



21-22
SEPTEMBER
2022

CITIES TALK NATURE EUROPE: NATURE, PLACES, PEOPLE

KRAKÓW,
POLAND

WELCOME TO KRAKÓW!

More than 50 on site and online participants from municipalities and other organisations and two days full of discussions, exchange and inspiring examples: from 21-22 September 2022, the Kraków Metropolitan Area hosted the first European INTERLACE Engagement Event. Titled “Cities Talk Nature Europe: Nature, Places, People”, the conference aimed to strengthen knowledge and exchange on the implementation of Nature-based Solutions. The conference was part of the **CITIES TALK NATURE** programme embedded in the **INTERLACE** project.



Maria Piątkowska and **Daniel Wrzoseczyk** from Kraków Metropolitan Area's Office opened the conference, welcomed all on-site and online participants and presented the two-day programme. Climate change adaptation will be the biggest challenge of the coming years, they emphasised.



DAY 1 - PLENARY SESSION

Why INTERLACE?

INTERLACE supports medium-sized municipalities in ecosystem restoration in Latin America and EU. **Sandra Naumann**, project coordinator of INTERLACE from the Ecologic Institute, explained how ecosystem restoration is part of the solution when it comes to climate change, air pollution as well as social problems. To this end INTERLACE develops governance instruments for implementing Nature-based Solutions and fosters the intensive exchange between Latin American and European cities.



Green space management in the host city Kraków

Łukasz Pawlik, Deputy Director of the Kraków Municipal Greenspace Authority introduced the achievements, perspectives and challenges of green space management in Kraków using many concrete examples. Two percent of the city's budget is devoted to green spaces. Kraków aims to double the forest cover until 2040 from four to eight percent, to guarantee all inhabitants a just and equal access to green spaces and to connect green spaces with each other. A challenge in implementing green areas is the large space currently used by vehicles and for car parks. Concluding Łukasz Pawlik emphasized the importance of education and cooperation with citizens.



Panel discussion: Sharing practical experiences in implementing Nature-based Solutions

Find below the questions and respective answers posed to the representatives of the three European INTERLACE cities **Xavier Romero Hidalgo** from Granollers (Spain), **Max Kromholz** from Chemnitz (Germany) and **Daniel Wrzosek** from Kraków Metropolitan Area (Poland):

1. With which Nature-based Solution in your municipality do you identify most with and why?

- **Daniel Wrzosczyk** favoured a green space that is planned under a railway. This is an example of how to combine mobility changes with climate adaptation.
- **Xavier Romero Hidalgo** presented a renaturalisation of a degraded area for biodiversity and water management reasons, which was completely polluted before. A landfill was converted into a wetland, including a network of paths and trails – combined with an environmental education centre.
- **Max Krombholz** identified with the Auepark, a medium-scale park close to the Chemnitz city centre, which serves many purposes, for example recreational activities and the prevention of high-water events. It also connects green areas in the northern parts with green areas in the southern parts of the city.

2. Were there any obstacles while implementing these projects?

- **Max Krombholz** reported that only a high water event led to the decision to develop a parking lot into the Auepark. He stressed the importance to act in advance of extreme weather events.
- **Daniel Wrzosczyk** highlighted that it requires a completely new approach regarding the development of public spaces and the high financing demands, in order to adapt to the new reality that climate change adaptation will entail.
- **Xavier Romero Hidalgo** emphasised the advantages of cooperating with the scientific community in order to transform degraded urban areas into a habitat with good ecological status – for example by supporting the municipality in the design and monitoring of Nature-based Solutions.



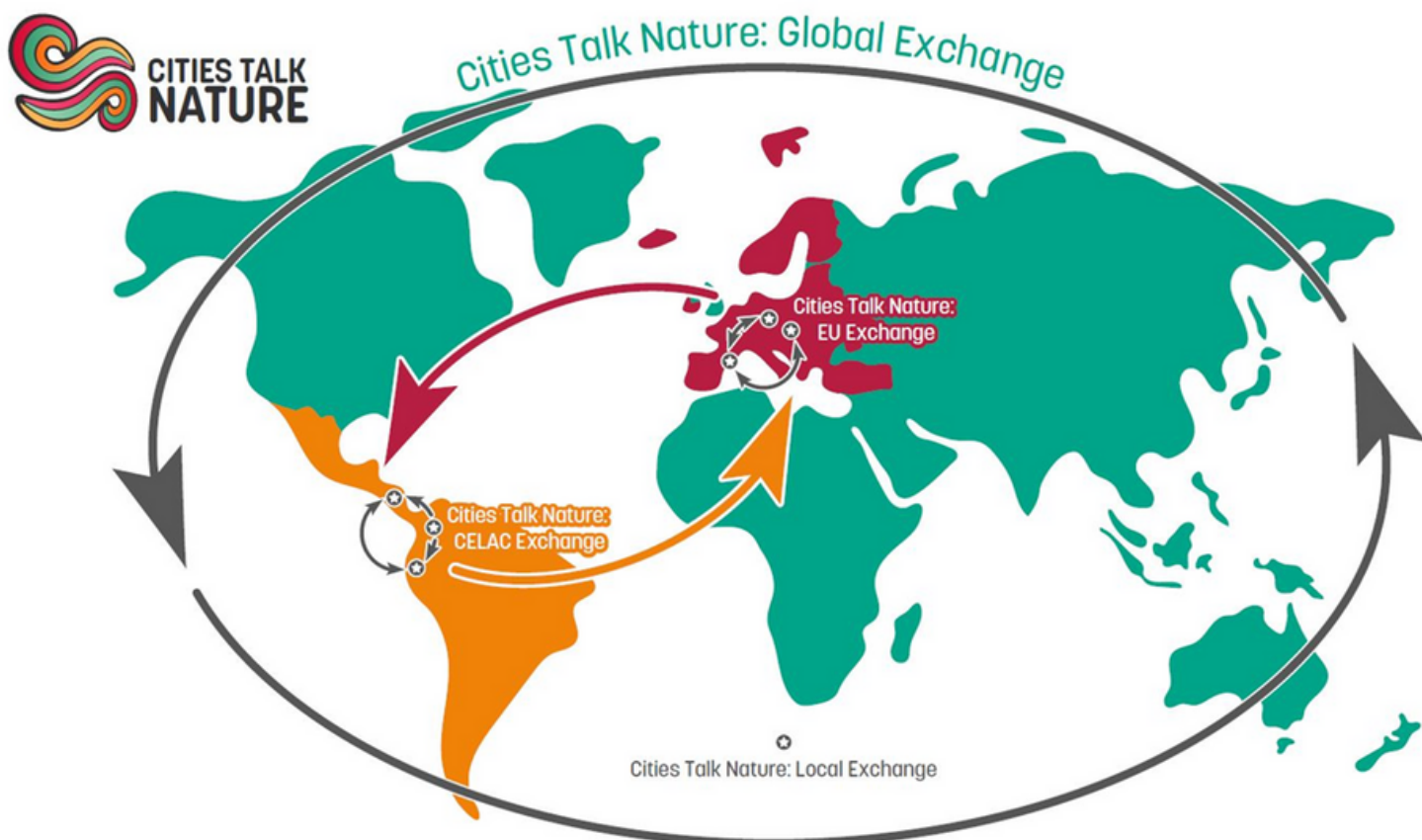
3. How are Nature-based Solutions anchored in your city administrations?

- **Xavier Romero Hidalgo** explained that in Granollers there is no specific department for Nature-based Solutions, but there is one on green infrastructure (focussing on nature and places, less on people). He hopes that in future there will be a working group on Nature-based Solutions.
- **Max Krombholz** reported that since 2019 a working group to develop Chemnitz's masterplan on urban nature is in place. It is a cross-sectional working group, including the environmental office, the green space office and the urban planning office.
- **Daniel Wrzosczyk** explained that the Kraków Metropolitan Area works with thematic forums. Nature-based Solutions will be discussed in the newly created forum on climate change.

Join CITIES TALK NATURE!

CITIES TALK NATURE is a community of practice dedicated to restoring degraded ecosystems in municipalities in Latin America, Europe and other parts of the world. It is part of INTERLACE and facilitated by a unique cooperation between different city networks in Latin America and Europe. CITIES TALK NATURE fosters exchange between cities, providing access to tools and methods as well as supporting collective action towards more liveable, inclusive and sustainable cities.

Join our **webinars and event** and sign the **engagement letter**, in which signatories express their willingness to participate in CITIES TALK NATURE's regional and global dialogues, or share your good practice examples in the CITIES TALK NATURE **showcase**.



DAY 1 - WORKSHOPS

After the lunch break, four workshops invited the participants to deepen the morning discussions:

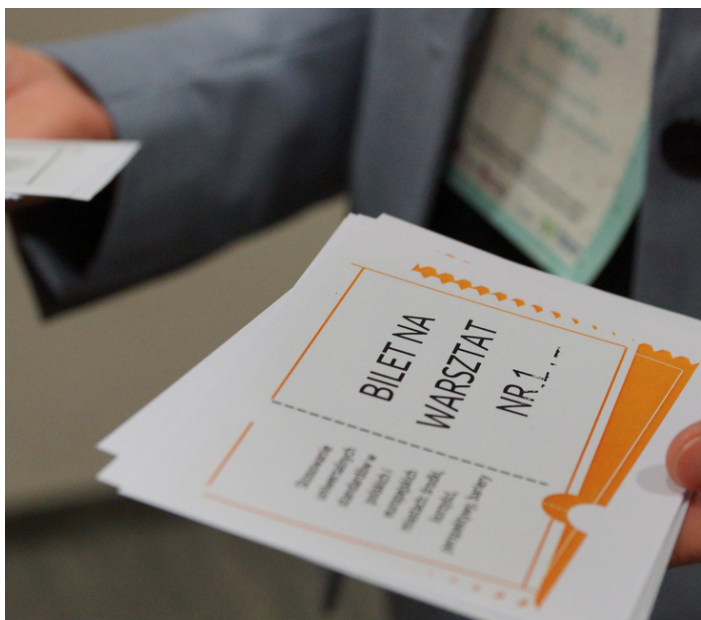
Workshop 1 was about the **definition of universal standards for urban green area maintenance**. As a result of an audit which revealed a lack of standards, knowledge and monitoring activities, Wrocław municipality together with other cities, scientists and civil society set out to define urban greenery standards. Important goals of this process included the gathering of knowledge, the usage of understandable language and the production of a document, which is easily applicable for public procurement. This process resulted in a document defining six standards (preparation, planting, turf restoration, care, maintenance of the surfaces and biodiversity) which were discussed in the workshop.

In Workshop 2, a team of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona reported on an **assessment of Metropolia Krakowska's sensitivity to climate change**, which they are currently conducting. Within the last nine months, they identified the most important challenges of the metropolitan region (such as air pollution, heat islands and river flooding) and developed specific indicators that can be mapped on the ground. Social aspects such as population density or the locations of critical infrastructure were also considered. Participants of the workshops discussed how to weigh the criteria.

The third workshop built on the thesis that key EU policies recognize the potential of Nature-based Solutions and support their implementation. But the challenge would remain to translate this commitment into local actions. In order to support the **mainstreaming of Nature-based Solutions into local policies**, the **INTERLACE Urban Governance Atlas** was developed. The atlas was presented in the workshop and further strategic tools were collected by the attendees.

In the fourth workshop, experiences from a **participatory process** which supported the production of the “Directions of Development and Management of Green Areas in Krakow for 2019-2030”, a long-term development policy, were shared and discussed. In three stages, consultation workshops in many municipal districts were held in order to identify challenges, prioritising actions as well as to receive feedback and collect postulates.

Please find the minutes of each workshop in the following.



Workshop 1: **Application of universal standards of urban green area maintenance in Polish and European cities: means, benefits, perspectives, barriers**

by Monika Pęc-Święcicka (Wrocław Municipal Greenspace Authority), Ilona Gosk (Sendzimir Foundation)

Main findings and issues discussed in the workshop

- Standards are ready-made guidelines based on the experience and practice of others, which allow the persons responsible for a given aspect to correctly execute orders and receive these orders, and contractors - to execute them with the imposed expectations.
- Standards cannot capture all aspects.
- Standards are not used in Poland - in Germany and the Czech Republic they are the norm.
- We multiply brochures and substantive materials - it is redundant. There is a need and each city does its own thing, and it is worth that these documents should be universal for everyone.
- Risk analysis is always necessary when implementing and developing standards.
- Standards deal with contractors. The works should be selected according to what is happening, to the neighborhood, to the surroundings. Similarly, the equipment - switches to electric from combustion.
- Non-liability for negligence costs twice as much.
- Mowing grass - zoning is important (biocenotic).
- Checklists should be created for the description of the subject of the contract and for collection.
- There are many organisational problems with maintaining greenery in the city.

How to implement universal standards? => General conclusions:

- it is good to make a network of contractors and a schedule for the implementation of specific works;
- not to make standards in order to forcefully implement;
- good things will soon be accepted under real conditions;
- everyone meets the standards as they want (we give people freedom, we only require feedback);
- it is good to establish cooperation with NGOs and universities

Workshop 2: Advancing strategic planning of Nature-based Solutions in Europe: Metropolia Krakowska case study by Svea Busse and Johannes Langemeyer (Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona)

Main findings and issues discussed in the workshop

- Metropolia Krakowska (MK) aims for an efficient spatial management system.
- In the workshop one aspect of the INTERLACE assessment framework was looked at more closely: criteria for vulnerability (taking into account exposure, sensitivity and when possible adaptive capacity). These vulnerability criteria were applied to the area of MK and visualized in one map per criteria and in one map aggregating all the criteria.
- Problem to solve for workshop participants: in the aggregated map all criteria are weighed exactly the same. Workshop participants were asked to play the “pebble game”, in which small groups discussed how many “pebbles” the different vulnerability criteria shall receive, more pebbles meaning that the importance increases.
- How can the pebble game and the vulnerability criteria be applied in daily work?:
 - It is important to think about who shall be in the groups playing the pebble game as this will influence the outcome.
 - Look at combinations of the vulnerability criteria instead of an aggregation of all. Identify clusters that are useful and then identify Nature-based Solutions that address these clusters. For example, a combination of health and environmental data as is done in Berlin.
 - Game to be played with a thematic group in MK working on environmental issues in order to improve the current spatial map.
 - Shows that co-creation processes are important and should be applied more.

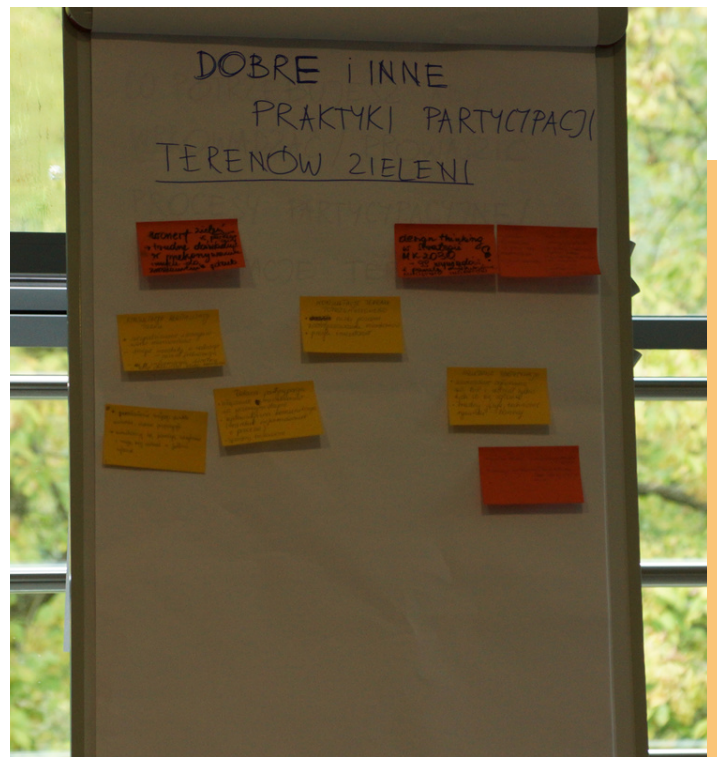
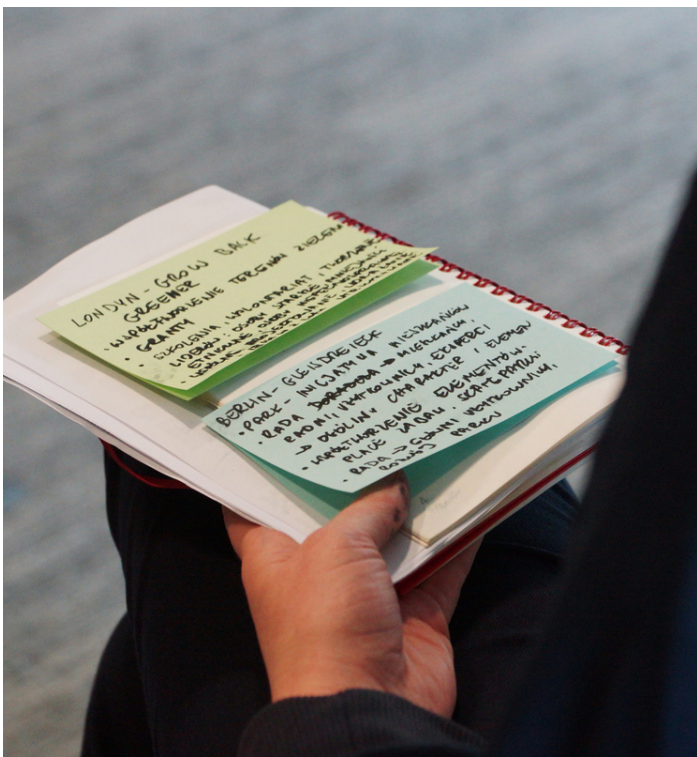


Workshop 3: Strategic tools applied in European cities: state-of-the-art, needs and perspectives

by Natalia Burgoscuevas (Ecologic Institute) and Tomasz Bergier (Sendzimir Foundation)

Main findings and issues discussed in the workshop

- After an in-depth round of introduction, Natalia Burgoscuevas presented the **INTERLACE Urban Governance Atlas** (UGA):
 - The UGA is an interactive online database which collects more than 150 policy instruments from the EU, Latin America and beyond
 - The UGA aims to inspire action through the exploration of good practice policy examples
 - Four types of policy instruments are featured: 1) Legislative, regulatory, and strategic; 2) Economic and fiscal; 3) Agreement-based or cooperative; 4) Knowledge, communication and innovations
- Following this overview, Natalia Burgoscuevas showcased five examples from the UGA:
 - A private-public collaboration to deliver green infrastructure opportunities in Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in central London
 - The Hamburg Green Roof Strategy
 - The restoration of native vegetation and soil regeneration, including community involvement, in Bogotá
 - A payment structure for ecosystem services to women in Costa Rica
 - The Parque Lineal Las Vegas in Portoviejo
- In the second part of the workshop, participants collected their own (existing as well as needed) examples of policy instruments along the four UGA categories and presented them to the other participants.



Workshop 4: **Public participation is urban ecosystem management: best examples from Poland, standards, needs** by Agnieszka Czachowska (Sendzimir Foundation), and Ewa Iwaszuk (Ecologic Institute)

Main findings and issues discussed in the workshop

- Engagement of diverse groups from the very beginning.
- A participatory process shouldn't be finished when something is built, it should be the beginning of the process.
- We should educate participants whilst not using difficult/professional terminology.
- The process should be well-planned and we should know all the next steps.
- We should learn how to manage conflicts.
- Everyone should learn something during the participatory process.

Open questions remaining?

People have no spatial imagination. How can we talk to them about spatial plans/models/aspects?

Interesting quotes

"In Norway councillors meet residents at the park. They just sit on the bench and they wait until someone approaches and wants to chat to them. That's how they get to know the needs of residents. They do that every week."

"Sometimes revitalisation is a step backwards, sometimes desisting from revitalisation is a step forward."

DAY 2 - FIELD TRIPS

The second day was all about practical experiences: During a five hour tour, conference participants visited different green areas within the Metropolitan Area of Kraków and learned about their history, development and functions. These on-site visits produced a lot of exchange and rounded off a stimulating conference.

The visited sites included Park Jordana, Błonia, Park Krakowski, Plac Axentowicza and Park Lotników Polskich (Kraków), as well as Royal Castle, Błonia and Main Square (Niepołomice)



Błonia Niepołomice



Park Lotników Polskich



Park Lotników Polskich



Group photo



Group photo

We sincerely thank all participants of the “Cities Talk Nature Europe: Nature, Places, People” conference in Kraków. We are pleased with your active participation in the workshops devoted to universal standards for urban green areas, Nature-based Solutions, sensitivity to climate change and participatory processes. We have received a lot of positive feedback regarding the on-site visits. Thank you for exchanging your thoughts and observations. We hope you enjoyed the event thoroughly and were able to network with the people of your interest. It was our great pleasure to host you. See you at the next INTERLACE Engagement Event!

Organising Team: Metropolia Krakowska and Sendzimir Foundation

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Please find the recording of the event and all presentations on the **INTERLACE HUB**.

CONFERENCE REVIEW
EDITED BY CLIMATE ALLIANCE,
PICTURES BY METROPOLIA
KRAKOWSKA AND ECOLOGIC
INSTITUTE



Please find more information about **INTERLACE** and **CITIES TALK NATURE**.



Alcaldía de Envigado

