

Enhancing Nature-based Solutions and Green Infrastructure Networks in Urban and Peri-urban Areas in Chile

“GEF Green Cities” (Ciudades Verdes) | GEF ID 11339 | Child Project of the GEF-8 Sustainable Cities IP

Country: Chile

Implementing Agency: Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO)

Executing Agency: Ministry of Housing and Urban Planning (MINVU), with the Ministry of the Environment (MMA)

Project Overview

- **Project development objective:** expand and integrate Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and Green Infrastructure (GI) in urban and peri-urban areas to conserve and restore biodiversity, mitigate climate change and improve people's health and well-being.
- **Main investment components (GEF US\$):**
 - C1 – Regulatory & institutional frameworks for integrated urban planning with GI/NbS networks (0.73 M)
 - C2 – Enabling conditions for public & private investment in GI/NbS, incl. 16 pilot initiatives in the 4 cities (2.23 M)
 - C3 – Technical capacities & information management: training, national geospatial GI/NbS platform, knowledge exchange with GPSC (1.36 M)
 - C4 – Monitoring & evaluation (0.19 M) | PMC (0.22 M)
- **GEF financing and co-financing (US\$):** GEF grant 4,742,965 | Co-financing 39,923,434 | Total ≈ 44.7 M | 60 months
- **Participating cities:** Antofagasta (arid north) • Santiago Metropolitan Area – communes of Lo Espejo & Pedro Aguirre Cerda • Valdivia (temperate rainforest & wetlands) • Coyhaique (Patagonia)

Global environmental benefits targeted: 1,551,824 ha under improved practices | 785,985 tCO₂e mitigated | 812,570 direct beneficiaries (51% women)

Implementation Status

Current stage and key milestones: early implementation (Year 1 start-up)

- **Approval / effectiveness status:** GEF CEO-endorsed; project effective and under execution, with FAO providing execution services to MINVU (national execution).
- **Technical studies / consultations (PPG):** city diagnostics and pilot-site selection in the 4 cities; baseline CAP (capacities, attitudes, practices) survey with gender lens; regional workshops, focus groups and gender/civil-society consultations.
- **Activities started / completed:** 5-year work plan drafted (national + city-level activities); Project Management Unit set-up and recruitment under way; coordination with MINVU, MMA, MOP, SERNAFOR and the 5 municipalities.
- **Next milestone and expected date:** Inception Workshop and 1st Project Steering Committee (approval of work plan and Annual Work Plan and Budget) – Q4 2026 / Q1 2027.

Immediate Priorities

Next 6–12 months

- **Priority 1 – Operational start-up:** complete Project Management Unit recruitment, hold the Inception Workshop, install the Steering Committee (MINVU–MMA–FAO) and approve the 5-year work plan and AWP/B 2027.
Target: Q1 2027
- **Priority 2 – Phase 1 (Start-up & baseline) → Phase 2 (Design & governance):** consolidate the baseline in the 4 cities (CAP survey update, sociocultural assessments, mapping of existing GI/NbS) and move into design: gender-sensitive NbS technical standard, Green Infrastructure & Biodiversity Plan guidelines, and multi-stakeholder governance roundtables in each city.
Target: Q2 2027
- **Priority 3 – Pilot preparation in the cities (C2/C3):** technical design of the first NbS/GI pilots (e.g. Pablo Neruda Park – Lo Espejo/PAC; Angachilla/Catrico – Valdivia; La Negra – Antofagasta; La Cruz ravines – Coyhaique).
Target: Q3 2027

Key Challenges

Challenge	Support Needed
Institutional coordination: 2 ministries, regional governments and 5 municipalities; turnover of authorities and staff across electoral cycles.	Examples of multi-level governance models for urban GI/NbS (national–metropolitan–municipal).
Technical capacity: Uneven municipal capacity to design, maintain and monitor GI/NbS (CAP baseline 15–35%).	Training modules and practical toolkits on NbS design, maintenance and urban biodiversity.
Financing / co-financing: Limited funding for long-term GI maintenance; private investment still incipient.	Innovative finance and business models (value capture, green bonds, PES, PPPs).
Policy / regulatory: GI not legally defined; outdated land-use planning framework; long approval cycles.	Comparative regulatory experience: GI standards, urban nature plans, planning codes.
Other: Measuring GEBs (ha, tCO ₂ e) in urban settings; climate risks (drought, heat, wildfires).	Harmonised SCIP methodologies and indicators for urban GEB accounting.

Where GPSC & Partners Can Add Value

Select up to 3 areas and specify the support needed:

☐ Technical assistance

☒ **Peer-to-peer learning** → twinning our 4 cities with SCIP cities in similar biomes

☒ **Knowledge products / toolkits** → NbS standards, GI planning guides, urban GEB metrics

☐ Training / capacity building

☐ Expert advisory support

☐ South-South exchange

☒ **Financing / private sector engagement** → finance models for GI/NbS investment & upkeep

☐ Monitoring & evaluation

☐ Communications & visibility

☐ Other: _____

Lesson / innovation to share

A gender-sensitive CAP baseline survey (capacities, attitudes, practices) gives each city a measurable capacity target (e.g. Coyhaique 15% → 35%) and a tailored training plan — easily replicable across SCIP.