



## Mainstreaming Urban Nature-Based Solutions

### Develop markets

Developing a market for nature-based solutions can help increase demand for these solutions and also stimulate supply. Biopolus, a group of environmental engineering companies in Hungary specialising in urban water systems for neighbourhoods, established an open innovation platform and cooperation between companies, research institutions, and private individuals to usher in a broader market impact. Also in Hungary, green certification of buildings helps to develop the sustainability market, and the Business Council for Sustainable Development promotes sustainability among their members, including Coca Cola, Deloitte, ING, and over 70 other banks and corporations. Construction company Skanska in Sweden has considered offering climate adaptation services, but without demand from clients for these services in new developments the motivation to expand into this area is limited.



In order to address rising roof damage costs in its portfolio, home insurance firm Interpolis helped to stimulate the green roof market in The Netherlands by running a national marketing campaign featuring well-known media personalities demonstrating installations. The marketing campaign posed the question to consumers, 'What is your contribution to a sustainable world'? The campaign explained that homeowners can prevent environmental damage by turning roofs 'from grey to green,' contributing to insect habitat, improving rain run-off absorption, and reducing urban heat islands. To make green roofs more attractive for homeowners, Interpolis offered a free roof inspection and a standard low price through a collaboration with a green roof firm.



# 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.