nature education. The discussion stressed the importance of a long-term perspective in addressing the complexities of nature education, steering away from short-term fixes and advocating for sustained efforts.

Policy Considerations and Expert Support: The discussion touched upon the importance of designing European and national policies that support schools and teachers in nature education efforts. Suggestions included creating networks with pedagogical and topic specialists, establishing municipal hubs and support teams, and considering nature and NBS education as a long-term process. The theme highlighted the need for a systemic approach involving policy frameworks and expert support to ensure the successful integration of nature-based education in schools.



PRACTITIONERS' PERSPECTIVE ON WORKING WITH NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS. (SEE BELOW THE DETAILED SESSION)



Figure 10: Practitioners' exchange on the implementing NbS

Urbanisation Challenges and Conservation Plans: The panel discussion highlighted shared challenges in Mexico City and Belo Horizonte concerning population growth encroaching upon green spaces, despite robust conservation plans. Both cities acknowledged the need for legal and political interventions to address this issue. Belo Horizonte emphasised the importance of engaging society through cultural initiatives, involving artists and singers to promote NbS. The theme underscored the critical role of legal and political interventions, combined with cultural initiatives, in managing urbanisation challenges and safeguarding green spaces.

Connecting Culture and Environment for NBS Awareness: A key takeaway was the recognition of the importance of connecting culture and the environment to expand awareness of NbS. Belo Horizonte showcased the use of cultural initiatives, involving artists and singers, as a strategy to bridge the gap between NbS projects and the community, making them more relatable. This theme emphasized the value of incorporating cultural elements in environmental initiatives to foster a sense of pride and connection within communities, as seen in Mexico City and Belo Horizonte.

Public Resistance and Education for NBS Acceptance: The panel discussed public

resistance to renaturing in Paris and acknowledged that overcoming this resistance is a matter of time and public education. Cities such as Paris, Aarhus, and Krakow are implementing educational initiatives for raising awareness about the benefits of nature-based solutions.

Groundwater Protection and Street Tree Planting: Aarhus Municipality's focus on groundwater protection and street tree planting highlighted the importance of targeted efforts in NbS implementation. The emphasis was on creating GIS databases, monitoring, and appropriate management. This discussion highlighted the significance of specific strategies addressing local environmental challenges, such as groundwater protection, and the role of GIS databases in facilitating informed decision-making and management.

Heat Maps for Advocacy and Spatial Planning Modification: Velika Gorica's use of heat maps for advocacy and subsequent spatial planning updating, demonstrated the impact of data-driven approaches in promoting NbS. The emphasis on GIS databases and monitoring systems plays a crucial role in advocating for NBS. However, questions arose about tree selection, municipal boundaries, and the balance between private and public land, emphasizing the need for comprehensive planning and evaluation systems.

Challenges in Comprehensive Evaluation and Baseline Data: This discussion emphasised the challenges in establishing robust evaluation and monitoring systems and the need for overcoming political and financial barriers to ensure the successful implementation of NBS initiatives. It underscored the importance of addressing these challenges to build a solid foundation for effective NbS project.



MARKET PLACE

The Marketplace initiative at the "Re-greening cities with Nature Based Solutions in Europe and China" conference provides a dynamic platform for selected projects and initiatives to showcase their work, engage with key stakeholders, and cultivate collaboration. This innovative approach offers participants a unique opportunity to present and discuss their activities related to the potential of urban greenery and forests for increased urban sustainability. The primary objective is to bridge the gap between science, policy, and practice by facilitating direct interactions between presenters and policymakers, practitioners, and thought leaders in the field of Nature Based Solutions and urban planning.



Figure 11: Marketplace: Networking and knowledge sharing

During the first day of the conference, participants are allocated a concise 60 seconds to introduce their ideas, organisations, or projects to the entire audience. This brief pitch sets the stage for subsequent in-depth discussions at individual "market stalls." These stalls, equipped with standing tables, provide a conducive space for presenters to engage in face-to-face conversations with interested parties for up to 30 minutes. This intimate setting encourages immediate feedback, actionable advice, and the opportunity to establish meaningful connections with other participants. Through this format, the Marketplace aims to provide a supportive environment where NBS and urban planning professionals can share best practices, seek solutions to specific challenges, and explore possibilities for collaboration.

The added value of the Marketplace lies in its ability to foster networking, collaboration, and the exchange of ideas in a focused and interactive manner. Presenters gain valuable insights into their work through immediate feedback and actionable advice, while attendees have the chance to discover innovative projects and potential collaborators. The marketplace format facilitates a dynamic and efficient exchange of knowledge, creating an atmosphere that goes beyond traditional conference presentations. By encouraging meaningful conversations and connections, the Marketplace contributes to the overarching goal of advancing the understanding and implementation of Nature Based Solutions for urban sustainability.



DETAILED SESSION INFORMATION



NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS: INNOVATIONS FOR CLIMATE ACTION AND EU-CHINA COLLABORATION

Speakers & Moderator

- Vasileios Latinos, Head of Resilience and Climate Adaptation, ICLEI Europe (Moderator)
- Marco Fritz, Deputy Head of Unit Climate and Planetary Boundaries.
- Vojko Bratina, International Relations Officer, Policy Officer - S&T Attaché at Delegation of the European Union to China
- Karin Zaunberger, Policy Officer, European Commission, Directorate General for Environment (Unit F3)
- Benjamin Caspar, Team Leader of Urban Environment Policy at the European Commission

Session Format

Panel Discussion

Session description

Join us for an engaging panel discussion featuring experts in the fields of climate and environmental policies. The session will explore essential aspects of nature-based solutions, biodiversity enhancement, ecosystem restoration, climate action, disaster risk management, and collaborative efforts on a global scale. Each speaker will provide invaluable perspectives on key initiatives, policies, and strategies that are steering the course of climate and biodiversity action. The discussions will be presented with clarity and accessibility, ensuring that participants gain comprehensive insights into the future of climate resilience, international cooperation, biodiversity, and urban greening policies. Join us in this enlightening session aimed at fostering a profound understanding of the pressing issues that define our collective environmental responsibility.

Objective

Accelerating nature-based solutions in cities and regions

- Gain insights on how the Mission Adaptation can be effectively implemented to foster Nature-based Solutions
- Explore the role of research and EU funding formats to solidify the knowledge basis on Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and achieve the Mission's objectives.
- Accelerate systematic adaptation measures in cities and regions.

Building Global Cooperation for Climate and Biodiversity Impact

- Learn about the ongoing collaborative efforts between the EU and China.
- Identify opportunities to enhance the impact of research initiatives in addressing climate change and promoting nature-based solutions.
- Explore potential avenues for future collaboration to strengthen the global climate agenda.

Emphasising Ecosystem Restoration and Biodiversity Conservation

- Stress the importance of ecosystem restoration.
- Highlight the role of biodiversity in maintaining healthy ecosystems and how the economy is dependent on it.



- Advocate for practical policies to safeguard biodiversity at both European and global levels.

Urban Greening Plans and EU Nature Restoration Law

- Discuss urban greening plans within the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030.
- Explore the impact of legally binding targets promoting nature restoration and nature based urban development.
- Share strategies for integrating nature-based solutions into urban planning and development.

Agenda

(5 min) Introduction

(10 min) Accelerating nature-based solutions in cities and regions.

(10 min) Building Global Cooperation for Climate and Biodiversity Impact

(10 min) Emphasising Urgency to act and Opportunity.

(10 min) Urban Greening Plans and Proposed EU Nature Restoration Law

(10 min) Q&A with the audience

Details of the activities during the session

Direct Questions to the main speakers

- Question 1 to Marco: If you need to prioritise, what would you point out as necessary to speed up the use of nature-based solutions in cities and regions?
- Question 2 to Vojko: What upcoming initiatives can be highlighted in the ongoing collaborative efforts between the EU and China to foster biodiversity?
- Question 3 to Karin: Could you comment on the urgency of the situation we are in and the opportunity and importance of maintaining healthy ecosystems in consideration of societies' economies' dependence on biodiversity?
- Question 4 to Ben: With the recent approval of the Nature Restoration Law and its legally binding targets, how can Urban Greening Plans best align with the objectives of restoring at least 20% of the EU's land and sea areas by 2030 and achieving restoration of all ecosystems by 2050?

Follow up questions to the main speakers.

- Question 1 to Marco: Should we strive for a more effective connection between policymakers and the outcomes of research and innovation projects in order to expedite actionable measures?
- Question 2 to Vojko: What new ideas or partnerships could make global cooperation on climate change and nature-based solutions more effective in the future?
- Question 3 to Karin: You have participated in the final round of intergovernmental consultations on nature-based solutions in Nairobi. What were the main outputs of European NbS projects that you reported there and why is the UNEA process so relevant?
- Question 4 to Ben: Is there a concern that cities might employ strategies to surpass the targets, and will there be guidance provided to ensure cities follow the correct path?



Summary of Discussions

The discussion centred on the significance of implementing nature-based solutions (NBS) effectively and ensuring coherence across disparate policy domains. Participants stressed the need to exchange best practices, involve communities, and secure funding to expedite NBS deployment. They also mooted the necessity to prevent fragmented urban policies and guarantee connectivity in NBS projects.

Key Take aways

Highlighted quotes

The idea in 2016-2017 was to bring European experiences on NbS and Chinese experiences on sponge cities together. We can see today – e.g. through these two research projects – that China and the EU has learned a lot from each other. Both on an academic level and on the ground. In the new mission tools, it is on an even bigger scale – working with adaptation tools in the regions. Brings together different types of funding – regional funding and LIFE funding. When we have produced results on the missions in Europe, we will also open up for international networking. Today, is a great celebration of lessons learned in the two projects.,
Marco Fritz, Adaptation Mission Secretariat, DG Research & Innovation

EU and China are discussing missions. There are some similarities in the approaches. There is a good will from both sides with several meetings over the last months in addressing CC and promoting NBS. The political commitment from EU and China is good and very well supported by the experts in research. Vojko Bratina, Delegation of the EU to China

Urgency and opportunities in NBS. Biodiversity problems and CC can only be solved in combination. Not in isolation. Multiple benefits of NBS are key. The social role is important – NBS brings jobs and provides people the opportunity of being part of the solutions. We have to make cost-benefit calculations, but the social part, public participation etc. is also key. The three COP presidents made a statement that it is important to work with nature. Karin Zaunberger, DG Environment

The importance of Nature-Based Solutions has been underscored by the Green Deal, emphasising their role in addressing climate change, economy, and social aspects. Urban biodiversity, beyond parks, is crucial, requiring comprehensive planning with a clear vision, budget, political will, and monitoring. The 2030 Biodiversity Strategy acknowledges unmet 2025 goals and advocates for legally binding targets, moving away from voluntary measures. The emphasis is on universal participation, making it mandatory to increase and monitor tree cover in urban ecosystems to achieve a satisfactory biodiversity level. Implementation begins next year. Benjamin Caspar, DG Environment

List of good ideas for taking action

The participants in the discussion underscored the centrality of networking, sharing, and extending the reach of nature-based solutions implementation beyond early adopters. They also emphasized the



significance of ongoing collaboration between China and the EU, as both regions possess valuable experiences to exchange and learn from each other's triumphs and obstacles.

- Disseminating best practices: Sharing knowledge, lessons learned, and successful examples of NBS implementation can expedite the adoption of these solutions across diverse regions and contexts.
- Expanding NBS adoption: Enlarging the reach of NBS implementation beyond early adopters is crucial for achieving widespread positive impact.
- China-EU collaboration: Continuous cooperation between China and the EU can promote knowledge exchange, innovation, and the development of more effective NBS strategies.

By prioritizing networking, sharing, and collaboration, regions can effectively scale up NBS implementation and harness the potential of these solutions to address environmental, economic, and social challenges.

RE-GREENING CITIES WITH NATURE BASED SOLUTIONS IN EUROPE AND CHINA

Speakers and moderator

- Elena Petsani, REGREEN, ICLEI (Moderator)
- Alberto Pozza, REA, European Commission
- Dr. Marianne Zandersen, REGREEN, Aarhus University
- Dr. Rik De Vreese, CLEARING HOUSE, European Forest Institute
- Prof. Bin Zhao, REGREEN, Fudan University

Session Description

In this session, we focus on the key achievements of the REGREEN and CLEARING HOUSE projects, exploring their impact on promoting nature-based solutions in urban areas. We will hear from experts from the European Commission, REGREEN, CLEARING HOUSE, as they share insights into their collaborative efforts to enhance the implementation of NBS in Europe and China. This session will provide a comprehensive overview of the projects' successes, showcasing their ability to foster knowledge exchange, empower local stakeholders, and drive sustainable urban development.

Objective

- Provide an overview of the key achievements of the REGREEN and CLEARING HOUSE projects.
- Highlight the key outcomes and the collaboration with Chinese partners.
- Discuss the potential for scaling up NBS implementation in both Europe and China.

Agenda

(5 min) Introduction and Welcome

(20 min) Key Achievements of the REGREEN Project

(20 min) Key Achievements of the CLEARING HOUSE Project

(10 min) Identification of opportunities for further collaboration and research

(5 min) Conclusions



Summary of Discussions

The conversation centred around the enhancement of urban ecosystem services (ES), improvement of quality of life, and the development of models quantifying the impact of Nature-Based Solutions on cities. Public and private participation were deemed crucial for integrating urban ecosystem services and biodiversity, with toolkits like the city explorer and management toolkit highlighted as valuable assets. The conversation further underscored the significance of international collaboration, particularly between the EU and China, leveraging existing projects and literature to contribute substantially to UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Contributors emphasised the importance of integrating researchers and practitioners, showcasing the strength of the collaboration through six Urban Living Labs (ULLs). The dialogue delved into collecting best practices from both the EU and China, quantifying ecosystem services, and utilising tools such as interactive walkable floorplans. Local authorities were identified as critical enablers for both policy and implementation, with a call for a comprehensive education package to support the adoption of Nature-Based Solutions (NBS). Examples of successful implementation, such as Paris Region's political commitment and Aarhus' improvement in surface water quality, illustrated the tangible impact of the collaborative efforts on the ground.

Key Take aways

List of good ideas for taking action

Paris Region's Political Commitment:

- Elevated integration of Nature-Based Solutions to a political objective.
- Demonstrates a commitment to sustainable urbanisation.

Ile-de-France Nature Agency's Depaving Exploration:

- Proactive approach to mitigate non-sustainable urbanisation patterns.
- Reflects a strategic exploration of depaving as an NBS.

Velika Gorica's Spatial Planning using Heat Maps:

- Utilized heat maps to inform spatial planning decisions.
- Achieved 35% green coverage, including at least two trees on newly developed plots.

Aarhus Municipal Plan 2025's Surface Water Quality Improvement:

- Successful outcome in improving surface water quality.
- Implementation influenced by the Aarhus Municipal Plan 2025.



ENABLING TRANSFORMATION IN URBAN AREAS WITH NATURE BASED SOLUTIONS

Speakers & Moderator (s)

- Elena Petsani, Resilience and Climate Adaptation Expert, ICLEI (Moderator)
- Paola Lepori, Policy Officer, Biodiversity & Nature-based Solutions, DG Research & Innovation, European Commission
- Tom Wild, Coordinator of CONEXUS, Research and Innovation Action, Principal Investigator, Nature Based Solutions, Research Fellow, Dept of Landscape Architecture, University of Sheffield
- McKenna Davis, Coordinator of INTERLACE, Research and Innovation Action, Senior Fellow and Coordinator of Nature-based Solutions, Ecologic Institute [online]
- Bettina Wilk, Coordinator of NetworkNature+, Coordination and Support Action, Senior Expert, NbS and Biodiversity, ICLEI Europe
- Ivelina Ivanova, Coordinator of NBS EduWORLD, Coordination and Support Action, Project Manager in the Science Education Department of European Schoolnet (EUN)

Session Format

Panel Discussion

Session description

Join us for an engaging Panel Discussion! We're bringing together leading EU-funded projects, including INTERLACE, Conexus, NetworkNature+, and NBS EduWORLD, to reflect on how NbS research outcomes can shape more favourable, well-informed, and tailored policies that align with local conditions, as well as guide the priorities for future NbS calls and funding programmes, directing resources to areas with the most significant impact and ensuring the sustainable upscaling of NbS. Our candid conversation will also reveal the hurdles these projects have overcome and the invaluable insights they've gathered on their journeys.

We'll feature insights from two research and innovation actions (RIAs) - CONEXUS and INTERLACE - but with a Latin American focus, as they approach the finish line after almost 3.5 years of intensive work. Additionally, we'll hear from NetworkNature+ (NN+) and NBS EduWORLD, two Coordination and Support Actions that play a key role in fostering awareness-raising, networking, coordination, and dissemination of the results of RIAs and other projects, facilitating the sharing of knowledge, best practices, and project outcomes, thus contributing to the visibility and impact of NbS research and innovation activities. Be part of this illuminating discussion on the exciting future of NbS.

Objective

Understanding the EU NbS Policy Landscape

- Provide insights into the policy landscape related to Nature-Based Solutions - EU policy Level.
- Differences between the Horizon 2020 Programme and Horizon Europe (HE) is exploring horizontal linkages)
- Explore how NbS research outcomes can shape well-informed and tailored policies that align with local conditions.



- Discuss the role of leading EU-funded projects (INTERLACE, Conexus, NetworkNature+, NBS EduWORLD) in guiding future NbS calls and funding programs.
- Direct resources to areas with the most significant impact for sustainable upscaling of NbS. EC reflections, as they are the main funder.

Facilitating Knowledge Sharing and Best Practices

- Explore the networking role of CSAs, specifically NetworkNature+ and NBS EduWORLD, in creating a community of practice.
- Emphasise the role of Coordination and Support Actions (CSAs) in facilitating the sharing of knowledge, best practices, and project outcomes.
- Showcase how CSAs contribute to awareness-raising, networking, coordination, and dissemination of NbS research outcomes.
- Contribute to the visibility and impact of NbS research and innovation activities.

Explore Significant Project Contributions

- Delve into the accomplishments of two key projects focused on Latin American ecosystem restoration.
- Discuss the impact, significance, and challenges faced during the intensive 3.5-year project duration.

Agenda

(5 min) Opening of the session.

(5 min) Position the different types of funding - NBS funding landscape of CSAs, RIAs and IAs

- Policy landscape
- Shape future calls

(10 min) The Role of CSAs (NN+, NBS EduWORLD) - Networking role / Creating a community of Practice.

- Two projects that are motherboards of the outcomes of the Horizon projects.

(10 min) The role of RIAs, through the 2 sister projects (CONEXUS + INTERLACE) - ecosystem restoration - with CELAC

- Mention the main outputs of their projects. What is the added value? What were the challenges?

Detailed Structure of the session

Direct Questions to the main speakers (5 min each speaker to respond)

- Question 1 to Paola: From a policy perspective, how can NbS research outcomes effectively shape policies that align with local conditions?
- Question 2 to Bettina: From the perspective of the NetworkNature+, how does your work contribute to creating a community of practice and fostering knowledge sharing and capacity building for the NbS?
- Question 3 to Ivelina: In your role as the Coordinator of NBS EduWORLD, how does the project facilitate the exchange of knowledge and best practices within the NbS education community?
- Question 4 to Tom: Can you highlight the main outputs of CONEXUS and discuss the added value it brings to the ecosystem restoration efforts, especially with a Latin



American focus? Can you tell us a bit about any challenges faced during the intensive 3.5-year project duration or opportunities that have arisen?

- Question 5 to McKenna: Can you highlight the main outputs of INTERLACE so far and what is upcoming, and discuss the added value it brings to the ecosystem restoration efforts, especially with a Latin American focus? Can you tell us a bit about any challenges faced during the intensive 3.5-year project duration or opportunities that have arisen?

Follow up questions to the main speakers (3min each speaker to respond)

- Question 1 to Paola: We have a lot of existing demonstrations and pilots, which are helping us build resilience in different places. What are the challenges of up-scaling NbS at the local level?
- Question 2 to Bettina: How do Coordination and Support Actions (CSAs) and more specifically NetworkNature+ enhance the visibility and impact of NbS research and innovation activities?
- Question 3 to Ivelina: How do you envision the NBS EduWORLD project contributing to improve NBS literacy and education on NbS at various levels and of various stakeholders?
- Question 4 to Tom: In what ways can collaboration be enhanced between different sister projects to maximise impact? Do you have any examples to share?
- Question 5 to McKenna: In what ways can collaboration be enhanced between different sister projects to maximise impact? Do you have any examples to share?

Key Take aways

Nature-Based Solutions Landscape and Funding:

- Considerable funding of 650EUR million supports 74 ongoing NBS projects.
- Recognition of NBS practitioners' impact on 470 communities.

Challenges and Opportunities in NBS Implementation:

- Identified challenges include political awareness and effective stakeholder communication.
- Emphasised the need for proactive responses and joint public engagement.

Connections and Networking within the NBS Community:

- Emphasised the importance of connections within the NBS community and internationally.
- Highlighted the need to consolidate, support, and expand resources.

Intelligence Gathering and Sharing:

- Emphasised ongoing intelligence gathering on NBS and the value of top-notch individuals in the field.
- Advocated for agile approaches and a mix of traditional and innovative methods.

Empowerment and Inclusivity in NBS Initiatives:

- Discussed strategies for undoing misconceptions, strengthening gender equality, and making NBS relevant to people's lives.
- Emphasised the need for consolidation, support, and expanded resources.

Policy Implications and Recommendations for Policymakers:

- Stressed the importance of aligning NbS research outcomes with local conditions.
- Highlighted the need for tailored policies and resource allocation based on significant impact areas.



Best Practices:

Nature-Based Solutions Landscape and Funding:

- Establish transparent funding mechanisms for NBS initiatives.
- Encourage community involvement in decision-making processes.

Challenges and Opportunities in NBS Implementation:

- Implement reactive and responsive strategies to challenges.
- Foster community involvement in NBS planning and implementation.

Connections and Networking within the NBS Community:

- Create a network of hubs for equal access to resources.
- Encourage collaborative initiatives that span different sectors.

Intelligence Gathering and Sharing:

- Implement agile approaches for rapid adaptation.
- Encourage collaboration and information sharing among NBS practitioners.

Empowerment and Inclusivity in NBS Initiatives:

- Foster inclusive practices in NBS initiatives.
- Establish mechanisms for undoing prejudices and promoting diversity.

Policy Implications and Recommendations for Policymakers:

- Engage policymakers in dialogue on NbS benefits and challenges.
- Develop strategic and scalable policy frameworks.

Good Ideas for Taking Action:

Nature-Based Solutions Landscape and Funding:

- Advocate for sustained funding for NBS projects.
- Foster collaboration between NBS practitioners and communities.

Challenges and Opportunities in NBS Implementation:

- Develop targeted awareness campaigns on NBS benefits.
- Establish community forums for ongoing engagement.

Connections and Networking within the NBS Community:

- Establish task forces for cross-sectoral collaboration.
- Promote NBS through various communication channels.

Intelligence Gathering and Sharing:

- Utilise videos, comics, and storytelling for effective communication.
- Establish hubs for knowledge sharing and dissemination.

Empowerment and Inclusivity in NBS Initiatives:

- Implement hands-on, practical experiences in NBS projects.
- Develop communication strategies for diverse audiences.

Policy Implications and Recommendations for Policymakers:

- Engage policymakers in dialogue on NbS benefits and challenges.
- Develop strategic and scalable policy frameworks.



POLICY, GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES OF THE NBS INTEGRATION

Speakers & Moderator

- Dr. Duncan Russell, REGREEN, University of Exeter, (Moderator)
- Dr. Clive Davies, CLEARING HOUSE, European Forest Institute
- Dr. Jiali Jin, CLEARING HOUSE, The Chinese Academy of Forestry, Research Institute of Forestry
- Dr. Anne Jensen, REGREEN, Aarhus University
- Dr. Richard Hardiman, REGREEN

Session Format

Discussion session

Session description

During the last decade, the concept of NBS has increasingly found its way into government agendas and decision-making, notably through local planning processes. Governments are becoming more conscious of sustainable development, Agenda 2030, climate adaptation and other potential solutions to pressing challenges. However, NBS often require more integrated approaches to local policymaking than other solutions, ensuring that nature renewal and preservation align to maximise benefits for other sectors and associated priorities.

Compartmentalisation and the fragmentation of local government into silos have been identified as a major factor in both REGREEN and CLEARINGHOUSE limiting and challenging the uptake and implementation of urban NBS. Fragmentation is also recognized as an issue in broader environmental protection efforts related to sustainable transitions (Russel et al., 2020; Mickwitz et al., 2009; Alons, 2017; Sarabi, 2019). Local government institutions, particularly those dealing with sustainability linked to NBS, face challenges integrating policy issues and aims across a range of urban sectors (Peters, 2018; Candel, 2019; Wamsler, 2015). On the other hand, there is a need for more integrated governance approaches to facilitate the creation and implementation of well-designed NBS initiatives that can foster multi-functional policy solutions. The integration of top-down and bottom-up approaches proves essential in crafting policies that seamlessly mesh at different levels. Equally crucial is the deployment of innovative financial and other incentives, strategically tapping into sources like government grants and non-traditional funds to stimulate proactive engagement in NBS.

In this panel debate, we invite for discussion on barriers and enablers related to NBS policy, governance and institutional issues.

Objective

Identify Barriers to NBS Policy Implementation:

- Explore and discuss the challenges and obstacles that hinder the effective implementation of Nature-Based Solutions policies at the local government level.
- Analyse factors such as compartmentalization, fragmentation, and siloed approaches within local government institutions that impede the uptake and execution of urban NBS initiatives.



Examine Governance Challenges:

- Investigate the governance issues associated with NBS policies, focusing on the integration of policy issues and aims across diverse urban sectors.
- Discuss the challenges faced by local government institutions dealing with sustainability linked to NBS and explore potential solutions to enhance governance approaches.

Highlight the Need for Integrated Policymaking:

- Emphasize the importance of integrated approaches to local policymaking for NBS, ensuring alignment with broader sustainable development goals, Agenda 2030, and climate adaptation strategies.
- Explore ways to break down silos and encourage collaboration among different sectors to maximize the benefits of nature renewal and preservation.

Discuss Multi-Functional Policy Solutions:

- Encourage dialogue on the development and implementation of well-designed NBS initiatives that go beyond single-sector solutions.
- Explore how multi-functional policy solutions can address various challenges and priorities, fostering holistic and sustainable urban development.

Promote Integrated Governance Approaches:

- Discuss the significance of integrating both top-down and bottom-up approaches in crafting NBS policies that effectively mesh at different levels of government.
- Explore successful examples of integrated governance approaches in other contexts and discuss their applicability to NBS policy.

Agenda

(5min) Introduction

(5min) Policy, governance and institutional issues: findings and reflections from the CLEARING HOUSE project, Dr. Clive Davies, CLEARING HOUSE, European Forest Institute

(5min) Barriers and Enablers to Public Participation in NBS in China, Dr. Richard Hardiman, REGREEN

(5min) NBS as innovative, political, and novel governance approach, Dr. Anne Jensen, REGREEN, Aarhus University

(5min) China's National Forest City programme for more resilience cities, Dr. Jiali Jin, CLEARING HOUSE, The Chinese Academy of Forestry, Research Institute of Forestry

(20 min) Discussion with the speakers

(40 min) Discussion with the audience

(5min) Closing remarks

Summary of Discussions

The panel discussion centred on the complexities of implementing Nature-Based Solutions (NBS), with conflicts and the interplay between the public and private sectors taking centre stage. The conversation underscored the challenges of achieving collaboration, particularly in economically challenged areas, and the need for a nuanced approach that balances top-down and bottom-up strategies. Examples from Europe and China highlighted the inevitability of top-down approaches, cautioning against potential pitfalls. The discussion also delved into issues of ownership, public participation, and the role of planners in facilitating NBS initiatives. Gentrification concerns were



addressed, emphasizing the importance of incorporating solutions to mitigate negative impacts. The panel stressed the significance of creating common identities and fostering community engagement, exploring diverse models such as cooperatives and community gardens.

In exploring the dynamics of NBS policy implementation, the panel identified key themes, including conflicts, public-private relationships, and the balance between top-down and bottom-up approaches. The challenges of collaborative initiatives in economically challenged areas were emphasized, along with the importance of finding a nuanced approach that accommodates both sectors. Examples from Europe and China highlighted the varying degrees of success in achieving collaboration and addressing public engagement. The panel discussed the role of planners as enablers and facilitators, urging a move beyond informational participation. Gentrification concerns were acknowledged, and innovative solutions to incorporate sustainability in urban development were explored. The session concluded with a call for collaborative efforts, emphasizing the need for diverse strategies to navigate the complexities of NBS policy, governance, and institutional challenges.

Key Take aways

Highlighted quotes:

Most NBS interventions are led by the public sector. NBS is often not known by name. Urban forestry is normally project based. Scale of interventions is much greater in China than Europe. Governance is more top-down in China but should not be over-exaggerated. Clive Davies

In unveiling China's national forestry program, we harness the power of informed research to guide urban development, fostering improved forest coverage and weaving blue-green corridors. Beyond aesthetics, our approach enhances social and economic resilience. Addressing land use conflicts, elevating the quality of urban forests, implementing large-scale monitoring, and prioritizing biodiversity, we champion an integrated vision for urban-peri and urban-rural forests, creating a harmonious tapestry for sustainable growth. Jiali Jin

"In the realm of urban policy and planning, Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) unfold as a political terrain, where contested ideas of nature clash amid conflicting interests. The interactive canvas of walkable floor maps becomes our platform to navigate these contests. Inside policy entrepreneurs emerge as catalysts, while NBS activism, fueled by external activists, breathes life into governance institutions. Adapted to local systems and cultures, policy evolution hinges on the synergy of learning, political engagement, and co-benefits, fostering collaboration among cities for an enriched and integrated future." Anne Jensen

"In the vast tapestry of China, from West to East, the landscape of mindsets varies profoundly. The pivotal Chinese Environmental Protection Law of 2015 echoes global expectations for public participation akin to the Aarhus Convention. Yet, a historical top-down approach breeds some reluctance among the public, especially in mega-projects like sponge cities. Embracing the nuances, micro-projects offer a more accessible path. To truly harmonize public involvement, China beckons for a surge of social scientists, providing invaluable insights on navigating the delicate balance between tradition and progressive engagement."

Richard Hardiman



ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS OF NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS AND RESTORATION

Speakers & Moderator (s)

- Laurence Jones, UKCEH (Moderator)
- Ellen Banzhaf, UFZ; (Moderator)
- Tomasz Bergier, The Sendzimir Foundation (TSF) (Moderator)
- Andrea Armstrong, Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)
- Corina Basnou, CREAf
- Sebastian Scheuer, Humboldt University Berlin (HUB)
- Janice Scheffler, UKCEH
- Gregor Levin, Aarhus University
- Wanben Wu, Aarhus University
- David Fletcher, UKCEH

Panellists

- Łukasz Mielczarek, Kraków Municipal Greenspace Authority (ZZM Kraków)
- Eugènia Vidal Casanovas, Barcelona Metropolitan Area (Barcelona)
- Signe Iversen (Aarhus Municipality)
- Gordana Mikulcic Krnjaja (Velika Gorica)

Session Format

Presentations and Panel Discussion – 90 min:

- 4 short talks + 10 min. questions (30 min.)
- 4 short talks + 10 min. questions (30 min.)
- Integrated discussion (30 min.)

Objective

To present the main tools and project findings on the multiple benefits from NBS, which help city officials in their decision making.

Session description

This session explores ways to evaluate the benefits provided by NBS and illustrates it with examples from showcase cities. We present key outputs from Clearing House and REGREEN. These most important results comprise the identification of NBS typologies, the analysis of different ecosystem services, the discussion on equity targets to face environmental pressures, and also Geo-surveying of public interest and perception on different aspects of NBS. The gained knowledge reflects scenarios to inform NBS, illustrates an application on how to develop, model and assess various scenarios as well as benchmarking tools. Hence, the session also shows synergies and trade-offs regarding multiple benefits of NBS through an integrated analysis and explains the guidelines on how to manage NBS and discusses further development. All in all, the session describes the benefits of NBS, as well as the ways to measure or understand those benefits. It also illustrates how close working with city authorities in a collaborative partnership is important to get useful data, models and information which can help cities make effective and evidence-based decisions on NBS types and locations tailored to their respective needs.



Agenda

(5min) Introduction to break out session (Laurence Jones)

(20 min) #1 Four short talks + discussion (Chair: Laurence Jones)

- Typology of Urban-Forests as Nature-Based Solutions (ClearingHouse: Sebastian Scheuer (HUB))
- Ecosystem services analysis approaches (REGREEN: Janice Scheffler (UKCEH))
- Equity issues of exposure to pressures, and access to benefits of NBS (REGREEN: Gregor Levin (AU))
- MyDynamicForest: Geo-surveying on public interest/opinion/perception on different aspects of NBS/environmental issues in CH CS cities (ClearingHouse: Corina Basnou (CREAF))

(10 min) Clarifying questions & Discussion.

(20 min) #2 Four short talks + discussion (Chair: Ellen Banzhaf)

- Developing scenarios to inform NBS (REGREEN: Wanben Wu (FU))
- An application for developing, modeling & assessing scenarios, as well as a benchmarking tool (ClearingHouse: Sebastian Scheuer (HUB))
- Integrated analysis of multiple benefits from NBS - synergies and trade-offs (REGREEN: David Fletcher (UKCEH))
- Guidelines on urban forest management and development (ClearingHouse: Clive David (UK- EFI))

(10min) Clarifying questions & Discussion.

(20min) #3 Guided interactive discussion (Chair: Tomasz Bergier)

- Question to each panellist: “How will you use some of these products and results in your city, to address challenges you are facing?” (3 minutes each)
- Questions from the audience

(5min) Summary and close of session (Tomasz Bergier)

Detailed Structure of the session

#1 and #2 Talks from ClearingHouse & REGREEN will be spread across the two presentation sessions.

Ecosystem services analysis approaches [Janice Scheffler] 5 min

- water flow (Aarhus)
- water quality (Aarhus)
- air quality (all cities)
- noise mitigation (Paris)
- heat mitigation (Velika Gorica)

Equity issues of exposure to pressures, and access to benefits of NBS [Gregor Levin] 5 min

- accessible green space (Aarhus)
- variation in access to NBS (Paris)
- lowered air pollution exposure due to NBS (Paris)

Developing scenarios to inform NBS [Wanben Wu] 5 min.

- future scenarios for city development (Europe & China)
- working with cities to test NBS plans #1 (Aarhus ~6 NBS scenarios)
- exploring policy ambition – feasibility of 3-30-300 guidelines (Velika Gorica)



- testing outcomes of different NBS options. Different types of NBS for water flow (Aarhus)
- air quality trees inside versus trees outside of a city (any city)

Integrated analysis of multiple benefits from NBS - synergies and trade-offs [David Fletcher] 5 min

- multifunctional assessment of ES within 1 city (Aarhus)
- comparison of services across 3 cities (Air pollution removal)
- urban development drives ecosystem service differences across the 6 REGREEN cities
- efficiency metrics to allow comparison across cities.

Urban Forests

- Typology of Urban-Forests as Nature-Based Solutions – Sebastian Scheuer (HUB)
- MyDynamicForest: Geo-surveying on public interest/opinion/perception on different aspects of NBS/environmental issues in CH CS cities (i.e., River Parks in Kraków, air quality in Leipzig, etc.) – Corina Basnou (CREAF)
- An application for developing, modelling & assessing scenarios, as well as a benchmarking tool – Sebastian Scheuer (HUB)
- CH Guidelines on urban forest management and development – Andrea Armstrong (VUB)

#3 Format and theme prompting questions for Discussion session.

Four city representatives will be invited to the stage (two cities from REGREEN and two from ClearingHouse). They will be asked to comment on the potential of the presented products, and especially the most useful for them to apply in their city.

Summary of Discussions

The discussion delved into various facets of urban forestry, encompassing typology, model development, equity considerations, citizen science, scenario planning, integrated analysis, and thematic guidelines. Noteworthy points included the significance of composition in urban forests, the impact of green spaces on water quality, noise reduction, and heat mitigation, along with equity issues linked to environmental exposure. The introduction of a citizen science tool aimed to assess perceived traits, underscoring the necessity of integrating equity considerations with urban forests. Scenario planning was discussed for nature-based solutions, specifically testing plans for air pollution removal. An integrated analysis of multiple benefits identified hotspots and explored the impacts of urban development. Thematic guidelines underscored the importance of preserving biodiversity and resolving conflicts between ecosystem services.

Representatives from different cities outlined their plans to apply these insights locally. One city highlighted the systematic definitions of urban forest functions. Another city aimed to align projects with environmental directives and municipal planning, with a focus on water quality impacts. Education and green space access were prioritized in another city, using heat maps to influence zoning plans. Despite finding the tools helpful for analysing air quality and canopy cover, integrating diverse data systems and establishing consistent data repositories were noted as challenges in spatial planning. The discussion spotlighted diverse tools and perspectives for addressing urban challenges through sustainable urban forestry practices.



Key Take aways

Systematic Definitions of Urban Forest Functions:

- Recognising the need for systematic definitions of functions related to urban forests, this practice ensures a clear understanding of the roles and contributions of urban green spaces.
- Water Courses and Riparian Woodland Impact on Water Quality:
- Acknowledging the impact of water courses and riparian woodlands on water quality aligns with the EU Water Framework Directive, emphasizing the importance of preserving and enhancing these natural features.

Education and Access to Green Space:

- Prioritizing education and providing access to green spaces, particularly by incorporating such considerations into school curricula, contributes to fostering environmental awareness and ensuring equitable access to nature.

Influence of Heat Maps on Municipal Zoning Plans:

- Leveraging land surface temperature heat maps to influence municipal zoning plans helps cities make informed decisions about urban development, taking into account heat mitigation strategies and green space distribution.

Tool Utilisation for Comprehensive Analysis (Krakow Example):

- The recognition that various tools, such as those analysing air quality and canopy cover, can be valuable for cities. Krakow's experience highlights the importance of comparing different models and sharing analyses to benefit other cities.



ECOLOGICAL QUALITY OF RESTORATION ACTIVITIES AND NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS

Speakers and Moderators

- Marc Barra, REGREEN, Paris Region Institute (Moderator & Speaker)
- Gwendoline Grandin, REGREEN, Paris Region Institute (Moderator & Speaker)
- Dr Tom Wild, University of Sheffield
- Prof. Dagmar Haase, CLEARING HOUSE, Humboldt – University of Berlin

Session Format

Panel Discussion

Objective

This panel will discuss the conceptual, functional and technological requirements to design and manage nature-based solutions in cities. The panelists will address challenges regarding the move from a traditional landscaping approach to ecological engineering and restoration strategies.

Session description

Common reflection on design and management but also opportunities and limitations of Nature-based solutions and restoration in cities. The session will discuss the impact of climate change on the functionality and practice of and with NBS. The session will be based on case studies and examples throughout Europe. Researchers and practitioners will talk together.

Agenda

- (10min) Moving beyond the nature-based solutions discourse: introducing nature-based thinking, by Tom Wild
- (10min) Designing biodiverse nature-based solutions, by Marc Barra
- (10min) What is renaturalisation?, by Gwendoline Grandin
- (10min) A critical view on recent urban NBS, Pre-recorded video, by Dagmar Haase
- (45min) Discussion Session

Detailed Structure of the session

PART 1. ECOLOGICAL QUALITY OF NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS (45min)

- Presentation 1. Moving beyond the nature-based solutions discourse: introducing nature-based thinking (10 minutes) by Tom Wild
- Topics: re-based thinking, ecological qualities of urban NBS and restoration, examples
- Presentation 2. Designing biodiverse nature-based solutions (10 minutes) by Marc Barra
- Topics: focus on the building level (green roofs), focus on the district level (water management), focus on the city-level (parks / blue and green network), case studies

PART 2. RENATURALIZATION: ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION IN CITIES

- Presentation 3. What is renaturalisation? (10 minutes) by Gwendoline Grandin
- Topics: meaning and approaches, ecological restoration and engineering, soils central to urban renaturing challenges, identifying areas with high renaturing potential (cartoviz REGREEN tool), case studies.



- Presentation 4. A critical view on recent urban NBS (10 minutes) Pre-recorded video by Dagmar Haase

Topics: spontaneous colonisation, rewilding, brownfields as a refuge for wildlife, the importance to protection BEFORE restoration of NBS in cities.

Engagement with the audience (45 minutes)

Summary of Discussions

In the discussion on Nature-based thinking (NBT), the focus is on transitioning from Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) to a more holistic Nature-based thinking approach. The proposal advocates an interdisciplinary, multiscale, and less anthropocentric perspective, acknowledging the inseparable connection between Nature and Humanity. Emphasizing the necessity to comprehend local ecological habitats and processes, the talk challenges prevailing ornamental gardening principles in urban areas, urging a shift towards rewilding practices, including low flowering seasons and minimal mowing. Valuable insights from brownfield habitats contribute to the discourse, encouraging a departure from the current aesthetic vision of urban Nature.

Exploring the multiscale application of NBS and restoration efforts in cities, the discussion underscores factors crucial for biodiversity at different levels. At the city level, considerations such as patch surface and connectivity are highlighted as pivotal. Neighbourhood-level tools, like the Ratio of Biologically Vital Areas, are presented as essential for environmental stability. At the building level, the presentation advocates for urban forms inspired by ecological engineering, promoting green roofs and walls with a focus on local plants and diverse habitats. The ecological quality of green spaces is intricately tied to their shape, structure, and size, with size and connectivity emerging as key drivers of biodiversity. The conversation stresses the significance of renaturing cities to combat climate change, enhance health, and restore biodiversity, introducing the REGREEN methodology for assessing the potential of depaving and renaturing urban areas. A critical view on recent urban NBS highlights challenges, such as tree mortality in Europe due to changing climate conditions, underscoring the need for the "right" plant species, irrigation, and thoughtful green space management. The call for a laissez-faire approach and leveraging spontaneous colonization and rewilding of brownfields emerges as a key strategy, along with the recognition of soil as an integral part of NBS that connects green spaces with water access and storage. The importance of patch connectivity for seed exchange and the potential of linear NBS along urban gradients are also emphasised.

The discussion highlighted several key challenges in the implementation of Nature-based thinking (NBT) in urban contexts. Tensions arose between short-term operations and the long-term functionality of ecosystems, emphasizing the need to reconcile immediate actions with the sustainable health of natural systems. Difficulties were identified in determining the appropriate scales and objectives for NBT initiatives, emphasizing the importance of finding the right balance. A significant concern was the engagement and perception of nature by city-dwellers, who often lack meaningful experiences with the natural environment within urban settings. Additionally, the conversation addressed the challenge of fostering collaboration among professionals from diverse backgrounds, including ecologists, architects, and urban planners. Lastly, there were discussions about the complexities in identifying effective levers for various stakeholders, particularly municipalities, in driving successful NBT implementations.



Key Take aways

Highlighted quotes

"What is not renaturation? It is not depaving, which doesn't necessarily include the return of ecological processes. Nor is it greenery, which is a plant-focused aesthetic approach of the urban green space." Gwendoline Grandin

"Through GIS methodology, the REGREEN method highlights priority renaturing zones in the Paris Region to measure renaturing potential." Gwendoline Grandin

"Size and connectivity are the two main factors predicting biodiversity on a given area" Marc Barra

"To encourage biodiversity our green spaces management, we need more complexity, more native species... and less management". Marc Barra

"Trees are important elements of NBS because they provide a great number of urban ecosystem services. But they are nature too!" Dagmar Haase

"We need Nature, but Nature-based solutions maybe less in the designed way and more in the spontaneous colonization way" Dagmar Haase

"We can get great learnings from brownfield habitats, how its organisms interact with each other and with their environment, and especially with the soil. We need to understand ecological processes locally, through a functional approach". Tom Wild

"Nature-based thinking sees Nature and Humanity as indissociably connected, through a multi-scalar, interdisciplinary approach freed from conventional infrastructures." Tom Wild

List of good ideas for taking action

- Develop qualitative restoration methods locally adapted
- Consider the structure of the urban green space to understand its biodiversity (size, shape, age,)
- Work on the urban dwellers' perception of nature in cities (clean, managed, aesthetically pleasing nature versus dirty, unmanaged, unsightly nature (image often conveyed by wasteland). To do this, they need to know the natural surroundings around them, and want to protect them. We need to involve them directly in the protection/management of these areas and influence their perception of "aesthetic" nature through education and communication.
- Develop socio-ecological approach that intends to consider humans and nature as part of a whole ecosystem to understand their interactions in an interdisciplinary and multiscale way

Best practices (include a place, title and brief description).

- Paris region, REGREEN Method of determination of priority renaturation sites (Cartoviz)
- Sarcelles, Restoration of a river to reduce flooding.
- Leipzig, guerrilla gardening, extensive ways of care for urban green areas in Leipzig



URBAN LIVING LABS: NAVIGATING THE NBS JOURNEY THROUGH CO-DESIGN IN CITIES

Speakers and Moderators

- Dr Marianne Zandersen, REGREEN, Aarhus University (Moderator)
- Dr Rik De Vreese, CLEARING HOUSE, European Forest Insitute (Moderator)
- Dr. Eugenia Vidal, CLEARING HOUSE, Metropolitan Area of Barcelona
- Prof. Tomasz Bergier, CLEARING HOUSE, Sendzimir Foundation, for the Krakow Living Lab
- Gordana Krnjaja, REGREEN, Velika Gorica
- Gwendoline Grandin, REGREEN, Paris Region Institute
- Signe Iversen, REGREEN, Aarhus Municipality

Session description

In this session, partner cities and Urban Living Labs will reflect on the different types of impacts and added values of participating in REGREEN and CLEARINGHOUSE. Experience and insights will range from metropolitan areas of Barcelona and Paris to large cities of Kraków and Aarhus and towns like Velika Gorica, representing a wide variety of urban scales.

The session will also discuss the future perspectives of planning, designing and implementing nature-based solutions after REGREEN and CLEARINGHOUSE projects come to an end, including what processes, insights, tools and guidelines the cities can recommend other cities and towns embarking on a NBS journey.

Agenda

Each speaker will have 5 minutes to talk, no slides This will be followed by interaction with the audience.

Detailed Structure of the session

The questions that we would like you to address in your 5minute talk are the following:

- What has been the key impact(s)/change(s) for your city/workplace to participate in REGREEN/CLEARING HOUSE? (This can be both soft and hard – e.g. in terms of increased awareness and different ways of working, co-creation processes, breaking down silos to changed policies, additional funding approaches to real implemented NBS that would not have happened (the same way) as before.
- What would you say is the legacy of REGREEN/CLEARING HOUSE – what will be the lasting/ longer lasting element(s)?
- What tools, guidelines, evidence have you found was especially useful from REGREEN/CLEARINGHOUSE
- What advice do you have for other cities engaging on a journey towards better integrating NBS and co-developing NBS in cities?

Summary of Discussions

Co-learning:

- Explored cities, modelling, and mapping tools in the context of NBS.
- Emphasized the value and benefits of NBS in education for diverse user groups.



- Barcelona showcased successful site-specific development, setting a precedent for collaborative initiatives.

Awareness Raising:

- Advocated for heightened awareness among citizens, interest groups, and policymakers.
- International projects highlighted the multifaceted benefits of NBS, providing leverage for policy influence.
- Stressed the broader impact on municipalities and regional bodies, underscoring the international dimension.

Collaboration:

- Encouraged collaboration beyond traditional networks, fostering connections with new colleagues.
- Recognized the need for innovative collaborative forms that transcend silos.
- Explored the interconnected nature of NBS with other municipal actions, promoting holistic urban development.

Co-design:

- Highlighted the transformative potential of inclusive co-design processes with citizens.
- Leveraged participatory approaches to understand values and co-create locally adapted NBS solutions.
- Positioned community engagement as integral to informed decision-making.

Impact:

- Positioned planning as a strategic tool for NBS integration.
- Showcased examples of RG and CH projects influencing strategic planning globally.
- Demonstrated the lasting legacy of projects, acting as inspiration for sustained NBS journeys within cities.

Next Steps:

- Consideration of lessons learned from successful projects like BRC, RG, and CH.
- Exploration of opportunities to replicate and adapt NBS strategies in diverse urban contexts.
- Continued engagement with citizens, policymakers, and collaborators for ongoing success.



THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC VALUES OF NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS AND RESTORATION

Moderators & Speakers

- Prof. Liisa Tyrväinen, Natural Resources Institute Finland
- Prof. Ben Wheeler, University of Exeter, UK
- Dr Joanne Garrett, University of Exeter
- Dr James Fullam, University of Exeter
- Dennis Roitsch, Wageningen University and Dr Jiali Jin (Chinese Academy of Forestry, Research Institute of Forestry)
- Dr. Sebastian Scheuer, Humboldt University Berlin
- Dr. Jiali Jin, Chinese Academy of Forestry, Research Institute of Forestry

Objective

Present and discuss findings from REGREEN and Clearinghouse that relate to the social and economic values of Nature Based Solutions

Session description

This panel discussion will first present a selection of headline findings from REGREEN and Clearinghouse that relate to the broad social and economic values of Nature Based Solutions. It will then open up a panel discussion, to consider the merit of these different forms of valuation (including non-monetary valuation), what they can tell us, and how they can be used to inform relevant policy and practice.

Agenda

10.30 - 11.10: Presentations Chair: Liisa Tyrväinen

- Presentation 1: Dr Joanne Garrett – Urban heat mitigation by urban green spaces in Paris: reductions in mortality and associated economic valuation.
- Presentation 2: Dr James Fullam – Perceptions and experience of Nature Based Solutions: Insights from photo-elicitation focus groups in three European cities.
- Presentation 3: Researcher Dennis Roitsch & Dr Jiali Jin – Comparing perceptions related to urban forests as nature-based solutions in Europe and China
- Presentation 4: Dr. Sebastian Scheuer – Citizens' trait perceptions to support the governance of urban forests as nature-based solutions.

11.10 - 11.15: 3-minute attention break: Audience asked to discuss in pairs – one thing that they have learned or one question they would like to ask the panel.

11.15 - 12.00: Panel discussion with speakers. Chair: Ben Wheeler

Summary of Discussions

The discussion covers key decision-makers interested in the study, specifically city-level planners, and community members. The research aims to effectively convey diverse tree values by integrating various perspectives, with a particular emphasis on communicating with stakeholders. The choice of the statistical value of life for economic evaluation is explained, highlighting its simplifying impact on calculations while overlooking the complexity of human life, particularly age-related factors. There's exploration into the gap between expectations and tree management, underscoring conflicts and communication issues. The project team is actively working on tools like infographics and summaries to better communicate the varied values of trees.



The conversation shifts to data collection methods, emphasizing the adaptation of existing work and the challenges in implementing surveys. The difficulties of adapting tools, especially for smaller cities lacking infrastructure, are discussed. The dialogue also explores differences in perceptions of tree benefits across regions, considering factors such as government investment and cultural influences. Further discussions centre on challenges in defining surveys for biodiversity acceptance, with a call for a co-design process to bridge communication gaps. The online audience prompts a discussion on the necessity for robust external policies for effective urban tree management, with insights shared. As the discussion concludes, participants highlight knowledge gaps, including the need for uniform data, quantifying non-material ecosystem services, and expanding the geographical scope of surveys.

Key Take aways

Highlighted quotes

In response to the escalating threat of more intense and frequent heatwaves due to climate change, the study focused on the effectiveness of public green spaces in Paris during 2019. Analysing high-resolution temperature maps for Paris in 2019, the study aimed to understand the impact of green space on cooling and health. Jo Garrett

The findings revealed a significant positive correlation between the size of green spaces and their effectiveness in cooling urban areas, reducing mortality, and increasing economic value. Larger green spaces emerged as key contributors, while smaller spaces displayed higher economic efficiency per unit area. Overall, public green spaces in Paris had a measurable effect on reducing temperatures. Estimated 21.5 people saved by green spaces. Jo Garrett

"In the urban narrative, residents intertwine seasonality with a sense of place, equate security with safety, and navigate conflicts between environmental concerns and political preferences. Our study reveals a delicate balance where mismanaged tree actions can fracture trust between councils and citizens. Residents, attuned to urban challenges, express a distinct preference for mature trees, valuing their contribution to aesthetics, a grounded sense of place, and essential ecosystem services." James Fullam

"Through a Citizen Science Framework, this study delved into the intricate connections between human experiences and social-ecological traits in urban forests (UF-NBS). By utilizing traits as boundary objects, the framework facilitated citizen engagement and a shared understanding of tree expressions. Objectives ranged from assessing citizen awareness and appreciation in specific locations to identifying cultural ecosystem service values and exploring contributions to health. Conclusions highlight the tool's efficacy in uncovering relationships, providing insights for action, and emphasizing the importance of amenity improvements and UF-NBS monitoring and maintenance." Sebastian Scheuer

List of good ideas for taking action

Use experiential information from people to inform decision making to guide more holistic management and planning approaches (often in Finland this is not valued, they rather prioritize ecological data)



Best Practices

A survey of 1,700 individuals across 33 European countries and 18 provinces in eastern China revealed the public's perceptions of ES and EDS (ecosystem disservices) provided by forests.

Results: Overall, Europeans valued ES more highly than Chinese respondents. Air quality, human health, and aesthetics were considered the most important ES, while provisioning ES such as food and timber production were deemed least important. Security issues, such as parks being unsafe places, bug bites, and allergies, were the most prominent EDS. However, Chinese respondents placed a higher value on EDS compared to Europeans. In China, a cultivated landscape was preferred by a larger proportion of respondents compared to Europe, where a more natural, wild landscape was favoured.

Observations: The observed disparities between European and Chinese perceptions can be attributed to a combination of factors, including:

- Differential economic conditions and cultural backgrounds
- Disparities in access to green spaces, particularly in large Chinese cities
- By understanding these differences, we can better tailor forest management practices to align with the needs and preferences of diverse communities.



NATURE-BASED EDUCATION: OPPORTUNITIES, PEDAGOGIES AND CHALLENGES

Speakers & Moderators:

- Dr. Sally Anderson, REGREEN, Aarhus University
- Prof. Francesc Baró, CLEARING HOUSE, Vrije Universiteit Brussel
- Ivelina Ivanova European Schoolnet
- Katriina Kilpi, CLEARING HOUSE, BOS+
- Prof. Jeppe Læssøe, Jeplae Consulting
- Juliette Mollet, REGREEN, École primaire Pierre Brossolette
- Marie Quiviger, REGREEN, École primaire Pierre Brossolette

Session Format

Panel Discussion

Objective

This panel will discuss the development and appropriation of educational tools and pedagogies for promoting eco-literacy among children, youth and others. The panel will specifically address challenges that consultants, teachers and schools encounter in promoting, appropriating and implementing nature-based education in school settings.

Session description

The panel will discuss efforts to advance nature-based education from different organizational perspectives. Panellists represent EU-based educational organizations, EU research projects (Clearing House/REGREEN), and primary schooling.

We will engage specifically with the opportunities and challenges of advancing nature-based education as seen from the perspectives of:

Organizers involved with the European Schoolnet, NBS EDuWorld and Scientix ambassadors.

NGO consultants and researchers working in Clearing House/REGREEN to develop and facilitate nature-based education.

Primary school teachers with long experience in appropriating and adapting educational tools to school practices and embellishing common scientific approaches to nature education with artistic and performative pedagogies.

For educators, policymaker, researchers and concerned citizens alike, this panel discussion opens space for common reflection on nature-based education and common discussion across educational efforts to develop and advance eco-literacy and promote human relationships with nature that may make a difference for understanding the importance of nature-based solutions to address societal and environmental challenges.

Agenda

(5min) Opening remarks from the organisers.

(30min) Part I: Educational tools developer perspective

2 panelists – European Schoolnet and BOS+

- present their work in general.
- highlight a specific experience or story.



- pose 1-2 questions for plenum discussion.

Plenum discussion: engage with participants.

(40 min) Part II: Educators perspective

3 panelists – Jeplæ consulting, 2 teachers, primary school Pierre Brossolette

- present their work in general.
- highlight a specific experience or story.
- pose 1-2 questions for plenum discussion.

Plenum discussion: engage with participants.

(15 min) Closing remarks.

- Summarize key questions highlighted in the session.
- Thank panellists and audience.

Summary of Discussions

The discussion highlighted the challenges faced by teachers in implementing nature-based education due to constraints in time, energy, and resources. It emphasized the necessity of supportive structures, involving City Council backing and external organizations/experts assisting in funding searches and creative pedagogical tool implementation. The successful integration of nature-based education in public schools was underscored for its potential to enhance social cohesion within communities and alleviate school segregation. Notably, parents are increasingly inclined to select schools based on their commitment to nature-based education, as exemplified by the success of Primary School Pierre Brossolette in this regard. The collective effort towards effective implementation emerged as a key theme throughout the discussion.

Key Take aways

Highlighted quotes

Teachers' experience and the co-construction of online scenarios for NBS-Eduworld:

"From an educational point of view, we need to be able to provide and facilitate access to information to help teachers use the online material. We believe that stories told by teachers can encourage other educators to experiment with these educational tools". (Ivelina)

Taking educational contexts into account:

"Teaching contexts vary greatly from one teacher to another. It is important to take into account the different levels of education, knowledge, natural contexts, etc., to better understand the challenges to be overcome. It is important to co-construct educational tools based on teachers' experiences." (Katrina)

Outside agency to support teachers: "When teachers are uncomfortable with a new tool or topic, it's very important to have an outside facilitator come in to help with the first experiments." (Katrina)

Involving children:

"It's important to educate teachers - to teach participatory approaches to thinking about and working with NBS with the participation of children". (Jeppe)

"It's important to understand the realities and practices in schools (road blocks, barriers, limits, opportunities), because the educational process takes place step



by step over time, as does the appropriation of tools and the creation of relationships with municipalities". (Jeppe)

How to make the educational project last over time:

"The question we're asking ourselves in our teaching team is how to make the process last over the long term, when each stage of the project represents an enormous and exhausting amount of work for the teachers involved. For us, it's a question of resources and support, which should be at the heart of any reflection on nature education or NBS" (Juliette)

"Where is the right level to create a multi-skilled super team to support teachers in nature education? The municipality, the Region, the UE/EU? Because when it comes to nature education, you can't leave it all up to the teachers, and that's a bit the case at the moment". (Juliette)

"It is important to change the mentality, but we need long-term facilitators so that the nature education project can be real, to have time to learn and interest the students" (Juliette)

"I don't believe in school programs; I believe in actions" (Juliette)

List of good ideas for taking action

- Combine scientific approaches taught in natural sciences with literary, cultural, historical and physical approaches and activities taught in disciplines such as music, physical education, language, history.
- Promote nature-based education based on participatory processes and co-construction. Include teachers and students in creating educational tools and building programs.
- Create municipal or regional networks with pedagogical and topic specialists who can: 1) help school teaching teams to find funding for projects, and 2) promote and support school projects and initiatives that afford multiple, interdisciplinary learning experiences, enhance children's knowledge of their immediate natural environment and promote community building.
- Design European and national policies that include strategies for supporting schools and teachers' nature education efforts, hereunder budgets for promoting and facilitating school projects and programs.
- Establish municipal hubs and support teams that teachers can draw on for expert support and an array of teaching materials that fit with teacher needs, project ideas, curricula, grade levels, timeframes and class sizes.
- Think of nature and NBS education as a long-term process, not as short-term individual action, universal one-size-fits-all programs, or quick fixes.



Best practices

NBS Eduworld Project

The NBS Eduworld Project is at the forefront of enhancing nature-based education literacy by establishing a community of practice. With a focus on both formal and informal education, the project provides free, easily accessible educational resources, including MOOCs and teacher-prepared learning scenarios. The commitment to Creative Commons licenses ensures widespread use and adaptability, empowering teachers to explore and teach nature-based education effectively.

City of Trees (BOS+ and Clearing House)

City of Trees, developed by BOS+ for Clearing House, offers a compelling educational package promoting reconnection with forests and nature. Through a blend of scientific and sensory experiments, the package aims to enhance knowledge, well-being, and health. Available in eight languages and designed for easy adaptation, it garnered positive feedback from tests in Belgian schools. Teachers' suggestions for external expert/educator support highlight the importance of collaborative efforts for successful implementation.

REGREEN Initiatives

The REGREEN projects produced a range of tools that highlight the active participation of children in nature-based solutions. From the Greenopolis digital platform to Interactive Walkable Floor maps, these tools differentiate between teaching about nature-based solutions and engaging in their creation. Despite obstacles in school contexts, the emphasis on facilitation over barriers underlines the project's commitment to making nature-based education accessible and engaging.

Primary School Pierre Brossolette

The Primary School Pierre Brossolette stands as an exemplary model of effective environmental and biodiversity education. Over a five-year period, the dedicated teacher team engaged 20 classes in projects, attaining the prestigious ECO-school label. Creative initiatives, such as mosaic murals, outdoor panels, and student-created short videos, showcased the integration of nature-based concepts into various subjects. While their success highlighted the achievements of committed educators, the challenges faced in securing funding and local support underscore the ongoing effort required for sustained implementation.



PRACTITIONERS' PERSPECTIVE ON WORKING WITH NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS.

Speakers & Moderators

- Dr. Asa Ode Sang, REGREEN, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, (Moderator)
- Dr. Eugénie Vidal Cocanova, CLEARING HOUSE, Metropolitan Area of Barcelona, Moderator
- Marc Barra, REGREEN, Paris region institute
- Valder Pliego del Ángel, CLEARING HOUSE, Secretariat of Environment of Mexico City
- Signe Marie Iversen, REGREEN, Aarhus Municipality
- Gordana Mikulčić-Krnjaja, REGREEN, Velika Gorica Municipality
- Dr. Roselyne de Lestrage, CLEARING HOUSE, Bruxelles Environnement

Session Format

Panel Discussion

Objective

The objective of the session is to provide insights from practice on how they currently work with NBS and what challenges they are facing.

Session description

We will invite all three REGREEN cities and three of the Clearinghouse cities (Consortium + Knowledge Exchange Program) and ask them to elaborate around 3-4 questions and then open up to everyone. The focus will be on the work with NBS that is taking place within the cities, the challenges they are experiencing and what influence taking part in RG/CH has had on their work with NBS.

Agenda

Introduction (5 min)

Practioner Pair 1: Belo Horizonte + Mexico DF (25 min)

Practioner Pair 2: Brussel + Paris Region (25 min)

Practioner Pair 3: Aarhus + Velika Gorica (25 min)

Closing remarks of the workshop (10 min)

Details of the activities during the session

Present the 6 cities (map with the location of each)

(25 min) Pair 1: Belo Horizonte + Mexico DF

- 7 min presentation of each city and how you work with NBS today.
- Selection of questions - ask 1-2 for each city.
- Question 1: Related to planning.
- Question 2: The concept of NBS is less established and a shorter usage in Latin America, would you say there is any differences in how the concept is used or applied in a Latin American context?
- Question 3: When looking at financing NBS, what are the current way of funding the establishment of new NBS in your city, what do you see as the future viable direction for securing long-term financing? Hurdles?



- Question 4: How do you evaluate success of NBS, are you doing any monitoring and evaluation of the benefits of NBS?

(25 min) Pair 2: Brussel + Paris Region

- 7 min presentation of each city and how you work with NBS today.
- Selection of questions - ask 1-2 for each city.
- Question 1: Both Brussel and Paris Region are large scale areas, where you are working over a large scale. Could you give an example of how you work across scale (Paris Region - pavement; Brussel - urban forestry).
- Question 2: Complexity of large territories with the urban - rural gradient. Different approaches across their remit? The edges? How do you see NBS having impact on an extensive territory?
- Question 3: Adaptive management in large organisational structures, the more experimental and process-based approaches? How management of NBS could fit within their organisations? New ways of working?
- Question 4: How do you evaluate success of NBS, are you doing any monitoring and evaluation of the benefits of NBS?

(25 min) Pair 3: Aarhus + Velika Gorica

- 7 min presentation of each city and how you work with NBS today.
- Selection of questions - ask 1-2 for each city.
- Question 1: Impact of being part of the project REGREEN for how your city is working today with NBS?
- Question 2: How do work with local involvement and co-creation process on a local scale? Examples?
- Question 3: When looking at financing NBS, what are the current way of funding the establishment of new NBS in your city, what do you see as the future viable direction for securing long-term financing? Hurdles?
- Question 4: How do you evaluate success of NBS, are you doing any monitoring and evaluation of the benefits of NBS?

Summary of Discussions

Presentations from Mexico City and Belo Horizonte underscored a shared challenge: population growth encroaching upon green spaces, despite robust conservation plans. Both cities acknowledged that addressing this issue requires legal and political interventions. Belo Horizonte stressed the importance of engaging society through cultural initiatives, involving artists and singers to promote Nature-Based Solutions. Connecting culture and the environment was seen as crucial to expanding awareness of NBS. In Paris, combating land take and promoting biodiversity were focal points, but public resistance to renaturing was noted. Overcoming this resistance was seen as a matter of time and public education.

Addressing NBS challenges, Aarhus Municipality focused on groundwater protection and street tree planting. The emphasis was on creating GIS databases, monitoring, and appropriate management. Velika Gorica used heat maps to advocate for NBS, leading to a strategy modification in spatial planning to increase greenery in construction plots. Public education, especially for children, played a crucial role in creating awareness and integrating NBS into schoolyards. However, questions arose about tree selection, municipal boundaries, and the balance between private and public land in the



NBS implementation process. The lack of a comprehensive evaluation system and baseline data for NBS projects was identified as a significant obstacle, attributed to political issues, siloing, and insufficient funding.

Key Take aways

Description: Actively involving the community in nature-based solutions projects entails seeking input, collaboration, and participation from local residents. This practice recognises the importance of community ownership in environmental initiatives. Incorporating cultural elements, such as music and art, helps bridge the gap between the project and the community, making it more relatable and fostering a sense of pride and connection. Examples of cities implementing this approach include Mexico City and Belo Horizonte, Brazil.

Education and Awareness Building:

Description: This practice involves implementing educational programmes aimed at raising awareness about the benefits of nature-based solutions. Targeting both children and adults, these programmes emphasise the long-term advantages of biodiversity and renaturing. Overcoming resistance to change in landscaping preferences requires effective communication strategies that highlight the positive impact of NBS on the environment and overall community well-being. Cities such as Paris, Aarhus, and Krakow have implemented educational initiatives to promote NBS awareness.

GIS Database and Monitoring Systems:

Description: Establishing a Geographic Information System (GIS) database is crucial for effective planning and management of NBS projects. This practice involves creating a centralised system to organise spatial data, facilitating informed decision-making. Developing robust evaluation and monitoring systems ensures ongoing assessment of project progress, challenges, and outcomes. Addressing funding issues and organisational silos is necessary to secure the resources needed for data collection, analysis, and the successful implementation of NBS initiatives. Cities such as Aarhus Municipality and Velika Gorica have focused on GIS databases and monitoring systems in their NBS projects.



FIELD TRIPS

RESILIENCE AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT OF URBAN FORESTRY PARK – THE CASE OF PARC DE WOLUWE

Grégory Reinbold and Etienne Aulote (Brussels Environment)

During this site visit, we will discuss – among other things:

- Natural regeneration versus horticultural management
- Which adaptive species for implementing urban forestry solutions in open public space
- Strategy for managing old trees.
- Combining urban forestry management with a Natura 2000 protection status.

TERVUREN – BRINGING THE FOREST INTO THE BUILT AREA THROUGH RENATURATION.

Jorge De Vriese and Ann De Cannière (Province of Vlaams-Brabant)

We will visit some sites where the Horizon+ strategic project has been extending the richness and forest feeling of the Sonian forest into the village centres and built areas around the Sonian Forest. We will travel by scenic Tram 44 to the village centre of Tervuren (tram stop Tervuren station, line 44) and the immediately adjacent Voervalley, where the natural value and water-buffering capacity of the valley has been restored. By softening and greening private plots, Horizon+ also extends the positive impact of the Sonian Forest into private gardens and streets.

INTRODUCTION TO FOREST BATHING AND FOREST MIND

Katriina Kipli, NatureMinded

Katriina will take you to the Parc du Cinquantenaire/Jubelpark and will introduce us on how to connect with the tree, the weather, the others and ourselves.



ANNEX

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

No	Organisation
1	Aarhus University
2	Ain Shams University
3	Àrea Metropolitana de Barcelona AMB
4	Belo Horizonte
5	BOKU University, Vienna
6	BOS+
7	Brussel Health gardens
8	Bruxelles Environnement
9	Chinese Academy of Forestry, Research Institute of Forestry
10	Chinese Academy of Forestry
11	European Climate, Infrastructure and Environment Executive Agency
12	City of Gelsenkirchen
13	City of Velika Gorica
14	Ecological and Forestry Application Research Centre (CREAF)
15	CREARTSCOM ASBL
16	Croatian Forest Research Institute
17	Delegation of the European Union to China
18	Department of Environmental Science, Aarhus University
19	Eco Island
20	Ecole élémentaire Pierre Brossolette - Argenteuil
21	European Forest Institute
22	Euractiv
23	European Carbon and Graphite Association
24	European Centre for Environment and Human Health
25	European Commission - DG Research & Innovation
26	European Forest Institute, Biocities Facility
27	European Parliament
28	European Research Executive Agency
29	European Schoolnet
30	EVE Solutions
31	Faculty of Engineering, University of Porto (FEUP)
32	Government
33	Green energy cooperative
34	Guangzhou Institute of FLA
35	Gurugram Metropolitan Development Authority, India
36	Hebrew University of Jerusalem
37	Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research GmbH - UFZ
38	Heriot-Watt University Edinburgh campus



No	Organisation
39	Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin
40	ICLEI Europe
41	ICLEI World Secretariat
42	Institute for European Environmental Policy
43	Institut Paris Region
44	International Union for Conservation of Nature
45	Joanneum Research
46	Krakow Municipal Greenspace Authority
47	KU Leuven
48	LGI Sustainable Innovation
49	Metropolis, World's Association of Major Metropolises
50	Mexico DF
51	Mount Kenya University
52	Natural Resources Institute Finland
53	Natureherit DC
54	Natuurinvest
55	OOH
56	Paris Region Institute - Agency for Biodiversity
57	Provincie Vlaams-Brabant
58	REVOLVE
59	Sand glass foundation
60	Sino-Danish Center for Education and Research
61	Skab
62	Skynet
63	Sustainability Research Institute, University of East London
64	Sustainable Intelligence
65	Swedish University of agricultural sciences
66	The University of Bari, Italy
67	The University of Hong Kong
68	TROPICAL FOREST NETWORK NIGERIA
69	TUZVO / EFI
70	UCLM
71	UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology
72	UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology
73	Université Libre de Bruxelles
74	Umweltforschungszentrum Leipzig
75	Universitat Oberta de Catalunya
76	Université de Liege
77	Université Libre de Bruxelles
78	University Mohamed 6 Polytechnic
79	University of Antwerp
80	University of Bari
81	University of Bologna
82	University of Exeter
83	University of Greenwich



No	Organisation
84	University of Lisbon
85	University of Lodz
86	University of Santiago de Compostela
87	University of Sheffield
88	Virilio Technologies
89	Vrije Universiteit Brussel
90	Wageningen University & Ökoworld LUX S.A.
91	Young Volunteers for Environment
92	Municipal Greenery Board in Krakow (ZZM UMKRAKOWA)



SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

THE SPEAKERS



Sally Anderson

Sally, Associate Professor at Aarhus University, is a social anthropologist with a strong research interest in children, cultural learning, forms of childhood education, diverse learning cultures and learning environments. With over 25 years of fieldwork in Scandinavian settings, Sally's research has focused on everyday processes of culturation, school organisation and sociality, children's participation in civil society through recreation and sport, the place of religion in childhood education, and the education of indigenous and immigrant children. She has recently returned to earlier field sites in Sápmi to study relations between children, adults, animals and landscapes and the environmental/social learning such relations afford. Sally leads the REGREEN Work Package on Education, participation and awareness.



Ellen Banzhaf

Ellen leads Work package 3 Mapping and Modelling of Ecosystem Services in REGREEN – fostering nature-based solutions for equitable, green and healthy urban transitions in Europe and China (2019–2024). She holds a tenure with Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research – UFZ, Leipzig, Germany, where she is with the Department of Urban and Environmental Sociology and heads the Geomatics working group. In addition, she is spokesperson for the Helmholtz project Transformations towards Resilient Cities (2021–2027) where she just co-edited the book *Die Resiliente Stadt* (2024; in German). In her scientific work, she links urban remote sensing with urban ecology towards sustainable urban development, including the adaptation of cities to climate change through nature-based solutions. She undertakes combined evaluation of fieldwork and remote sensing techniques to measure environmental pressures and map human exposure. Her research interests include monitoring urban land cover and land use at different scales to gain a deeper understanding of green and blue infrastructure and identify related socio-spatial equity.



Corina Basnou

Corina is a researcher in CREAM, Barcelona. Corina has a special interest in nature-based solutions, green infrastructure planning, education and citizen science. She coordinates in CREAM two H2020 projects on urban restoration: CLEARING HOUSE and CONEXUS. Her main responsibilities in these projects are tools testing and piloting, NBS indicators assessment and mapping, co-designing and engaging local stakeholders. At local level, she has been involved in various urban green planning projects, with particular interest for setting up the basis for the biomonitoring of environmental health using plants, as part of the global One Health research framework. She also coordinated the local Green4children project, a science-policy initiative to enhance NBS and education.



Marc Barra

Marc, from the Agency for Biodiversity in Paris Region, is an urban ecologist specializing in nature-based solutions. He leads research and applied projects in relation with urban planning and architecture. He is currently involved in H2020 project REGREEN on urban nature-based solutions and in the French Capital of Biodiversity award.



Francesc Baró

Francesc is an Asst. Professor at the Geography and Sociology Departments of the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), Belgium, where he leads an interdisciplinary research line on urban ecology. He is also an associate senior researcher with BCNUEJ, where he co-leads the research line “Urban Climate Risk, Infrastructure, and Justice”. He obtained a PhD in Environmental Science and Technology (2016) awarded the Special Prize for Doctoral Studies from UAB (Autonomous University of Barcelona). His

PhD thesis examined the concepts of ecosystem services and green infrastructure in the urban context, developing a pioneering framework to assess mismatches between (urban) ecosystem service provision and demand. Since then, his research has been motivated to understand the role of urban ecosystems towards more just, (climate) resilient, healthy and sustainable cities, combining geospatial and advanced quantitative and qualitative data analyses, including participatory methods. He has participated in several EU-funded ground-breaking research projects (e.g., URBES, OpenNESS, Naturvation, GreenLULUs, Clearing House) with multiple leading roles and responsibilities. Since 2022, he is the co-PI of the European project “Coolschools”, a partnership of 16 organizations including universities, local governments, SMEs and international NGOs examining the role of climate nature-based solutions in school environments.



Tomasz Bergier

Tomasz, as a researcher and knowledge broker, represents the Sendzimir Foundation in CLEARING HOUSE: Collaborative Learning in Research, Information-sharing and Governance on how urban forests as nature-based solutions support Sino-European urban futures (2019–2024). Plays a similar role in INTERLACE: International Cooperation to Restore and Connect Urban Environments in Latin America and Europe (2020–2024). Professor at the AGH University of Krakow. His areas of scientific interest are nature-

based solutions (NBS) and blue-green infrastructure (BGI), and especially their application in sustainable water management and climate change adaptation and mitigation. Experienced lecturer and trainer, both for university students and professionals. Expert and member of several advisory boards, supporting Polish cities in green transformation. Scientific editor of the book “Challenges of Sustainable Development” and “Sustainable Development – Applications” publication series. Author of numerous publications and guidelines on sustainable development, water management, NBS and BGI.



Anders Branth Pedersen

Anders is Senior Researcher (Political Science) and Head of Section of Environmental Social Science & Geography at Department of Environmental Science, Aarhus University, Denmark. His core research interests are environmental policy analyses and environmental governance at EU/national/regional/local level. E.g. through analyses of the effectiveness of environmental policies and policy instruments, target group behavior, analyses of implementation barriers/possibilities and analyses of multi-level environmental governance. In REGREEN, Anders leads WP6 – the governance and planning of urban nature-based solutions.



Vojko Bratina

Vojko obtained a master degree in Physics in 1995 with a major in Astrophysics and Space Physics, and a PHD in Optics in 2000. His background education includes also a Master in Space Engineering and in Science Communication. From 2001 to 2008 he worked as researcher in the field of space technologies with the National Institute of Applied Optics in Florence, Italy, part of the Italian CNR. In 2008 he joined the EC as policy maker, working in the domain of Earth Observation and Climate Change. He then moved to EC Executive Agencies INEA and REA as Project Officer in 2015. In October 2019 he was assigned to his current post of Science Attaché in the S&T Section of the Delegation of the EU to China in Beijing caring about S&T cooperation between EU and China.



Ben Caspar

Ben is managing urban biodiversity policy in the European Commission. Having studied biology, he joined the commission in 2002 and has since worked on marine conservation, adaptation to climate change, sustainable food policy and more recently urban environment policy. He is now part of the team implementing the Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, including the Nature Restoration Law.



Wendy Chen

Dr. Wendy Chen is a professor of Department of Geography, and serves as the Director of the International Centre for China Development Studies, at the University of Hong Kong. She currently also serves as the Editor-in-Chief for Urban Forestry & Urban Greening, a top international journal in the field of urban greening design and management. She is the coordinator for the Urban Forestry Unit under the International Union of Forest Research Organisation, and the Executive Board Member of Urban Forest Division, Chinese Society of Forestry. Dr. Chen's research focuses on urban forestry, urban river restoration, environmental externality of urban landscape planning and design, urban environmental governance and environmental policies, as well as urban sustainability.



Wang Cheng

Prof. Dr. Wang Cheng is Chief Specialist at the Research Institute of Forestry of the Chinese Academy of Forestry and Executive Deputy Director of the Urban Forest Research Centre of the National Forestry and Grassland Administration (China). Prof Dr WANG has launched creative research and practice with guiding value in areas including theories of construction of forest cities in China, development planning for forest cities, prevention of plant-caused pollution in urban area, and biodiversity of urban forest. Prof

Dr Wang is coordinator of the CLEARING HOUSE project in China (“Research on Urban Forest Key Technologies in Response to Green Urbanisation in China and Europe”).



Clive Davies

Clive is a researcher, educator, and consultant with broad interests. These span urban forestry, landscape planning, green infrastructure, and nature-based solutions. He is acting as an in-house consultant for the European Forest Institute working on the CLEARING HOUSE project and combines this role with others at Newcastle University in the UK, as chair of the European Forum on Urban Forestry, Director of MD2 Consulting Ltd and expert for the European Union’s Research Executive Agency.



McKenna Davis

McKenna Davis works as a Senior Fellow at Ecologic Institute in Berlin and coordinates the Institute’s activities on Nature-based Solutions (NbS). Her work focuses on the science-policy-society interface, supported by transdisciplinary research on NbS policy and governance, co-creation and stakeholder engagement, capacity building, and urban transformation. McKenna’s expertise extends to European biodiversity and nature protection policies and the links to climate change adaptation and human health and

well-being. She coordinates the Horizon Europe-funded INTERLACE project and oversaw the development of its Urban Governance Atlas, showcasing 250 good practice examples of global policy instruments supporting NbS.



Rik De Vreese

Rik is Senior Researcher Urban Forestry Team Leader at the Resilience Programme of the European Forest Institute (EFI) office in Bonn (Germany). He is the coordinator of the Sino-European Research and Innovation Project “CLEARING HOUSE” funded by the European Horizon2020 programme and the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology. The CLEARING HOUSE project facilitates the implementation of urban forests and urban trees as sustainable solutions leading to more sustainable cities in Europe and China.

His research focuses on the relations between humans and trees, in the urban and peri-urban sphere. More specifically, Dr De Vreese has been involved in research on integrating ecosystem services in decision-making and urban planning, mainly with a transdisciplinary lens. Rik is a member of the Board of Directors of the European Forum on Urban Forestry.



David Fletcher

David works on Work package 3, Mapping and Modelling of Ecosystem Services, in REGREEN – fostering nature-based solutions for equitable, green and healthy urban transitions in Europe and China (2019–2024). He is a Research Associate at the UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, where he works as a spatial modeller. His work focuses on quantifying and mapping the provision and benefits of Ecosystem Services (ES), particularly those associated with green and blue spaces in an urban setting.



James Fullam

European Centre for Environment and Human Health (ECEHH), University of Exeter. Prior to his present position at the ECEHH, James worked across a range of health services research positions, focussing on the development of complex interventions. James has merged this experience with a passion for nature-based interventions for mental health. Dr Fullam currently leads a project on the sustainability of nature-based interventions for mental health in the UK. He is also responsible for a work package focused on qualitative exploration of the links between mental health and Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) in REGREEN.



Joanne Garrett

European Centre for Environment and Human Health (ECEHH), University of Exeter. Joanne is a Research Fellow focused on the interactions between human health, well-being, and the environment. Jo is predominantly a human geographer, utilising quantitative and GIS approaches. Jo is a researcher with the REGREEN project, focused on valuing the health benefits from nature based solutions.



Gwendoline Grandin

Gwendoline is an ecologist specialising in urban ecology. She works at the Paris Region Biodiversity Agency (part of the Paris Region Institute). Her work focuses on nature-based solutions, urban depaving and renaturing, and the links between urban wasteland and biodiversity. Gwendoline recently worked on the European REGREEN project and wrote the guide “Renaturing cities”.



Dagmar Haase

Dagmar’s research career grounds on studies on urbanization linked to the concepts of urban ecosystem services (UES), green infrastructure and nature-based solutions. She is the first author of one of the first and highly cited research papers on UES from 2014. Urban densification processes and patterns but also urban shrinkage and their role for and in social-ecological systems, the integrated study of physical, institutional, and perceptual filters for the realisation of UES is another core research field. Dagmar is co-author of the introductory paper on Social-Ecological-Technological Systems (SETs) and in recent projects she is going for an application of this concept together with an international team. Dagmar’s work bases on large European data samples and data sets but she is also actively working in case studies. Her focus is on quantitative and qualitative studies supported by remote sensing and the development of Apps to involve a broader public and link science and citizens. Dagmar has an h-index of 77 and over 250 scientific publications (journal papers and book chapters). Several awards based on and given for the above listed research activities, i.e., the AXA Science Award in 2014, the Wallenberg Honorary Professorship in 2016 and the Honorary Professorship of the University of Bucharest in 2022.



Richard Hardiman

Richard has been working and living in China for over 30 years since 1986. He gained a PhD in Water and Environmental Chemistry at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Since then, he has been a consultant for a wide range of environmental projects in China for various international agencies and most recently was advisor to the Chinese Ministry of Environment on Environmental Governance. His current focus is on China’s resource management, its environmental policy and implementation, and China’s impact on global resources and environment. Richard contributes as a SME to the REGREEN Work Package on governance including planning systems.



Marcus Hedblom

Marcus is an urban landscape ecologist at Swedish University of Agriculture (SLU) and contributing to REGREEN Workpackage on Education, Participation and Awareness. Marcus is involved in many different transdisciplinary projects involving valuation of ecosystem services in urban greenery, lawns as ecological and cultural phenomenon, ecosystem services in the Swedish mountains and how the present trend of densifying cities affects ecosystem services within cities and their rural hinterlands. His

focus is also on studying how respondents act physically on multisensory exposure from urban greenery using sound, smell and virtual real environments.



Ivelina Ivanova

Ivelina (Public Sector and International Relations / Project Management) is a Project Manager in the Science Education Department of European Schoolnet (EUN). Ivelina coordinates the Horizon Europe project NBS EduWORLD and EUN's participation in the COOLSCHOOLS project and the NBS Academy project. She has also coordinated the conclusion of the Nature-Based Solutions Pilot (Phase 2), as well as the Scientix Ambassadors, the Scientix National Contact Points, and the Scientix STEM School Label

at EUN.



Signe Iversen

Signe is a geographer and landscape manager at the Technical and Environmental Department of the Municipality of Aarhus, Denmark. Signe works with city planning and watercourse protection and administration of the legislation on watercourses. She also focuses on the integration of blue and green structures and Climate Adaptation in planning processes. She has previously worked 8 years with the EU Programme of Development in Rural Districts in the Danish Ministry of Environment and Food. Signe is part

of the Urban Living Lab Aarhus in the REGREEN project.



Anne Jensen

Anne is an environmental sociologist and senior researcher at the Department of Environmental Science, Aarhus University contributing to the REGREEN Work Package Governance including planning systems. Anne centers her research on policy analysis of environmental challenges, urban studies, sustainable mobility, in particular cycle mobility, policy science and climate change in local and national governance. Her research is aimed at investigating the encounter between policy making, governing and policies, daily lives and social interactions, including in cities and their transition to sustainable cities. Running parallel to this, she holds a strong interest in working with methods for qualitative policy analysis, mixed methods, and methods that capture mobility and power in their social, spatial and historical context, including methodologies that focus on the nonrepresentational parts of self, identity, space and policy.



Jiali Jin

Dr. Jiali Jin is a research assistant at the Research Institute of Forestry, Chinese Academy of Forestry, Beijing China. Her research interests include GIS, spatial analysis, urban landscape ecology, and urban forest ecosystem services assessment such as the cooling effect of urban trees and forest. Dr Jiali Jin is working as the principle key researcher in a Sino-Europe collaboration research project "CLEARING HOUSE. Her work focuses on identifying and mapping Urban forests as nature based solutions in China and contrasting the outcomes with European cities, exploring social perceptions on urban forests through China and Europe, analyzing and managing urban and peri-urban forests that contributes to the resilience of socio-ecological urban system.



Laurence Jones

Laurence is a principal scientist at UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (UKCEH) and Visiting Professor at Liverpool Hope University. He is thematic lead of urban research in UKCEH. His interests cover the interactions of people and the environment and his work focuses on developing models and new approaches to better understand and quantify how the environment benefits people. In REGREEN he leads WP2 on Challenges and Nature-Based Solutions and leads Task 3.2 on Ecosystem Services Modelling.



Katriina Kilpi

Katriina works at the BOS+ as project manager, dealing with European and national projects around forest and health. Her project repertoire includes educational projects for all ages, encompassing such themes as nature connectedness, loneliness, and general wellbeing. In the CLEARING HOUSE project, Katriina and her colleague Tine de Kezel were responsible for the City of Trees Inspirational package for educators. The city of trees was also built on the 5 pathways of nature connection, to make sure that the children not only learn facts about the trees and forests but also connect their own lives and wellbeing to the presence of urban trees and forests.



Julius Knopp

Julius works in REGREEN in work package 3 Mapping and Modelling of Ecosystem Services (2020–2024). He is a researcher at the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research – UFZ, Leipzig, Germany, where he is with the Department of Urban and Environmental Sociology and contributes to the Geomatics working group. In addition, he is working with the Helmholtz project Transformations towards Resilient Cities (2021–2027). His scientific work focuses on urban remote sensing and mapping of green infrastructure. Object based image analysis and the evaluation of socio economic data drive further research interests, particularly questions of equity in access to urban green spaces and transformation of existing data products to adapted information for further geospatial analysis.



Jeppe Læssøe

Jeppe, Professor Emeritus affiliated to Danish School of Education, Aarhus University where he has been professor with special responsibilities on education, society and sustainable development. He has his disciplinary background in Psychology with a Ph.D in Communication and Educational Studies. However, his research has been interdisciplinary. He has conducted a large number of local, national and international projects focusing on facilitation of citizen participation, social learning and change in relation to sustainability issues. Furthermore, he has contributed to the exploration of barriers, potentials, and ways forward for Education for Sustainable Development.



Vasileios Latinos

Head of Resilience and Climate Adaptation, ICLEI Europe

Vasileios is a climate adaptation and resilience expert, with 13+ years experience, working with local and regional governments throughout Europe. He is coordinating the resilience portfolio of ICLEI Local

Governments for Sustainability for Europe, responsible for development, management and coordination of projects and services in the topical areas of climate change adaptation, urban resilience and disaster risk reduction

and supporting the programmatic development of ICLEI in this field. Vasileios is also involved in standardisation activities and has managed the European Urban Resilience Forum since 2016.



Gregor Levin

Gregor, PhD in geography, is a senior advisor at the Department of Environmental Science at Aarhus University, Denmark. His main research focus is on spatial analysis of land-use and land-cover dynamics. He is involved in several research and advisory projects, such as assessment of land-use changes for national emission inventories, mapping and assessment of ecosystem services and biodiversity. Gregor Levin is co-leader of the EC-funded REGREEN project and contributes to work package 3 on

Mapping and Modelling of Ecosystem Services.



Paola Lepori

Paola Lepori is a Policy Officer for Nature-based Solutions at the European Commission, DG Research & Innovation. Her core professional objective is building alliances to trigger transformative change towards an inclusive nature-positive future. Before joining the Biodiversity and Nature-based Solutions team in 2022, she had been working in the field of environment for several years, including in DG Maritime Affairs & Fisheries, as a communication officer. In Italy, Paola worked as desk news and writer

for newspapers focusing on international affairs, writing in-depth analyses on current and environmental affairs. Her academic background is international relations, and international cooperation with a focus on the Middle East. Her academic research brought her from Italy to the UK, Jordan, Syria and Australia.



Hanne Lund Steffensen

Hanne is a Civil engineer in urban planning and management at Aarhus Municipality since 2013 with a background as a forest and landscape engineer. Combining these fields where nature and cities emerge is Hanne's specialty. Hanne is an expert in the management of urban trees and in the management, development and protection of green areas in Aarhus city. Since 2015, Hanne has worked specifically with increasing biodiversity in urban green areas by introducing Nature-based Solutions and actively making room for nature in a densifying city. Hanne is part of the Urban Living Lab Aarhus in the REGREEN project.



Łukasz Mielczarek

Łukasz (PhD, Krakow, Poland) is specialist in biodiversity conservation, pollinators, especially hoverflies and ecosystem services of urban trees and tree microhabitats, certified tree inspector. Since 2018 he has worked for Krakow Municipal Greenspace Authority (ZZM) in the Department of Forests and Nature. Also project manager of CLEARING HOUSE and Life Urbangreen projects in Krakow.



Gordana Mikulčić-Krnjaja

Gordana, a law graduate, serves in the Administrative Department for Urban Planning and Environmental Protection of Velika Gorica, Croatia. She plays a pivotal role in the city's climate initiatives, acting as a coordinator for renewable energy, energy efficiency, green mobility, education, and nature-based solutions. Gordana's mission is to transform Velika Gorica into a national model for mid-sized cities in smart and green solutions, and at the EU level, it stands out as a progressive small city. She is instrumental in the "Velika Gorica Solar City" project and manages the Regreen project, among various other initiatives. Her special focus is on bridging the rural areas with the city center, fostering a climate-neutral integration. As a key member of the Urban Living Lab Velika Gorica, Gordana contributes significantly to the REGREEN project, emphasizing sustainable urban development.



Juliette Mollet

School teacher from 2001 to 2023. Agricultural engineer by training (1994), Juliette chose to join the French education system in 2001. From 2012 she was allowed to settle down at Pierre Brossolette primary schools in Argenteuil (around 300 children, aged 6 to 11). There she met a group of committed teachers who were motivated by raising children's awareness of the issues involved in preserving their environment. From 2018, they worked with all the classes to obtain the "Eco-Ecole" label. They were awarded this label in June 2020. They have continued and diversified this work thanks to Regreen and artistic partnerships. She left teaching in September 2023 and is currently retraining (payroll management).



Elena Petsani

Elena is an Urban Resilience & Sustainability Planner (MSc & MEng.). She has professional background with over seven years of experience in inclusive and climate-resilient urban development, sustainability strategies, policy-making, and academic research at the national and local government level. She has supported strategic urban planning and territorial development, climate adaptation policies, and spatial tools for multi-stakeholder engagement in the decision-making process. Elena is involved in EU funded projects focused on adaptation to climate change, urban resilience and Nature based Solutions such as REGREEN, proGReg, UP2030, Pathways 2 Resilience, CARDIMED, and MULTISOURCE.



Valder Pliego del Ángel

Valder has a degree in Political Science and Public Administration from the National Autonomous University of Mexico. He has specialized in areas related to Environmental Law and environmental public policies. Within the public sector he has worked in the Deputy Attorney General's Office for Legal Affairs of the Environmental and Territorial Planning Attorney's Office of Mexico City and the Secretariat of Environment of Mexico City. He currently works as an Advisor to the Secretary of Environment of Mexico City, where he has coordinated and monitored various projects related to the Environmental Policy within the framework of the implementation of the "Mexico City Environmental and Climate Change Program". In particular, in processes to strengthen schemes for the expansion and socio-environmental improvement of natural spaces, under a vision of nature based solutions; as well as the development of the local circular economy strategy, which includes the construction of the Circular Economy Law of Mexico City published in February of this year, that it's beginning to be implemented with a sustainability and regeneration of natural systems approach.



Alberto Pozza

Project Adviser in Unit B3 “Biodiversity, Circular Economy and Environment” European Research Executive Agency (REA).

Alberto has been working as a Project Adviser since 2019. He started at the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME) and then moved to the European Research Executive Agency in 2021, where he manages a portfolio of projects that are funded by the Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe programmes, in the fields of Nature Based Solutions,

biodiversity and transformative change.

Prior to joining the Executive Agencies, Alberto worked in research and development in the field of renewable energies at the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre, as well as in private companies. Alberto holds a master’s degree in electronic engineering.



Marie Quiviger

Primary school teacher since 2015. Marie always worked in the education field, in one capacity or another, first in secondary and high schools as a history and geography teacher, then she trained in french signs language to assist deaf students, and finally, she became a primary school teacher in 2015. She settle down in Pierre Brossolette School in 2018, where she met a team whose energy and enthusiasm to commit into Eco Ecole project won her over. They were awarded this label in June 2020. They have continued

and diversified this work thanks to REGREEN and artistic partnerships.



Duncan Russel

Duncan is a Professor in environmental policy at University of Exeter.

Duncan’s research and teaching interests include UK and European environmental policy, climate policy, evidence and policy interactions, and budgetary politics. Current and recent projects include being Principle Investigator on the Defra, Scottish Government, NERC, ESRC and AHRC-funded National Ecosystem Follow-up Work Package “Institutional behaviours and cultures and the uptake of ecological knowledge”. Duncan is

co-leading the REGREEN Work Package Governance including planning systems.



Åsa Ode Sang

Professor of Urban Vegetation Design at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences. Professor of Urban Vegetation Design at the Dept. of Landscape Architecture, Planning and Management at SLU and leader of the subject group in Urban Vegetation. Åsas research focuses on perception, use and values of urban vegetation. She is currently involved in the two EU-funded NBS projects namely REGREEN and CONEXUS where she is working in close collaboration with cities in Europe and Latin America. In REGREEN

Åsa leads the Work Package on Urban Living Labs.



Janice Scheffler

Janice is a meteorologist and atmospheric modeller focussing on Air Quality. She works as an Air Pollution modeller at the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Atmospheric Chemistry and Effects science area and contributes to REGREEN with her expertise in modelling air pollution as environmental pressure. She works on multiple projects modelling, amongst others, the UK and European Air Quality for the past and present, the impact of wild fires on air quality in South East Asia, and the effect of land cover

changes on air quality – especially on how nature-based solutions in urban areas can improve air quality.



Sebastian Scheuer

Sebastian is a postdoctoral researcher at the Landscape Ecology Lab at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin. His research is centred on the study of urban human-environmental interactions, including broader themes such as natural hazard risk or benefits provided by urban green-blue infrastructures. His thematically overarching interest is in the (data-driven) analysis of relationships between people and their urban environment, applying, e.g., exploratory multivariate data analysis and geostatistics,

and in the formalisation of knowledge on these relationships to support their modelling and assessment.



Mara Sierra-Jimenez

Mara is a PhD in cultural geography. She works on the socio-cultural construction of the relationship with living things (Nature) and is particularly interested in understanding the processes of adaptation and appropriation of nature education tools. She is currently working as a post-doctoral researcher on the project “Tackling Global Changes” Societal decisions implementing Nature-Based Solutions: towards emancipatory approaches? in the ETTIS unit – “Environment, Territories in Transition, Infrastructures,

Societies” at INRAE (Bordeaux-France). She is particularly interested in the notion of beneficiaries in Nature-Based Solutions projects.



Marie Spanier

Marie is an ecologist specialising in urban ecology. She works at the Centre d'Ecologie et des Sciences de la Conservation at the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle in Paris. She is currently focusing her work on urban ecosystem services. She recently joined the European REGREEN project to contribute by organizing an event to promote biodiversity in landscaping practices, as well as contributing to a report on Recommendations for potential targets values in Cities.



Francesca Tedeschini

Francesca is a research assistant at Joanneum Research with an academic background in both Economics and EU Law and Policies. Her main research focus is on energy and climate change policy and the green transition of the European Union. She is involved in various research projects, such as assessing market characteristics, financing approaches and incentive mechanisms for NBS and defining and integrating energy citizenship into decision-making processes. For the REGREEN project, she has mainly contributed to WP8 on communication and dissemination, the exploitation plan and the accelerator program.



Eugènia Vidal Casanovas

Eugènia is an architect and urban designer based in Barcelona with over 20 years of professional experience in both the public and private sector. She has practiced, taught and conducted research in Europe, the USA, and Asia. Eugènia is committed to the open spaces of the metropolis, protecting and restoring ecologies and creatively transforming everyday landscapes. She is the Head of the Open Space Planning Office at the Green Infrastructure Service of the Metropolitan Area of Barcelona [AMB]. Eugènia holds a PhD in Infrastructural Landscape Projects from Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya.BarcelonaTech and a MSC in Architecture and Urban Design from Columbia University. She is a registered architect in Spain.



Benedict Wheeler

Ben is an Associate Professor in Environment, Health and Inequalities, and is co-director of the European Centre for Environment and Human Health at the University of Exeter. He applies geographical and epidemiological methods to research the impacts, positive and negative, that the environment can have on human health.



Tom Wild

Tom is based in the Department of Landscape Architecture at University of Sheffield where he is the Principal Investigator for the Horizon 2020 project Conexus. Tom is an ecologist, specialising in aquatic and riparian ecosystems, and catchment management practices. His research interests centre around the conditions, policies and practices that enable or hinder the rehabilitation and regeneration of impacted (and semi-natural) ecosystems. Much of his work has been concerned with values and the economic valuation of blue-green infrastructure and nature-based solutions, such as sustainable urban drainage (SUDS), deculverting and river restoration.



Bettina Wilk

Bettina is a senior project officer for nature-based solutions and biodiversity at ICLEI Europe. She is involved in several pertinent H2020 projects and coordinating Network Nature+, the one-stop-resource and exchange platform for nature-based solutions across science, policy and practice. She was a researcher at the Copernicus Institute of Sustainable Development, Utrecht University. Ms. Wilk holds a master's in environmental governance from Utrecht University and in Social and Cultural Anthropology from the

University of Vienna.



Jerylee Wilkes-Allemann

Jerylee is a researcher and educator at the Bern University of Applied Sciences and a principal scientists at the European Forest Institute (Biocities Facility). Her research interests include forest policy and governance, urban forestry, ecosystem services with a focus on outdoor recreation and wellbeing, forest pedagogics and communication in the forest sector. She has been working as a consultant for the CLEARING HOUSE project and has developed guideline Nr. 3 concerning participation. Jerylee is board member

of the European Forum on Urban Forestry, managing director of ArboCityNet and a tree lover.



Wanben Wu

Wanben has been actively involved in work package 3 of the REGREEN project since 2020, which focuses on mapping and modelling ecosystem services. He is also a key member of the MOST-funded REGREEN project in China. He has conducted extensive land cover assessments at various scales in Urban Living Labs (ULLs) in Europe and China. His responsibilities also extend to evaluating the various benefits derived from ecosystem services through nature-based solutions within different urban development

scenarios. He is currently working as a postdoctoral researcher at the Centre for Ecological Dynamics in a Novel Biosphere (ECONOVO) at Aarhus University in Denmark. Here he is actively involved in another Horizon Europe project entitled Climate-smart Rewilding: Ecological Restoration for Climate Change Mitigation, Adaptation, and Biodiversity Support in Europe. In this role, his main focus is on studying ecosystem responses to passive and trophic rewilding in Europe. His research interests include complex human-nature dynamics, urban form mapping, urban heat stress studies and forest function studies.



Marianne Zandersen

Marianne is the Coordinator of REGREEN – fostering nature-based solutions for equitable, green and healthy urban transitions in Europe and China (2019–2024). She works as an environmental economist and senior researcher at Aarhus University, Department of Environmental Science in Denmark with a focus on environmental and behavioral economics in the fields of urban and peri-urban systems, nature-based solutions, climate change and ecosystem management. She is also a Work Package lead on the economic and financial evidence of NBS in the related HEU project ‘Invest4Nature’ (2022–2026) and a Work Package lead in the upcoming HEU project ‘Go Nature Positive’ on developing evidence and a definition of Nature Positive Economy contributing to the development of an official EC definition (2024–2027). She is also part of the European Topic Center on Climate Change Adaptation and LULUCF (ETC/CA).



Karin Zaunberger

Karin is a biologist. After working in the European Parliament, she joined the Research Department of the European Commission and followed research projects in the field of biodiversity and climate change. Since 2007 she has been working in the Directorate General for Environment with a main focus on the biodiversity-climate change nexus. She has participated in negotiations on biodiversity and climate change in the frame of the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) since 2010 and she accompanied several studies and reports in relation to nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches. She was part of the EU’s negotiation team for the Resolution on Nature-based Solutions adopted by the UN Environmental Assembly in 2022. She is EU focal point for CBD SBSTTA and co-focal point for IPBES.



Bin Zhao

Bin Zhao is a professor at the School of Life Sciences, Fudan University, serving as a doctoral supervisor and a dual Principal Investigator (PI) in both research and teaching capacities. He is also the project leader for the China-Europe collaboration project (REGREEN) under the Key Research and Development Program of the Ministry of Science and Technology. Additionally, he holds the position of associate editor of the journal *Wetlands* and has been recognized as a New Century Excellent Talent by the Ministry of Education in China. Over the past decade, Zhao Bin has been dedicated to integrating remote sensing monitoring with ground observations, extracting implicit information from time-series spectra of remote sensing data. He applies this knowledge to various aspects, including the development of tidal flat shorelines, ecological succession, monitoring of invasive plants, and determination of soil salinity. His current research focuses on the environmental impact and sustainability challenges of the transition to new energy, multidimensional and interdisciplinary studies based on natural solutions, and addressing significant scientific issues.