Conference: Evidence-based planning for greener cities

Conference in collaboration with the Maltese presidency of the EU

Institute of Applied Sciences, Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology, 13 June 2017

Background and objectives

Almost three out of four EU citizens live in urban areas and this number will further grow. All these people need an inclusive, healthy, resilient, safe and sustainable living environment. This challenge is well captured by the United Nation's sustainable development goals (SDG) that include under SDG 11 seven specific targets aiming to make cities and communities better places to live. One important target is to provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces by 2030. Understanding how urban green spaces provide essential services to citizens is important to make informed decisions on maintaining or investing in green infrastructure.

The EnRoute (‘Enhancing Resilience of urban ecosystems through green infrastructure’) project provides scientific evidence to help policy makers and planners with achieving this target. EnRoute is a project of the European Commission in the framework of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020. It builds on the many positive experiences of the MAES urban pilot study. It aims to promote the application of urban green infrastructure at local level and will deliver guidance on the creation, management and governance of urban green infrastructure. Importantly, it will illustrate how collaboration between and across different policy levels can lead to concrete green infrastructure policy setting.

EnRoute organises a conference with the following objectives:

- Evaluate how science can provide the tools to inform policy making and urban planning so that quality of life improves for every citizen;
- Discuss how the Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystem and their Services (MAES) evidence base can help for policy-setting with respect to urban planning;
- Networking for scientists, planners and policy makers working on urban green infrastructure topics.

Conference organisers

- European Commission - Joint Research Centre (Joachim Maes, Grazia Zulian)
- Institute of Applied Sciences, Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (Mario Balzan)

Data and Venue

- The conference will take place in Paola (Malta) the premises of the Institute of Applied Sciences, Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST), on 13 June 2017.

Registration: [https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/ConferenceEvidenceForGreenerCities](https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/ConferenceEvidenceForGreenerCities)

Participants

- Policy makers from Malta and the European Commission
- Local stakeholders from the Maltese environment and planning authorities
- European stakeholders (planning, research, member states)

For questions contact: jrc-enroute-project@ec.europa.eu

---

Conference agenda 13 June 2017
Institute of Applied Sciences Auditorium

09.00: Welcome and registration

09.30: Opening by the chair of the meeting (Joachim Maes, Joint Research Centre, Italy)

09.35 - 10.30: Policy session on the role, challenges and opportunities of urban green infrastructure to improve the quality of life for European citizens with the following speakers (session chair: Martijn Thijssen, ORG-ID, The Netherlands)

- Dr. Silvio De Bono (President of the Board of Governors, MCAST, Malta)
- Video address by Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries Karmenu Vella (European Commission, Brussels, Belgium)
- Dr. Laure Ledoux (Deputy Head of Unit, Biodiversity Unit, DG Environment, European Commission, Brussels, Belgium)
- Perit Sylvio Farrugia (Deputy Director, Planning Authority, Malta)
- Mr. Daniel Boulens (General Manager, Public Parks and Gardens, City of Lyon, France)

10.30 Coffee break

11.00 - 13.00: Plenary session with local and international examples of how to mainstream urban green infrastructure in urban planning (session chair: Joachim Maes, Joint Research Centre, Italy)

- Assessing the link between green spaces and ecosystem benefits in Malta (Maltese example based on the experience of the H2020 project ESMERALDA and collaboration with stakeholders) (Dr. Mario Balzan, MCAST, Malta)
- Public health: How does an equal access to urban green space increase the health of citizens (Prof. Francesco Amaddeo, University of Verona, Italy)
- Multi-actor approaches towards effective urban green solutions for climate change adaptation? (Dr. Marta Perez Soba, Wageningen Environmental Research, The Netherlands and Martijn Thijssen, ORG-ID, The Netherlands)
- Urban Green Infrastructure and inter-sectorial policy development: how to handle the challenge of Stockholm’s population growth in combination with the improvement of green infrastructure? (Mrs. Ulrika Egerö, city of Stockholm, Sweden)
- Common discussion

13.00 - 14.00 Lunch
14.00 - 16.30: Parallel break-out sessions on the themes of the plenary sessions with a short coffee break in-between.

- **Session 1: Deconstructing the science policy interface on urban green infrastructure** (Joachim Maes, Grazia Zulian, Joint Research Centre, Italy). This session analyses how scientific information informs policy decisions on urban GI or how policy requests drive the research on urban GI. What are the main steps of the science policy interface; what are the main enablers and obstacles. Participants are requested to provide input based on their research or planning experiences. The conclusions of this session need to support the development of an on-line survey on urban GI science policy interface.

- **Session 2. Making the city climate proof** (Hedi van Dijk-Poot, Tygron, The Netherlands and Martijn Thijssen, ORG-ID, The Netherlands). In this session, which is based on state of the art serious gaming, you will be working on the development of an urbanized area where there are multiple challenges and needs that come from different actors in the city. You will be playing a designated role to achieve goals that are vital for the organization that you (in your role) work for. You may, for example, be a policy officer of the city, or a real estate developer. The Tygron serious gaming tool allows you to evaluate your ideas on the spot; both in terms of effects, money and procedural requirements. You will be challenged to cooperate and find the best societal option for the development.

- **Session 3 Using data and tools for planning of urban GI and urban ecosystem services** (Roy Remme, RIVM, The Netherlands and Steven Broekx, VITO, Belgium). Demonstration session. Participants of this session will be introduced in two tools which are actively used by cities in Belgium and The Netherlands for planning and management of urban green infrastructure and urban ecosystem services.

16.30 - 17.00: Final plenary: A vision for planning of urban green Infrastructure (Pieter van den Berk, The Green City, The Netherlands)

Guided tour of Valletta and a joint dinner (registration is mandatory)