

# REGREEN: "Fostering nature-based solutions for equitable, green and healthy urban transitions in Europe and China"



**Dear REGREEN followers!**

This newsletter is the second of its kind out of a series of newsletter issues of the project REGREEN addressed to a bigger audience for both experts and non-experts and the general public to provide updates on the project progress. This 2<sup>nd</sup> issue provides - in parallel to the project website - information on the latest news, reportings, upcoming events and other issues of interest.

## Biodiversity as the backbone of nature-based solutions

*By Priscila Jordão, ICLEI*

Is biodiversity a necessity in nature-based urban interventions, or only a nice-to-have? The [IPBES Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services](#) leaves no doubts regarding the severity of the biodiversity crisis: approximately 25 percent of species in Europe and Central Asia are already threatened with extinction in most of the plant and animal groups studied. In Europe, several policies and governance options to enhance ecosystem protection, such as the new [EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030](#), are already available.

[more](#)



## EEA Urban Adaptation Report No 12/2020



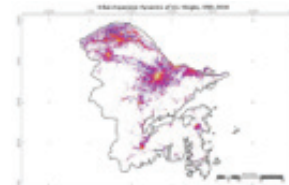
The EEA assessment report presents the status quo of adaptation to climate change at the local government level, with particular focus on cities. The assessment gives an overview of climate risks to cities, types of adaptation responses, extent of adaptation planning and actions at the local level in Europe and opportunities to scale up and speed up the implementation of adaptation to climate change at the local level.

From the REGREEN project point of view Marianne Zandersen (ETC/CCA and DCE-AU) is contributing author of this report.

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## REGREEN Report: Mapping urban land cover changes for 6 European and Chinese Urban Living Labs

As one of the first results of the project REGREEN Xiangyu Luo, Wanben Wu, Julius Knopp and Ellen Banzhaf published a report on land cover changes. Via different maps, the report illustrates the dynamic urban expansion of the 3 Urban Living Labs in Europe and 3 Urban Living Labs in China.



[more](#)



## REGREEN and the influence of COVID-19

*By Vasileios Latinos, August 2020*

The REGREEN project works intensively with its three European Urban Living Labs (ULLs), Aarhus (DK), Paris Region (FR) and Velika Gorica (CR). The three ULLs differ in scale and population, from the Region of Paris with its population of 12 million within 1281 municipalities to Velika Gorica with 30 000 inhabitants. Within the REGREEN project, we work on multiple scales, through modelling the ecosystem service delivery from NBS across the administrative region, NBS as an educational facilitator at schoolyards and specific NBS strategies such as depavement to reduce stormwater and flooding. The current pandemic situation has put a lot of stress on local governance and has meant that some of the planned activities within REGREEN were post-poned in spring 2020. This included the engagement with the schools within all three ULLs, where the closure of schools led to delays in setting up collaborations and carrying out field works. Within the three ULLs the process is on-going with regards to the mapping and modelling of ecosystem services, engaging the ULLs in dialogues on data requirements as well as identifying the challenges and issues relevant as well as prioritized NBS for each of the ULLs.

REGREEN covers a wide array of topics and works across sectoral units. During the spring and autumn, our three ULLs have been involved in a series of stakeholder engaging exercises, including a detailed stakeholder mapping for actors and stakeholders that are significantly relevant and important for work planned within the ULLs. For each ULL, a wide range of different stakeholders was identified and rated using an influence and impact matrix. In the following online (due to the COVID-19 virus outbreak) exercises, the cities engaged in the mapping of different communication endeavors that could be utilized but also in a detailed profiling of stakeholders and additional, strategic options in relation to their engagement.

Read more on how to include NBS in a post COVID-19 economic recovery [here](#).

## The European Urban Resilience Forum 2020 and the REGREEN Project



*By Vasileios Latinos and Valeria Eirin, August 2020*

The 2020 edition of the European Urban Resilience Forum was set to take place in Malmö, Sweden, for the first time outside Bonn and establishing itself as a mobile event that will bring the resilience community in many European cities in the future! The current COVID-19 virus outbreak and consecutive health crisis made the organising team, led by ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability and the European Environment Agency to change their plans and switch to an online edition, proving that it is necessary to adapt to the always-changing circumstances and show their resilient face. On the positive side, and with over 600 participants, this year has been the largest edition so far, a day full of fruitful exchanges, debate and reflections on the future of Europe's resilient cities.

[more](#)



### The City of Velika Gorica: Building a green mindset through NBS

*By Snježana Mihinica, August 2020*

There is a beautiful legend about mythological beings named Moguts who lived deeply connected to nature and have great appreciation of the natural world. In these ancient times each village in Velika Gorica region have their own Mogut as a guardian and protector. Because of their unconditional love, good character, profound wisdom and superhuman strength and abilities, the village was kept safe. In case of extreme weather, storms or natural disaster people would call Moguts for help because they knew how to deal with it. Moguts were always associated with oak which is considered as the holy tree.

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## How to cope with data gaps in REGREEN? Successful application of ESA third party mission data access

*By Julius Knopp (UFZ, Germany)*

Since no high resolution imageries exist for Croatia, the ULL Velika Gorica could not provide us with such remote sensing data. In REGREEN, we will carry out refined scale mapping for each European ULL to shed light to mapping and modelling ecosystem services. At UFZ, we undertook the effort to find adequate data by our successful project application at ESA (European Space Agency). In addition, the team at UFZ Leipzig is in close contact with the partners at the ULL Velika Gorica who appreciate the acquisition of high resolution World View 3 imagery. We can now analyse these imageries via ESA third party mission data access. This access is granted under the REGREEN project.



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## Exploring the relationship between challenges, people and NBS benefits in REGREEN

*By Laurence Jones & David Fletcher, UKCEH*

In REGREEN, we look at a number of pressures that exert a negative impact on the liveability of cities. These include pressures linked to environmental factors such as: High temperatures, air, noise & water pollution, flooding, and access to green and blue space. There are also a set of more socially determined pressures such as change in urban extent and morphology and increasing population. Other factors will influence the risk of negative impact, and these include factors such as poverty, level of education & other socio-economic factors which may make certain sectors of the population more vulnerable to risk.

[more](#)

## Purpose: to create the perfect playground. A Playful Lab Study in Alnarp, Sweden

*Guest article by Emma Leijnse, August 2020*

Researchers at Alnarp are working in their forest lab to develop natural environments that entice children to play. Their aim is to produce similar areas for children's play in cities. We think that you need to create a wilder environment. Typical parks are generally a bit too well-trimmed and tidy for children's play, says Fredrika Mårtensson, researcher at SLU, the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences in Alnarp.



[more](#)



## JOANNEUM RESEARCH LIFE, a WP lead partner of REGREEN, receives the Energy Globe Styria Award for combining nature based solutions with the production of food on urban rooftop

*By Alina Lückl and Andreas Türk (JOANNEUM RESEARCH)*

**GRAZ** – *Smart City Rooftop Farming* is an urban farming project on the rooftop of the Science Tower in Graz, showing how to grow food in a sustainable way in urban spaces. The project pursues the goal to produce food, cool the temperature of the city, provide electricity and to counteract surface sealing on the ground. The Science Tower is the first building in Austria, where the combination of these four functions is realized.

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## Urban Forests as Nature-based Solutions - a new role for urban forests and urban trees

*Guest article by Rik de Vreese, EFI Bonn*

The CLEARING HOUSE project gathers 26 partners in Europe and China, and will provide evidence and tools that facilitate the mobilisation of the full potential of urban forests as nature-based solutions (UF-NBS) for rehabilitating, reconnecting and restoring urban ecosystems.

The CLEARING HOUSE project – sister project to REGREEN – addresses a global challenge that unites European and Chinese cities in their quest to develop more resilient cities and liveable societies in order to improve human wellbeing. The project is focussing on implementing urban forests and urban trees as providers of nature-based solutions in and around cities. Trees are traditional elements in the urban landscape, but their merits are underestimated and undervalued. Trees and forests are also contested – on the one hand citizens complain about dangers, threats and nuisances related to forests and trees, on the other hand, cutting or managing trees and forests regularly result in negative comments by the public.

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**CLEARINGHOUSE**  
中欧城市森林应对方案



### Pressures and challenges in REGREEN Chinese ULL's

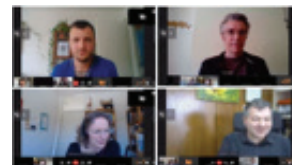
REGREEN aims to address urban challenges in China by i) assessing and mapping drivers and pressures; ii) modelling ecosystem services provided by Nature-Based Solutions in a holistic and systemic way and iii) valuing the contribution of NBS to health and well-being. Main environmental pressures and challenges in each of the REGREEN Chinese ULLs are described below. More information is available in the recent REGREEN deliverable 2.1 'Report on assessment of drivers and pressures leading to urban challenges, across the ULLs, including spatial and temporal components'.

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## REGREEN's virtual project meeting in April 2020

By Marianne Zandersen and Tamara Trumbic

Much has changed since we started planning our 1<sup>st</sup> project meeting in REGREEN – a 4-day meeting to be held in Paris in April 2020. People work from home, gatherings are limited, squares are half-empty, there are almost no air flights, but interestingly – the city's green spaces look fuller than ever. Like so many other European funded projects, we had to resort to online meeting. So, instead of heading for Paris for 4 days, we adapted to the corona virus situation and went virtual on 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 2020, bringing together over 60 participants from Europe and China.



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## EVENTS

### EVENT

#### UrbanByNature Chinese Hub kick-off



17<sup>th</sup> November 2020, Chengdu (hybrid)

This hybrid Kick-Off Meeting in China is titled "Enhance Urban Resilience in Green and Healthy Approaches" and focuses on "Introducing Nature-based Solutions and the UrbanByNature programme as a Means".

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## EVENT

### Sustainable & Resilient Urban-Rural Partnerships – Conference URP2020

*25<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> November 2020, Leipzig, Germany*

The URP2020 conference aims at developing new urban-rural imaginaries, integrating strategies and projects that explore present and future potentials in terms of sustainability and resilience. The conference brings together and connects recent scientific insights and enlightening experiences of on-going projects in practice. It stimulates learning on various levels, i.e. from the local level via entire regions to the broader European understanding of integrated urban-rural development.

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## EVENT

### GREEN-Urban Europe Research Alliance (UERA) International Workshop: How to achieve SDGs through local action

*27<sup>th</sup> November 2020, Milan, Italy, **Online conference***

Bocconi University-GREEN, in collaboration with the Urban Europe Research Alliance (UERA) and the Journal of Urban Ecology, has launched the Call for Papers: "How To Achieve SDGs Through Local Action".

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## EVENT

### European Business & Nature Summit 2020

*8<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020, Brussels, Belgium*

The European Business and Nature Summit (EBNS) will reconvene in Brussels on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020 to strengthen the growing movement of companies across Europe and beyond that are putting nature and people at the centre of their recovery strategies and plans.

[more](#)



ICLEI World Congress 2021  
12 - 16 April • Malmö, Sweden

## EVENT

### ICLEI World Congress 2021

*12<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> April 2021 • Virtual congress, hosted by Malmö, Sweden*

Every three years, ICLEI hosts the ICLEI World Congress to showcase how cities, towns and regions across our network are advancing sustainable urban development worldwide. The ICLEI World Congress connects local and regional governments with their peers and strategic partners, and provides a platform for discussions that will inform and enhance their work.

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## EVENT

### Connecting Nature Enterprise Summit in Poznan 8<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> July 2020 – postponed to 2021

*Planned to take place until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021, Poznan, Poland*

After careful consideration the decision has been taken to POSTPONE the Connecting Nature Enterprise Summit due to take place in Poznan until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 as a direct consequence of the Coronavirus Pandemic. While we are very disappointed not to be able to proceed as originally planned, our team in Poznan is working hard to secure an alternative date to ensure the Summit will go ahead with minimal programme disruption.

[more](#)



## EVENT

### European Urban Resilience Forum 2021

*September/October 2021 in Malmö, Sweden*

Since 2013, the European Urban Resilience Forum – driven by ICLEI Europe and the European Environment Agency – has offered a unique platform where city representatives and stakeholders from various local and regional institutions come together to exchange and discuss strategies and actions to adapt to climate change and build urban resilience.

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## EVENT

### IUCN World Conservation Congress 2021: Postponement

*New dates will be announced in due course, to be held in Marseille, France*

In view of the sanitary situation associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, France and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) have decided to postpone the IUCN World Conservation Congress, which was to be held in January 2021 in Marseille. New dates for the event will be announced in due course. France and IUCN remain fully committed to the development of a global framework for the conservation of biodiversity and will continue to act towards this objective.

[more](#)



## EVENT

### EFUF 2020: 23<sup>rd</sup> European Forum on Urban Forestry - POSTPONED

*New dates will be announced, to be held in Manchester, UK*

The organisers of the 23<sup>rd</sup> European Forum on Urban Forestry (EFUF) in Manchester, UK regret to announce that the Forum meeting scheduled for the 19<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2020 has been postponed due to increasing concern of the impact of Coronavirus (COVID-19).

[more](#)

## **REGREEN 2<sup>nd</sup> project meeting will be held in Leipzig, Germany back-to-back with the URPII conference and hosted by UFZ.**

Given the COVID-19 situation, REGREEN will be holding the meeting virtually on 23<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

## DISCLAIMER

The REGREEN Newsletter is published periodically to inform about the project progress and engage community interested in nature-based solutions. You are welcome to send in any topics you are interested in or have questions about.

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