



# EUROPEAN URBAN RESILIENCE FORUM

## 2019 REPORT

### INTRODUCTION

On 25 June 2019, over 180 participants from cities and local authorities, research institutions, and other public and private stakeholders gathered in Bonn (Germany) for the 2019 edition of the re-branded European Urban Resilience Forum (formerly Open European Day), making it the largest event in the conference series so far. The event was co-organized by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and the European Environment Agency.

This year, the impacts of extreme weather trends dominated discussions in a tangible way, with the conference taking place smack bang in the middle of a string of consecutive 30+ degree days. Through a mixture of plenary discussion, parallel breakout sessions, and a marketplace (which facilitated informal knowledge exchange and networking,) the participants debated and reflected on the future of resilience in European cities.

This year's nine breakout sessions explored three thematic streams:



**STREAM A:**  
NATURE-BASED  
SOLUTIONS FOR  
URBAN RESILIENCE:  
PUTTING THEM  
INTO PRACTICE



**STREAM B:**  
IMPROVING  
GOVERNANCE  
FOR INCLUSIVE  
AND EFFECTIVE  
CLIMATE ACTION



**STREAM C:**  
IMPLEMENTING,  
FINANCING AND  
MONITORING  
STRATEGIES FOR  
URBAN RESILIENCE

## OPENING PLENARY

The event opened with an address from the Deputy Mayor of Bonn (Germany), Reinhard Limbach, who acknowledged how cities in Germany and more broadly across Europe have increasingly been declaring states of “climate emergency”<sup>1</sup>. Deputy Mayor Limbach also noted the need to strengthen the linkages between climate, land use and nature, in the interest of climate justice.

Following the welcome address, Birgit Giorgi, Strong Cities in a Changing Climate and Holger Robrecht, ICLEI Europe, co-moderated a series of short interviews with Stefania Manca, City of Genoa (Italy) and EU Urban Agenda Partnership for Climate Adaptation, Katarzyna Szymczak-Pomianowska, City of Wroclaw (Poland), and Elena Visnar-Malinovska, Directorate-General for Climate Action, European Commission.

Marc Velasco, Suez Consulting, reported on the fourth edition of the [European Climate Change Adaptation conference](#) (ECCA), which was held in Lisbon (Portugal), in May this year, where hot topics were nature-based solutions (NBS), as well as integrating disaster risk reduction with climate change adaptation, and partnerships for implementation.

*“We see that a lot of data on climate change impacts is jealously protected. We want to start making climate risk data available to cities and local authorities so that they can make the best possible climate adaptation plan.”*

**Elena Visnar-Malinovska**

Head of Adaptation Unit, Directorate-General for Climate Action, European Commission

Ms Visnar-Malinovska observed that cities are experiencing different challenges but solutions can be transferred to other cities. She referred to the EU Urban Agenda Partnership for Climate Adaptation, which has two main functions: (a) to promote stakeholder engagement in order to widen partnership towards community resilience, and (b) to increase data availability and accessibility, which will be helpful in the preparation and formulation of an adaptation plan. Ms Visnar-Malinovska pointed out that 40 percent of large-to-medium sized European cities already have an adaptation plan in place, but the majority are still on their way there.

### KEY MESSAGES

- ▶ Mainstreaming climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction is vital in addressing climate change and natural disasters.
- ▶ Data availability and accessibility are crucial to formulating an effective adaptation plan.
- ▶ Financing remains a challenge to realising resilience goals. Public-private partnerships are just one financing mechanism to help support the implementation and financing of climate change adaptation plans and strategies.
- ▶ The link between social justice and building climate resilience has been under-explored in a European context and its importance is growing, if we are to ensure that adaptation strategies do not reinforce or worsen existing inequalities.

<sup>1</sup> The City of Bonn itself declared a state of climate emergency shortly afterwards. See more at: [www.bonn.de/pressemitteilungen/2019/juli/rat-der-stadt-bonn-erklaert-klimanotstand.php](http://www.bonn.de/pressemitteilungen/2019/juli/rat-der-stadt-bonn-erklaert-klimanotstand.php).



## STREAM A: NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS FOR URBAN RESILIENCE: PUTTING THEM INTO PRACTICE



The value of urban nature is becoming increasingly recognised on many fronts: for its ability to improve health, to foster closer ties within communities and to reduce the impacts of climate change. For municipal leaders and practitioners interested in harnessing these benefits, NBS has emerged as a compelling framing concept and call-to-arms. But these “solutions” don’t come with a user manual; they need to be made operational and embedded in local realities. Which is the right one to adopt? How can it be funded? And who needs to be involved? Sessions within this stream addressed the practicalities of moving from concept to practice.

### SESSION 1A

#### Fostering collaboration for green infrastructure within and beyond municipal departments

This session sought to conceptualise green infrastructure as a transversal concept, i.e. with potential to bridge boundaries across departments, domains and actors. Matthew Bach and Alice Reil, ICLEI Europe, facilitated discussion of collaborative approaches, with input from city representatives from: Newcastle (United Kingdom), Lisbon (Portugal), and Stockholm (Sweden).

*“Any network programme forces you to get out of your comfort zone, creating informal networks that can push things forward and bring exciting solutions to make our cities greener and more just.”*

**Duarte Mata**

City of Lisbon (Portugal)

To open the session, the panel of city representatives - Helen Hinds, City of Newcastle; Magnus Rothman, City of Stockholm; and Duarte d’ Araújo Mata, City of Lisbon - described approaches to building partnerships and collaboration with different actors, even those who might be less informed or interested.

Bernadette Kiss and Bjorn Wickenberg, Lund University/ Naturvation Project, emphasised the importance of creating “new, colourful cocktails” by bringing together actors to work towards a common goal. Breakout groups then discussed how NBS can enable transversal collaboration through common values and goals.

### KEY MESSAGES

- ▶ Transversal collaboration requires trust and relationship-building among partners.
- ▶ The greening of cities is a long-term process, thus it is important to build lasting partnerships.
- ▶ “Visioning” has been a key part of the Naturvation project, establishing a common goal for everyone to work towards.
- ▶ The aim should be the development of a “green-mind-set” across the city, not just the greening of the city.

### OPEN QUESTIONS AND CHALLENGES

- ▶ Communication between cities and inhabitants - what are the barriers?
- ▶ How to resolve conflicts of use? For example, park maintenance staff often perceive a green space’s functions differently than biologists, meaning ease-of-maintenance may be prioritised over provision of habitat for flora and fauna.
- ▶ How to describe the various functions of Green Infrastructure (GI) to all actors?

### Find out more:

Fraunhofer Institute, Morgenstadt: [www.morgenstadt.de/en/innovation\\_areas/urban\\_governance\\_planning.html](http://www.morgenstadt.de/en/innovation_areas/urban_governance_planning.html)  
Connecting Nature project: [www.connectingnature.eu](http://www.connectingnature.eu)  
Naturvation project: [www.naturvation.eu](http://www.naturvation.eu)  
European Green Capital Network: <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/europeangreencapital/applying-for-the-award/egc-network>

## SESSION 2A

### Choosing a nature-based intervention that fits: inspiration and logic

A new park, a green roof, or a street tree – Which one is the “right” solution? Where should it be implemented? And at what scale? This session sought to inspire, inform and challenge those involved in putting NBS into practice.

City practitioners from Cascais (Portugal), Oslo (Norway), and Wroclaw (Poland) teamed up with representatives of the business and community sector to unpack the challenges of choosing, implementing and maintaining a nature-based intervention that is right for their context. After lightning pitches on site-specific NBS interventions by the city representatives, breakout discussion groups workshoped the challenges and opportunities presented by each representative, through the lens of:

1. Preconditions and selection criteria for a specific NBS intervention
2. Barriers and enablers at the implementation stage
3. Skills, knowledge and ownership needed to maintain the intervention

*“In Cascais, 1500 people are now waiting for a community garden plot – in a city known for its beaches and tourism, not agriculture.”*

**Teresa Ribeiro**

City of Cascais (Portugal)

Teresa Ribeiro, City of Cascais; Terje Laskemoen, City of Oslo; and Joanna Kiernicka-Allavena, City of Wroclaw opened the discussion, and were then joined by Jonathan Müller, Helix Pflanzen; Emma Halliday, Greenspace Scotland; and Bernhard Scharf, Green4Cities and Greenpass, to take the conversation further.



Engagement between local inhabitants and city administrations emerged as a common discussion point at all tables, with many challenges voiced, and some success stories shared. In Cascais, for example, shared community gardens have been introduced, with much success, despite the fact that Portugal does not have a strong tradition of these. The global financial crisis played a role in their emergence, because families saw them as an opportunity to save money, through growing their own produce, and in fact started doing so illegally. The municipality saw an opportunity here to step in and legalise informal gardens started by inhabitants, contributing with services, for example training and water, but also setting rules. The gardens now play an important social role - fostering interaction between people from different neighbourhoods, and supplying donations to foodbanks.

The City of Oslo, on the other hand, faced challenges when gaining inhabitants' acceptance of city-initiated projects, such as small rain gardens and a project to re-open local waterways. To address this, the administration installed public signage to showcase the benefits of the plans, raise awareness and help change mind-sets.

## KEY MESSAGES

- ▶ Barriers to nature-based projects include: gaining support from inhabitants and securing extended funding for longer term maintenance, not just initial capital investment.
- ▶ Engaging multiple actors, for example inhabitants and businesses, can help to alleviate the costs municipalities face when maintaining projects. In Glasgow (United Kingdom), Green Space Scotland used crowdfunding to raise money for a community orchard, and secured the required amount in just three weeks. The campaign also sparked interest in volunteering.
- ▶ Municipalities can be pivotal in supporting the involvement of inhabitants, for example by establishing a legal framework - maintenance contracts in Glasgow, rules for community gardens in Cascais, or providing services - water in Cascais - and activating public spaces, for example by holding events.
- ▶ Where community acceptance of new interventions is low, working with existing local organisations, or connecting with local ambassadors can play a role in fostering a sense of ownership.
- ▶ Legislation at higher levels of government can support grassroots initiatives, for example the Community Empowerment Act, 2015 in Scotland.

## OPEN QUESTIONS AND CHALLENGES

- ▶ How to foster community ownership for projects initiated by the municipality?
- ▶ How to reconcile individual interests with the public good? For example, at some of the Grow Green pilot sites in Wrocław, local inhabitants continue to prioritise car parking over green space, even after efforts to engage them in decision-making.

## Find out more:

Greenspace Scotland: [www.greenspacescotland.org.uk](http://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk)  
 Helix Pflanzen: [www.helix-pflanzen.de](http://www.helix-pflanzen.de)  
 Grow Green project: [www.growgreenproject.eu](http://www.growgreenproject.eu)  
 Scotland Community Empowerment Act 2015: [www.gov.scot/publications/community-empowerment-scotland-act-summary](http://www.gov.scot/publications/community-empowerment-scotland-act-summary)  
 OPERANDUM project: [www.operandum-project.eu](http://www.operandum-project.eu)  
 Stalled Spaces Scotland: [www.ads.org.uk/stalled-spaces-scotland](http://www.ads.org.uk/stalled-spaces-scotland)  
 Oslo's Reopening Waterways project: [https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/greencitytool/resources/docs/best\\_practices/Oslo\\_Reopening\\_Waterways\\_Ao2.pdf](https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/greencitytool/resources/docs/best_practices/Oslo_Reopening_Waterways_Ao2.pdf)

## SESSION 3A

### How to make your case: create your own nature-based solution (NBS) business canvas

NBS can help to alleviate many types of urban problems, for example, economic insecurity, degradation of cultural heritage, or vulnerability to natural hazards, by protecting inhabitants and infrastructure and offering new financial opportunities. However, it remains a challenge to finance and implement NBS. This session sought to introduce participants to the “business canvas” - a tool for evaluating context-specific NBS with the starting point of identifying the value proposition; essentially for securing financing by eliciting the return on investments in terms of impact generation. This approach is under development in the Connecting Nature project.

Isobel Fletcher, Horizon Nua, and Clara Grimes, ICLEI Europe, set the scene by introducing participants to the business canvas. This was followed by insights into specific nature-based projects, provided from Valeria Stacchini, Metropolitan City of Bologna (Italy), Matija Vuger and Nikola Petkovic, City of Zagreb (Croatia), and Jonathan Moxon, City of Leeds (United Kingdom).



Participants were then split into groups to prepare a “business canvas” for one of the specific projects described, on one of three themes: flood alleviation, urban food development, and community involvement. Participants experienced first-hand the process of evaluating resources, organising cost structures and integrating partners, in order to comprehensively design a business model to be able to implement and finance NBS.

## KEY MESSAGES

- ▶ Need for diverse finance streams to ensure effective implementation, a successful output, and sustainable maintenance.
- ▶ Implementing green infrastructure projects is complex: many different stakeholders, measures and infrastructures.
- ▶ Identifying co-benefits and income sources can secure support from different sectors and encourages people to be involved. Building trust with landowners is particularly important.
- ▶ A comprehensive value proposition needs to consider environmental, social and economic aspects.

## OPEN QUESTIONS AND CHALLENGES

- ▶ How is land generating income for the local community? How can it be improved, or changed?
- ▶ What are the incentives for landowners to engage in NBS projects?
- ▶ How can local support be mobilised to ensure implementation and maintenance of NBS?

## STREAM B: IMPROVING GOVERNANCE FOR INCLUSIVE AND EFFECTIVE CLIMATE ACTION



Data, best practices, decision-support tools, policy instruments – these alone won't make a municipality resilient, but need to be supported by a solid understanding of local circumstances. This also means recognising that inhabitants, civil society and the private sector all have a role to play in ensuring that climate action is accepted and effectively delivered, since municipalities are not governed by governments alone. Ultimately, the successful governance of climate adaptation at the local level is highly context-dependent. It demands attention to scale, a careful assessment of local government capacity, the construction of convincing narratives to support the need for action, efforts to understand the distribution of climate impacts on social groups, as well as the creation of arenas for participatory democracy.

### SESSION 1B

#### Whose resilient city?

#### Making room for social justice in climate action

This session brought the theme of social justice in the field of climate adaptation, a theme which is currently under explored, directly into the spotlight, reflecting growing recognition across Europe of its importance in building resilient communities. Session moderator Daniel Morchain, International Institute for Sustainable Development, led a discussion with representatives from the cities of Halle (Saale) (Germany), Vejle (Denmark), and Barcelona (Spain).

*"We need to think more in-depth about the social consequences of adaptation measures. To map the vulnerable groups within the city is only a starting point."*

#### Johannes Langemayer

Barcelona Lab for Urban Environmental Justice and Sustainability, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Ib Jespersgaard, City of Vejle, (Denmark), Tonet Font Ferrer, City of Barcelona (Spain), and Christiane Lütgert, City of Halle (Saale) (Germany).

Breakout discussion groups were then hosted by each of the city representatives and supported by Johannes Langemayer, Barcelona Lab for Urban Environmental Justice and Sustainability, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

Social conflict in Europe's recent history has left some regions behind, for example, the former East Germany. In the City of Halle (Saale), investment in technical support does not automatically lead to more social equity. There is a need to establish a dialogue with locals to implement solutions, which respond to their needs. In Halle (Saale), the Freiimfelde neighbourhood, a city district which faces high urban density and a number of social problems, has benefited from the freiraumgalerie project. The project was started by a group of young urban planners and artists, who have sought to use street art to improve the image of Freiimfelde. The project fostered a sense of pride among local inhabitants, and has led to a successful community

To open the session, all participants were invited to complete an interactive survey, which asked three questions about the state of social justice in Europe. The majority of the participants agreed that social justice has worsened, rather than improved, in the past five years and that it remains disconnected from resilience-building.

This exploration was followed by a snapshot of social vulnerability to climate impacts, presented by Aleksandra Kazmierczak, European Environment Agency, before leading into a panel discussion with

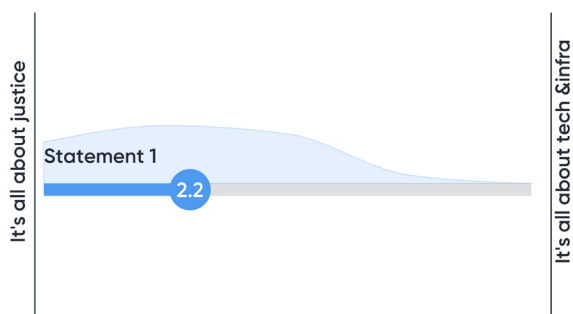
#### What is social justice?



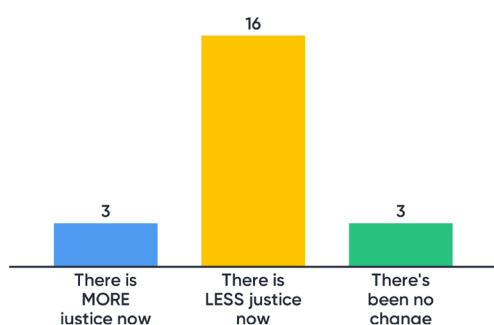
garden project, supported by the municipality. Funding for the Freimfelde project in Halle (Saale) was provided partly by a foundation, and partly through ecological compensation from a site elsewhere in the city.

The City of Barcelona is also a source of inspiration - there, social justice is “in the DNA.” Barcelona has experienced constant migration flows throughout its history, something which will likely increase in the future. In Barcelona, social justice is addressed in many different local government departments, which can unfortunately also lead to silo-thinking, as approaches are not necessarily coordinated. One way of advancing social justice however has been to consistently include local inhabitants in the decision-making processes.

### Is resilience about justice or is it about technology & infrastructure?



### How has social justice changed in European cities in the last 10 years?



#### Find out more:

EEA report: *Unequal exposure and unequal impacts: social vulnerability to air pollution, noise and extreme temperatures in Europe*: [www.eea.europa.eu/publications/unequal-exposure-and-unequal-impacts](http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/unequal-exposure-and-unequal-impacts)

Freimfelde project, Halle: [www.freiraumgalerie.com/urban-art](http://www.freiraumgalerie.com/urban-art) and [www.nachbarschaft-freimfelde.de](http://www.nachbarschaft-freimfelde.de)

Barcelona Climate Plan 2018-2030: [http://lameva.barcelona.cat/barcelona-pel-clima/sites/default/files/documents/eng\\_climate\\_plan\\_def.pdf](http://lameva.barcelona.cat/barcelona-pel-clima/sites/default/files/documents/eng_climate_plan_def.pdf)

Vejle Resilience Strategy: [www.100resilientcities.org/strategies/vejle](http://www.100resilientcities.org/strategies/vejle)

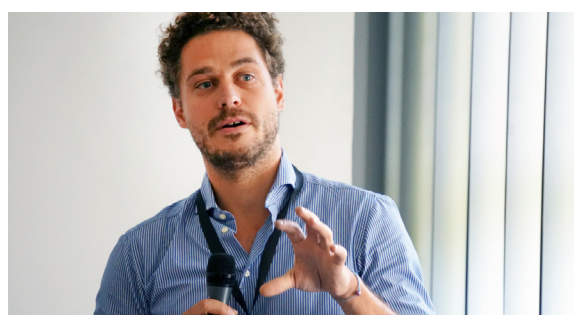
ENABLE project: [www.projectenable.eu](http://www.projectenable.eu)

## KEY MESSAGES

- ▶ Social justice is moving more and more to the forefront of awareness-raising and educational campaigns on urban sustainability at the EU level, with a strong presence in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Still, it is not yet strongly linked to adaptation and resilience.
- ▶ The intersection of social justice and climate action can be strengthened by identifying links and creating partnerships with other sectors like health, housing, etc.
- ▶ Although vulnerable groups are generally mentioned as a priority in adaptation and resilience strategies, there is a lack of guidance on how to correctly identify them or engage with them. Furthermore, a tendency to prioritise technical measures over “soft” social or institutional ones persists.

## OPEN QUESTIONS AND CHALLENGES

- ▶ Access to land is an ongoing challenge facing community initiatives interested in establishing new uses of public space in the interest of more socially cohesive communities, as city administrations and inhabitants have influence as many under-utilised sites are privately-owned. Support from higher levels of government, including the EU, is needed to foster increased “communing” of land, i.e. a shift to a sense of active collective engagement, responsibility and enjoyment of public spaces?
- ▶ Looking forward, there is a great need for more funding towards social justice initiatives, including more research and vulnerability mapping to better understand how adaptation measures are shaping cities. Are the most vulnerable populations being helped, or are climate risks merely being shifted throughout cities?
- ▶ Resilience of what: we have to ask ourselves, do we want to build resilience around an unjust system, or rather rethink that system?



## SESSION 2B

### Challenges and solutions for smaller municipalities

Smaller municipalities face many barriers towards effective climate change, as most case studies and guidelines are not applicable to them. Additionally, they have less access to resources - research, personnel, information, etc. - and it is at times very difficult and tedious for local authorities to apply for financing and comply with technical guidelines i.e. from the European Commission.

Birgit Georgi, Strong cities in a changing climate, and Majana Heidenreich, TU Dresden, facilitated discussion on barriers, challenges, and solutions for local municipalities, with inputs from Maria Gruner and Olaf Lier, Municipality of Coswig; Barbara Kulmer, Municipality of Weiz, (Austria; Andrea Carosi, Municipality of Urbino (Italy); and Bettina Fischer, Regional Government of Styria (Austria).

*"Resources and time are big limitations in small municipalities. As long as it does not cost money, there is freedom to engage in any project. When costs rise, there are many restrictions."*

**Maria Gruner**

Municipality of Coswig (Germany)

In response to these difficulties, smaller municipalities must rely on their strengths to prepare their communities for extreme weather events and build resilience. Smaller local governments are generally closer to and more connected to inhabitants and stakeholders, in comparison to larger municipalities. In addition, inhabitants of smaller municipalities themselves tend to be more knowledgeable about their local area, facilitating faster responses and more comprehensive adaptation plans. However, inhabitants are not necessarily aware that a problem exists, and it can take a disaster to trigger concern. In Coswig, a 2003 flooding event interrupted local festivities and was a key event in fostering collaboration between the city administration and local inhabitants on addressing climate impacts. This reflects a similar situation in Italy, where, for example, inhabitants in Milan are much more aware of climate risks, through their experience of severe flooding, than those in Cagliari, Sardinia.

Collaborations, partnerships and networking with other municipalities can be vital tools for facilitating knowledge-sharing, financial support and the effective development, implementation, and monitoring of climate initiatives. In some cases, small municipalities feel disconnected from issues affecting their larger counterparts, or may feel they do not share responsibility for the origin of broader problems, or for solving them. Networking and knowledge-sharing events can also help to close this gap.

## KEY MESSAGES

- ▶ Many guidelines and case studies developed at the EU level do not have small municipalities in mind and hence are not applicable to them. Work is needed to "localise" such resources.
- ▶ A bottom-up, collaborative approach and collaborative planning can be effective in smaller municipalities, where resources are scarce but administrations often have a closer relationship with inhabitants.
- ▶ Networking to facilitate knowledge-sharing and financial support is important for small municipalities in order to effectively develop, implement, and monitor climate initiatives.
- ▶ Youth involvement in climate change adaptation can stimulate change and ensure the sustainability of programmes and projects in the future.
- ▶ Mobilising economic sectors, for example, agriculture and tourism, can help to support adaptation initiatives because climate change hurts the economy too.
- ▶ The programme, LIFE Adapt, is assisting smaller municipalities in the drafting and shaping of regional adaptation plans that are better adjusted to local requirements.

## OPEN QUESTIONS AND CHALLENGES

- ▶ How to make regional adaptation plans relevant and more comprehensible for smaller municipalities?
- ▶ How to help local governments develop community adaptation plans? Or how to apply regional plans at a local level?
- ▶ How to improve financing and knowledge gaps?
- ▶ How to shift the attitudes of inhabitants towards supporting adaptation initiatives?

### Find out more:

LIFE Climate Action:

[https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/budget/life\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/budget/life_en)

LIFE-funded Master Adapt project, which aims to identify and test innovative tools for multi-level governance, to support regions and local authorities in defining and developing adaptation strategies and policies:

[www.masteradapt.eu](http://www.masteradapt.eu)

## SESSION 3B

### Strategic narratives for urban heat and health

This session explored the value of developing “strategic” narratives in the field of climate change adaptation, i.e. persuasive storylines that serve to motivate action. Facilitated by Gabriela Michalek, Centre for Environmental Research, UFZ, the discussion focused on rising temperatures and their impact on human health.

Dr. Virginia Murray, Public Health England, set the scene by highlighting the link between extreme weather trends and health, the growing incidence of heat waves, the “silent killer”, and making an emphatic plea to people working for local governments: “We really need your help”.

*“We need new stories! People get tired of hearing the same messages.”*

**Maria Nikolaidou**  
City of Larissa (Greece)

Dr. Murray emphasised the important role socially cohesive communities play in tackling climate health impacts, since many deaths would be preventable if people were looked after by others in the community, or through local care programmes. Dr. Murray’s presentation was followed by insights from the cities of Ljubljana (Slovenia), Vienna (Austria) and Larissa (Greece), as well as the work of Barcelona-based consultancy, IS Global, who work to address climate impacts on health through projects such as Climate Fit City. Ms. Michalek then presented the “ingredients” of a good narrative, which were created as part of the PLACARD project’s “recipe book”.



## KEY MESSAGES

- ▶ In many cities, narratives will need to be translated in order to reach different groups.
- ▶ Good data is essential to make good policy. Deaths from climate-related impacts need to first be documented in order to be recognised and effectively addressed by policy-makers.
- ▶ Media has an important role to play as a channel to carry narratives, but sometimes does not focus on the areas needing the most attention. In Sweden, forest fires in 2018 caused only one death (a firefighter who fell from a cliff), but attracted huge media interest, while hundreds of deaths from heat-related causes and thousands from cold go relatively unnoticed.
- ▶ In the United Kingdom, the “Snow Angels” network provides support to vulnerable people in the community, including coordinating volunteer networks in flood and heat emergencies. This could be an inspiring story for other cities.

## OPEN QUESTIONS AND CHALLENGES

- ▶ In the age of social media, how can we ensure that vulnerable populations – such as the elderly, homeless, or low-income earners – are not excluded from communication strategies?
- ▶ How to tackle isolation, since relationships, networks and access to community support are key to preventing deaths related to climate impacts?

During the second half of the session, participants split into two groups to explore these “ingredients”, using profiles of two imaginary cities. Representatives from local government and academia exchanged their own local stories and ideas for creating and communicating strategic narratives.

### Find out more:

Climate-fit.city project: [www.climate-fit.city](http://www.climate-fit.city)

PLACARD narratives recipe book:  
[www.placard-network.eu/our-work/how-to-become-a-climate-chef-and-avoid-disasters](http://www.placard-network.eu/our-work/how-to-become-a-climate-chef-and-avoid-disasters)

## STREAM C: IMPLEMENTING, FINANCING AND MONITORING STRATEGIES FOR URBAN RESILIENCE



So you've drafted a climate action plan. It's been reviewed by an interdepartmental committee, shared with inhabitants at public workshops, revised by your team and approved by the city council. Now what? This thematic stream dealt with what comes next – from unlocking funds to pay for a pilot project, to integrating climate adaptation measures with those for reducing emissions. Monitoring and evaluating the performance of the whole plan – often a weak point – received special attention as part of this thematic stream.

### SESSION 1C

#### Innovative schemes for financing resilient cities

How to finance measures to adapt to climate change and build resilience is a constant challenge for municipalities, the majority of which face ever-shrinking resources. In this session, representatives from the cities of Athens (Greece), Lisbon (Portugal), and Bristol (United Kingdom) shared their experiences of accessing finance. This was complimented with expertise from the European Investment Bank (EIB) and the Italian financial services company, Unipolsai.

Linda Romanovska, Fresh Thoughts Consulting, opened the session, looking at what has happened since last year's discussion, and what is coming up. She pointed out that the UNFCCC COP 26 taking place in December 2019 will focus on mobilising financing and funding, looking at what is available at the national level in different countries.

Stefanie Lindenberg, EIB, outlined what the EIB can offer, and explored in detail a loan given to the City of Athens with Eleni Myrivili, Deputy Mayor of the city for urban nature, resilience and adaptation. The NCFF loan is part of a larger, €55 million investment, which will support priority projects that include upgrading historic public buildings, improving education and health facilities and addressing the challenges of a changing climate. John Stevens (City of Bristol) then introduced the RESCCUE project, discussing the current flood risk posed in Bristol, and the relevant financing and implementation hurdles. He also introduced the strategies and measures the City is putting in place in order to mitigate this risk.

#### KEY MESSAGES

- ▶ Financing is consistently one of the greatest barriers towards the implementation of climate change methods.
- ▶ Adaptation funding is not always called adaptation funding. It can have many names, for example, water management funding etc. A mix of funding instruments from various places and sectors is an important key to success.
- ▶ A shift is needed in both adaptation to climate change and disaster risk reduction, from a singular focus on critical infrastructure protection, to a more integrated focus on overall risks, cascading effects and development progress.
- ▶ The financing market for climate adaptation and urban resilience projects requires a considerable degree of responsiveness to various city demands and standardisation of investment options.
- ▶ We need new, non-conventional financing instruments to support local resilience planning, including competitive supporting mechanisms and processes

#### Find out more:

RESCCUE Project: [www.resccue.eu](http://www.resccue.eu)

European Investment Bank (EIB):

[www.eib.org/en/products/blending/ncff/index.htm](http://www.eib.org/en/products/blending/ncff/index.htm)

Financing Urban Adaptation to Climate Change, European Environment Agency, 2017: [www.eea.europa.eu/publications/financing-urban-adaptation-to-climate-change](http://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/financing-urban-adaptation-to-climate-change)

Current LIFE funding call, open until 12 September 2019:

<https://ec.europa.eu/easme/en/section/life/calls-proposals>

*"I'm glad we are finally talking about money, and actually we're talking about it more and more. That means we are close to real action!"*

**Linda Romanovska**  
Fresh Thoughts Consulting

## SESSION 2C

### Building urban resilience through integrated mitigation and adaptation practices

The integration of efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change can provide considerable value for urban resilience, as both approaches often share common drivers. Not only can synergies be exploited to reduce climate risks and carbon emissions simultaneously – unintentional “lock-in” into counterproductive infrastructure and policies can also be avoided. Taking advantage of planned adaptation measures, it is often possible to “piggyback” and to add mitigation measures at only a small cost and vice-versa.

In this session, representatives of Covenant of Mayors signatory cities – Edgars Augustins, Saldus (Latvia); Catarina Freitas, Almada (Portugal); Malake Muñoz, Basque Country (Spain); Alberto Maria Rigon, Vicenza (Italy); and Jorg Pieneman, Rotterdam (The Netherlands) – shared their experiences with regards to an integrated and cross-departmental planning approach to climate mitigation and adaptation, and incorporating integrated measures into Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plans (SECAPs). Paolo Bertoldi, Joint Research Centre, European Commission, highlighted the importance of speedy action and the key role of the Covenant of Mayors initiative in enabling monitoring and reporting as well as careful planning in order to navigate potential trade-offs.

Giorgia Rambelli, ICLEI Europe, moderator of the session, pointed out that integration between mitigation and adaptation measures makes sense, as there is a growing need for compatible solutions to reduce costs. When choosing which measures to implement, a major challenge lies with the allocation of resources, ensuring that counterproductive investments are avoided, as well as securing good data. This was confirmed by Alberto Maria Rigon, who emphasized the cost savings achieved by integrated planning. Panellists shared their experiences and pilot projects for potential replication. One example was the “MultiAdapt” project in the City of Almada, where vegetable gardens have been constructed, serving to mitigate flooding and extreme heat. Jorg Pieneman gave the example of electric car charging points which were not flood-proof resulting in lost investment. In this case, integrated mitigation and adaptation planning would help to avoid such

cases. As pointed out by Edgars Augustins taking the steps towards more integrative planning, and such transitioning from SEAP to SECAPs, requires engaging a broad range of stakeholders and addressing potential knowledge gaps. Malake Muñoz shared the example of the Basque Country where a regional analysis of the risk of climate change was made. Local Governments were then able to make use of that analysis to create and integrated long-term strategy.

## KEY MESSAGES

- ▶ Holistic and cross-sectoral cooperation allows better long-term planning, avoids mal-investment and allows for better allocation of funds.
- ▶ Avoiding departmental silo thinking is key. A separate department above other Directorate-Generals can further facilitate horizontal interaction.
- ▶ Not all projects need to be expensive: small projects can have a large impact and improve stakeholder interactions, through a ripple effect. For example, in Rotterdam, the city square and playground within it were improved following the input of local inhabitants.
- ▶ Nature-based solutions in cities can be an enabler of integrative action.
- ▶ Cities typically start with analysing the potential for mitigation and then integrate adaptation challenges into the analysis. The two streams are often not yet on an equal footing.

## OPEN QUESTIONS AND CHALLENGES

- ▶ How to avoid counterproductive investments and misallocation of resources?
- ▶ How to mobilise more financial streams? Financing is a perpetual barrier.
- ▶ How to ensure availability of good data and measurement methodologies?

### Find out more:

Almada “Multi-adapt project”: [https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/documents/1.1\\_climate\\_revolving\\_fund\\_almada\\_21feb2018\\_c\\_o.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/energy/sites/ener/files/documents/1.1_climate_revolving_fund_almada_21feb2018_c_o.pdf)

Guidebook “How to develop a Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP)”, EU/ CoM: <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/publication/eur-scientific-and-technical-research-reports/guidebook-how-develop-sustainable-energy-and-climate-action-plan-secap>

Compete4SECAP project [www.compete4secap.eu/resources/energy-climate-planning](http://www.compete4secap.eu/resources/energy-climate-planning)

### SESSION 3C

#### Evaluation and monitoring as effective mechanisms to improve local adaptation policies

The outcomes and impacts of climate change adaptation activities and measures have been difficult to track in the past, and definitely has been a lack of effective monitoring in European cities and regions. This session looked at monitoring of adaptation and resilience policies as a task which is not only crucial for assessing the effectiveness of actions and activities implemented, but could also be used to adjust and tailor measures according to a city's changing needs.

A good monitoring strategy, responding to these needs for periodic assessment, needs to:

1. take into account both qualitative and quantitative data,
2. indicate the extent to which goals set out have been reached,
3. use a variety of different data sources, including local knowledge and perceptions, and
4. communicate the results.

The presenters - Zuzana Hudekova, City of Bratislava-Karlova (Slovakia); Susana Kankaanpää, City of Helsinki (Finland); Piero Pelizzaro, City of Milan (Italy); Sjoerd de Vreng, City of Nijmegen (The Netherlands); and Lucie Blondel, Climate Alliance/Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy - reported on their specific experience. In Helsinki, monitoring systems have been developed

#### KEY MESSAGES

Problems highlighted included lack of access to health data, which is often collected by non-municipal entities, and the difficulties of presenting a holistic, coherent overview of a complex situation to local inhabitants.

Inspiration came from the City of Antwerp's (Belgium) online platform, and citizen budgets for the design of green infrastructure.

Considerations for equity and social justice should be taken into account when monitoring climate adaptation in cities and communities.

Climate adaptation indicators cannot always show why adaptation planning works or not; a combined mix of processes, outputs and outcomes (including historical evidence) is needed to reach concrete.

based on municipal statistics, with different municipal departments involved, while in Milan, the SDGs have provided a useful basis for indicators and benchmarks for resilience monitoring. The group discussions focused on questions put by participants, who were in the process of planning their own monitoring strategies, suggesting areas, actors and indicators to be considered.





## CLOSING PLENARY

The closing plenary opened with a guest appearance by Secretary of State, Romanian Ministry of the Environment, Ion Cîmpeanu, who took a break from proceedings at the nearby UNFCCC climate conference, running in parallel, to deliver a message of support.

The link between planetary and human well-being was then singled out for special attention, with Dr. Virginia Murray taking the stage to extend her plea for help, from the breakout session, to the entire audience, and emphasising that “we’re not hearing enough about the impacts on people”. Birgit Giorgi and Holger Robrecht led a closing discussion with Dr. Murray, along with Humberto Delgado Rosa, Director for Natural Capital, Directorate-General Environment, European Commission, Roby Biwer, Member of Bettembourg Municipal Council (Luxembourg) and European Committee of the Regions (CoR), Lina Liakou, 100 Resilient Cities, and Efen Feliu, Tecnalia.

Councillor Biwer called upon local leaders to show more courage in taking action on climate change, pointing out that the interconnection between biodiversity and climate change has so far largely only been dealt with theoretically, and needs to be translated into concrete actions. Mr Delgado Rosa expressed optimism that the media attention received for the recent [landmark report from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services \(IPBES\)](#) may

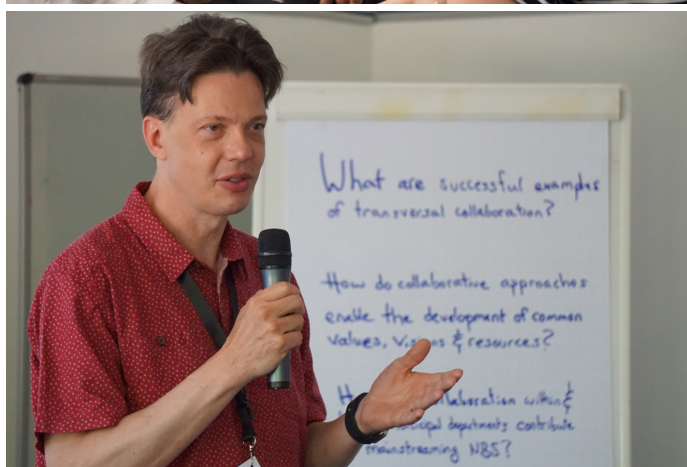
*“We need to integrate topics like nature-based solutions, climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction, with the aim to improve the health and well-being of citizens.”*

**Virginia Murray**

Head of Global Disaster Risk Reduction  
at Public Health England

present a new window of opportunity, highlighting the alarming decline of species and corresponding urgent need for action. He pointed out the persistence of a partial view that climate action is all about emissions reduction in areas like energy and mobility, whereas food and land use are major contributors to emissions. This may be a deciding factor in bringing the climate action and biodiversity protection agendas closer together.

Michelle Preen, Cities Biodiversity Center ICLEI Africa, and Alice Reil, ICLEI Europe then introduced the CitiesWithNature platform and the UrbanbyNature network, together offering a global platform for cities and experts to connect and learn from each other, to mainstream nature into our cities and build resilience.



## CONCLUSION

The 2019 edition of the European Urban Resilience Forum pointed to key themes warranting future exploration:

1. The intersection of climate change and social justice, and the related imperative to understand who is at risk, and ensure measures to address climate impacts are not just shifted around a city;
2. The intersection of climate change and health, and the pressing need for good data on health impacts to inform policy-making;
3. The importance of diverse financing strategies that are oriented to the long term and not just focused on capital to fund an intervention;
4. Strategies to engage inhabitants, to foster acceptance and create ownership over urban development projects, and
5. The relevance of food production, land use and biodiversity protection both for addressing climate impacts and reducing emissions.

Since the framing of policy issues plays a key role in determining those which are prioritised and acted upon, the perspective of overall social wellbeing – encompassing health and equity concerns – offers promise. A health and wellbeing focus offers broad appeal across sectors and among local inhabitants, and may serve as a useful framing device for action on resilience-building. While many of the themes that recurred throughout the day are in no way new, as Lina Liakou noted in the closing plenary, building resilience is a process rather than a pre-defined end state to be achieved. Revisiting the ways in which climate action is playing out in Europe's cities and regions – even several times over – is in no way in vain. If each time something new can be learned, it is one small step changed for the better – always with a more resilient, more sustainable, more inclusive future in sight.

### Find out more:

CitiesWithNature initiative:

<https://cwn.iclei.org>

UrbanByNature network:

[www.connectingnature.eu/urbanbynature](http://www.connectingnature.eu/urbanbynature)

IPBES Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services:

[www.ipbes.net/global-assessment-report-biodiversity-ecosystem-services](http://www.ipbes.net/global-assessment-report-biodiversity-ecosystem-services)

## STAY CONNECTED!

- ▶ To receive news on climate adaptation and resilience-building in cities, sign up to the ICLEI Climate Adaptation and Urban Resilience newsletter at [www.iclei-europe.org/newsletter](http://www.iclei-europe.org/newsletter)
- ▶ To suggest ideas for the programme of the next European Urban Resilience Forum in 2020, contact [urbanresilience.forum@iclei.org](mailto:urbanresilience.forum@iclei.org)
- ▶ You can contribute interesting examples of development and implementation of adaptation actions in your city to feature in the European Environment Agency's next urban adaptation report planned for 2020. The following areas are of particular interest: financing and funding adaptation in cities; concerted mitigation and adaptation actions; co-benefits of adaptation; assessing effectiveness of adaptation solutions; monitoring and standardizing adaptation. Please contact ICLEI or Aleksandra Kazmierczak at the EEA: [aleksandra.kazmierczak@eea.europa.eu](mailto:aleksandra.kazmierczak@eea.europa.eu) by 1<sup>st</sup> November 2019.

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