



Conference: Evidence-based planning for greener cities

Conference in collaboration with the Maltese presidency of the EU

Institute of Applied Sciences, Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology, 13 June 2017

Background and objectives

Almost three out of four EU citizens live in urban areas and this number will further grow. All these people need an inclusive, healthy, resilient, safe and sustainable living environment. This challenge is well captured by the United Nation's sustainable development goals (SDG) that include under SDG 11 seven specific targets aiming to make cities and communities better places to live. One important target is to provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces by 2030. Understanding how urban green spaces provide essential services to citizens is important to make informed decisions on maintaining or investing in green infrastructure.

The EnRoute ('Enhancing Resilience of urban ecosystems through green infrastructure') project provides scientific evidence to help policy makers and planners with achieving this target. EnRoute is a project of the European Commission in the framework of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020. It builds on the many positive experiences of the MAES urban pilot study¹. It aims to promote the application of urban green infrastructure at local level and will deliver guidance on the creation, management and governance of urban green infrastructure. Importantly, it will illustrate how collaboration between and across different policy levels can lead to concrete green infrastructure policy setting.

EnRoute organises a conference with the following objectives:

- Evaluate how science can provide the tools to inform policy making and urban planning so that quality of life improves for every citizen;
- Discuss how the Mapping and Assessment of Ecosystem and their Services (MAES) evidence base can help for policy-setting with respect to urban planning;
- Networking for scientists, planners and policy makers working on urban green infrastructure topics.

¹ <http://biodiversity.europa.eu/maes>

Conference organisers

- European Commission - Joint Research Centre (Joachim Maes, Grazia Zulian)
- Institute of Applied Sciences, Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology² (Mario Balzan)

Data and Venue

- The conference will take place in Paola (Malta) the premises of the Institute of Applied Sciences, Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST), on 13 June 2017.

Registration: <https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/ConferenceEvidenceForGreenerCities>

Participants

- Policy makers from Malta and the European Commission
- Stakeholders and researchers from 19 cities across Europe which are partners of the EnRoute project (Dublin, Glasgow, Manchester, Utrecht, The Hague, Antwerp, Helsinki, Tallinn, Oslo, Leipzig, Karlovo, Limmasol, Valletta, Rome, Verona, Padova, Trento, Poznan and Lisbon).
- Local stakeholders from the Maltese environment and planning authorities
- European stakeholders (planning, research, member states)

For questions contact: joachim.maes@ec.europa.eu

² <http://www.mcast.edu.mt/>

Conference agenda

09.00: Welcome and registration

09.30: Opening by the chair of the meeting (Joint Research Centre)

09.35 - 10.30: Policy session on the role, challenges and opportunities of urban green infrastructure to improve the quality of life for European citizens:

- Keynote speech by EU Commissioner for Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Hon. Karmenu Vella (To be confirmed)
- Keynote speech by Minister for Sustainable Development, the Environment and Climate Change, Malta, Hon. José Herrera MP (To be confirmed)
- Keynote speech by Parliamentary Secretary for Planning and Simplification of Administrative Processes, Malta, Hon. Deborah Schembri MP (To be confirmed)
- Keynote speech by the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) President of the Board of Governors, Dr. Silvio De Bono (To be confirmed)

10.30 Coffee break

11.00 - 13.00: Plenary sessions with local and international examples of how to mainstream urban green infrastructure in urban planning. The session will focus on five key challenges:

- Assessing the link between green spaces and ecosystem benefits in Malta: participation of urban planners and decision makers (Maltese example based on the experience of the H2020 project ESMERALDA) (Mario Balzan, Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology)
- Public health: How does an equal access to urban green space increase the health of citizens (Francesco Amaddeo, University of Verona)
- Climate adaptation and urban micro climate: How can proper planning of urban green space and peri-urban forest increase resilience of cities against impacts of climate change (examples from the participating cities)
- Urban Green Infrastructure and inter-sectorial policy development
- Common discussion

13.00 - 14.00 Lunch

14.00 - 16.30: World café: Break-out sessions on the themes of the plenary sessions with a short coffee break in-between.

- Break outs will develop further the issues raised in the morning sessions: How to mainstream UGI into the policy and planning process.

16.30 - 17.00: Final plenary: A vision for planning of urban green Infrastructure

Guided tour of Valletta