Cities for Biodiversity

Deep-Dive Learning Agenda

WORLD BANK GROUP

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Global Platform for Sustainable Cities

Theme 1: Greening Cities – Integrating urban greening and ecology into city and neighborhood planning and connecting "green and blue infrastructure"

Understanding urban ecology and balancing gray infrastructure investment, natural system, and urban design

A city's system consists of two main components: ecological systems (i.e., nature – vegetation and water) and "gray" infrastructure (buildings, roads, etc.). A city's urban ecological system – formed by the city's wetlands, lakes, rivers, forests – and its network provide multiple benefits (i.e., urban ecosystem services), such as mitigating urban heat island effects, recharging groundwater, promoting recreation, enhancing livability and well-being of people, as well as protecting coastal cities from erosion and flooding. However, urban planning tends to center on built infrastructure and systems, often at the price of urban ecology and the disintegration of green-blue spaces in the urban setting. Urban planning still occurs piecemeal for many cities, without adequate consideration of nature and the intricate ecological connectivity, resulting in encroachment upon natural habitats, alteration of land use, and disturbance of ecosystems, further accelerating the imbalance between man-made and natural capital.

We should plan and build our cities to maximize the benefits of the ecological services provided by the natural systems and reverse the current biodiversity loss trends. Cities should be designed to support functional landscapes in the changing climate and protect and enhance the interconnected ecological network, incorporating urban nature into the planning process. This requires careful spatial land-use planning, including green/ecological network planning, at the regional and city level, as well as at the neighborhood and site level.

Program organization

The deep-dive sessions will be delivered as collaborative efforts among the C4B cities, C4B experts, the World Bank's Global Platform for Sustainable Cities (GPSC) and Global Program on Nature-Based Solutions for Climate Resilience, and partner organizations, including the Global Environment Facility (GEF), CBD Secretariat, World Economic Forum, International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), ICLEI—Local Governments for Sustainability, the European Union's NATURVATION project, Alexander von Humboldt Institute, and Biophilic Cities.

First session – topics

1   Urban nature, ecological planning, and land-use planning
What is urban ecology/ecological system and ecological planning in the urban context? How can we incorporate urban ecology into land-use planning to support greening cities?

2   Green urban infrastructure
What is "green urban infrastructure"? How can we plan and build "green urban infrastructure" networks to deliver livability, health and enhance urban resilience?

3   Tools and applications
What are the tools that can support urban ecological planning? Many cities have mapped their green urban infrastructure (natural and man-made) and established an inventory, including a set of indicators to assess the conditions of the infrastructure. What are the insights from using those tools and lessons learned?

4   Challenges and opportunities
How can we balance the competing demands between green urban infrastructure that promotes urban nature and gray infrastructure that provides urban services and accommodates the needs of the growing urban population?

Program schedule: April 2022

The first deep-dive learning will take place from the week of April 4 to the week of April 11, 2022, as follows.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3 Week 1	4	5 Plenary 1 7:30- 10:00 am	6 Plenary 2 7:30- 9:30 am	7 Plenary 3 7:30- 9:30 am	8	9
10 Week 2	11 Breakout	12 Breakout	13 Plenary 4 7:30- 9:30 am	14	15	16
Breakout	*Two breakout sessions will be organized to accommodate different time zones.*					

Preliminary Agenda

Session	Theme	Topics
Session 1 (Plenary)	Getting to know C4B and Opening	• Opening remarks • Introduction (participating cities)
	Urban ecology, ecological spatial planning	• Integrating ecological planning into land-use planning • City practice and implementation, including old town regeneration and new town development
Session 2 (Plenary)	Green urban infrastructure	• Opportunities and challenges: How cities can better understand the ecosystem services provided by their green infrastructure and integrate the respective functions into their planning and strategy • Challenges of balancing green and gray infrastructure
Session 3 (Plenary)	Tools to support urban ecological planning: mapping and assessment indicators on conditions	• Overview of mapping natural assets • Assessing conditions of the natural assets using a set of indicators • Establishing an inventory of natural assets • Establishing green connectivity • How cities can map and assess their green infrastructure and utilize them to inform and develop policies and projects to enhance biodiversity
Session 4 Breakout session	City Practice	• Presentation of city practice and challenges • Discussion and identification of actionable items
Session 5 (Plenary)	Group Reflections and Discussions	• Reflections on the lessons learned • Discussion of cities' proposed activities to be incorporated into their projects

Simultaneous translation may be provided, based on the demands.

Annex 1. Proposed deep-dive learning topics

Session	Contents
Greening Cities	• What is urban ecology/ecological system? • How can we incorporate urban ecology into the planning to support greening of cities? • What is "green urban infrastructure"? How to plan and build a network of "green unban infrastructure' to deliver health and climate benefits and enhance urban resilience? • What are the tools that can support urban ecological planning? • How can we balance the competing demands between green urban infrastructure that promotes urban nature and gray infrastructure that provides urban services and accommodates the needs of the growing urban population?
Urban Biodiversity	• What is urban biodiversity? • How to manage urban biodiversity • Urban biodiversity and Post-2020 Biodiversity framework • Urban forests
Natural Capital Accounting and Pricing Natural Assets	• Measuring "natural wealth" of cities • How to put a price on urban natural asset
Green Urban Infrastructure – Nature-based Solutions	• How to identify and leverage nature-based solutions/hybrid solutions and ecosystem services
Urban Cooling – Nature-based Solutions, Urban Planning and Design	• How to mitigate urban heat impacts using different tools and interventions
Carbon Neutrality, Biodiversity, and Urban Ecology	• Strategies and tools towards making the low carbon transition and achieving carbon neutrality
Citizen Engagement	• How to empower citizens for climate action, beyond participation
Finance	• How to identify suitable financial mechanisms for investing in nature • How to build an enabling environment to induce private sector investment
Setting Targets and Ambitions	• How to support the development and implementation of initiatives reinforcing ambitious agendas