



## Mainstreaming Urban Nature-Based Solutions

# Generate partnerships



Partnerships between public, private, and civil society organisations are critical for increasing awareness and support, and generating initial action. Partnerships can be organised to broadly advance the green economy, for example Local Nature Partnerships that create a shared vision for nature in the UK, or to tackle policy barriers, for example through Green Deals in the Netherlands where the national government partners with private enterprises. Funding structures can be designed to incentivise collaboration, as Germany has done through an urban development funding scheme and a European regional fund for green infrastructure aimed at regional municipal coalitions. In both Germany and Hungary, EU funding incentivised new partnerships between departments. Building Information Modelling software has facilitated collaboration in the Netherlands by demonstrating design benefits of nature-based solutions to diverse partners.



The Network of Local Governments + Biodiversity, a Spanish federation convening over 300 municipalities, works to improve policy and knowledge in support of biodiversity and nature-based solutions, and is one of the key contributors to the National Strategy on Green Infrastructure. In partnership with a national federation of municipalities and provinces, as well as associations that represent green infrastructure companies and parks, the Network created a guide for municipalities that outlines best practices on green infrastructure. Barcelona's participation in international networks such as ICLEI, United Cities and Local Governments, and C40 Cities network has facilitated alignment with other major cities and provides access to inspiring global examples.



# Mainstreaming Nature Based Solutions

Promising Pathways for Sustainability Goals



## Climate Change

With the race to reach 'net zero' targets and build back resilience, nature-based solutions are increasingly seen as a critical tool for responding to climate change. Whether by cooling cities and reducing energy demand or providing new ways of managing flooding, nature-based solutions are gaining support globally. We identify four pathways through which mainstreaming is taking place: recognising their potential as a climate solution; investing to reduce climate risk; integrating climate action with other sustainability goals; and learning through practical experience on the ground.

## Biodiversity

As the world seeks to develop a transformative agenda for biodiversity over the next decade, we explore how mainstreaming nature-based solutions can enable cities to conserve, restore and thrive with nature. Four pathways are identified based on regulating for 'no net loss' of biodiversity, developing co-governance arrangements for public-private finance, integrating biodiversity with existing sustainability priorities, and integrating biodiversity into urban development and the built environment.

## Social Inclusion

Nature-based solutions such as new parks, rooftop gardens, and tree-lined streets play an important role in improving wellbeing and enhancing community spaces. However, the potential for gentrification and displacement of lower income groups means that these solutions must actively foster social inclusion and tackle inequalities. We identify three pathways that strengthen social inclusion: broadening community participation, securing genuine political commitment and policies that support social inclusion, and pursuing social inclusion measures as a way of achieving health and wellbeing.

## Economic Regeneration

Nature-based solutions can create economic regeneration through increasing economic activity and employment and by improving the quality of life. Nature-based solutions both directly contribute to economic vitality and well-being, and leverage new forms of economic activity in cities that generate opportunities. Mainstreaming for economic regeneration takes place through developing partnerships for investment, increasing our knowledge of their economic value, seizing opportunities emerging from other sustainability initiatives, and stimulating market demand for nature-based solutions.

## Sustainable Development Goals

To achieve the SDGs, urban development must prepare for growing populations while also creating sustainable and inclusive cities. Nature-based solutions can address a range of sustainability goals from climate resilience to health to economic development. For example, green space provides cooling, reduces pollutants, and encourages physical activity. Pathways that engage urban nature-based solutions to address SDGs include: involving diverse actors, strengthening local engagement, addressing multiple sustainability objectives simultaneously, establishing institutional arrangements that integrate sustainable development, and monitoring and assessing sustainable urban transformation.