Item 6(g)
Urban forestry matters

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UNECE Trees in Cities Challenge (TICC)

As of today: nearly 60 cities worldwide have pledged to plant over 12 million trees

A TICC pledge can help to:
- Mobilize finance & other support
- Build community support & engagement
- Engage & exchange with other cities

With cities on the front line of the SDGs & Climate Action
Sustainable Urban and Peri Urban Forestry...
...is a cost-effective, nature-based solution to localize the SDGs and Climate Action

- Reduce infrastructure cost with green solutions
- Mitigate urban heat island effect
- Reduce energy consumption & expenditure
- Increase residential & commercial property values
- Reduce flood & landslide risks
- Improve physical and mental health
- Grow food in urban areas
- Create green jobs

Learn more and pledge today: [https://treesincities.unece.org/](https://treesincities.unece.org/)
Urban and Peri-Urban Forestry Events since the last COFFI session

1. **Meeting of the Informal Network of Experts** on Sustainable Urban Forestry (8 December 2021);

2. Organization of a **workshop** on “Scaling up Urban Greening and forests in Cities” (18-19 Mar 2022);

3. Informal meeting on benchmarking collaboration (**Informal Network of Experts on Sustainable Urban Forestry**) (28 March 2022);

4. “Urban Forests for Future-Proof Cities” roundtable during the Regional Forum for Sustainable Development (RFSD) 2022 and **Meeting of the Informal Network of Experts on Sustainable Urban Forestry** (7 April 2022);

5. “Opportunities for Advancing Urban Forestry in the UNECE Region: Policy Roundtable” and Fourth Meeting of the **Informal Network of Experts on Sustainable Urban Forestry** (16 September 2022);

Urban and Peri-Urban Forestry Activities

- Informal Network of Experts on Sustainable Urban Forestry
- Regional Urban Forestry Opportunities Plan
- Paper on Urban Forestry Finance
- Production of 1 Podcast on Urban Forests
- Production of 1 Video on Urban Forests
Sustainable urban forestry is an integrative and cost-effective nature-based solution.

Policy actions must be aligned across sectors and levels of government.

National governments well positioned to support city level action.

Integrated long-term planning, design, management and finance is critical to unlock and maximise co-benefits.

Green spaces are not a cost but a good investment.

Urban forests should be accessible to all.

Engagement

334 Participants Online
~15 Attendees in-person
Advancing Urban and Peri-Urban Forestry – policy brief now translated into E,F,R

Sustainable Urban and Peri-Urban Forestry: Policy Brief

Enhancing the Impact of Sustainable Urban and Peri-Urban Forestry

Aspects to Address:

Urban and peri-urban forests to the doorsteps of all urban residents

The many benefits of sustainable urban and peri-urban forestry (SPUF) need to be delivered to all urban residents, irrespective of age, gender, income, education, and cultural backgrounds. Environments should be one of the fair and equal distribution of the benefits should be part of any SPUF programmes, as called for in SDG 11.1. Research has clearly demonstrated that people benefit optimally when they have easy and immediate access to SPUF, such as seeing trees from their windows, having a decent canopy cover in their neighborhoods, and being no more than a five-minute walk to the nearest public green space.

More diverse and resilient urban and peri-urban forests

Urban and peri-urban forests (SPUFs) that are diverse in species composition have been found to be more resilient to the effects of climate change and to outlive other species and plants. Diverse forests are known to provide a wide range of values and peri-urban forestry components, from sport cities to forests to green schools and other community gardens, and then building city parks to serve citizens. Each of these can provide for many different uses, experiences, and benefits.

Planting is good, sustainable management is better and requires long-term planning

Avoid risks for climate action, tree planting is receiving a lot of attention from the public and politicians, including urban forestry that contributes to cities’ sustainability. This trend, as opening tree canopy can help address climate change and support efforts to stay well above the planetary boundaries while promoting sustainable development. However, urban and peri-urban tree planting should be linked with long-term, adaptive SPUF management and is only likely to make sense if tree survival rates are improved drastically. Sufficient resources including funding and expertise should be reserved for this. The benefits of urban trees will increase as they are nurtured fully reality.

Predictable, long-term finance and resources are a critical need

Sustainable management of urban and peri-urban forests depends on long-term planning. Without predictable long-term finance and resources, it is more difficult for city authorities to plan, commit to, and efficiently implement SPUF management plans over longer planning horizons. SPUF plans that are not based on realistic budgets may fail to meet the objectives of sufficient funds are not ultimately available. Unpredictable budgets can also lead to inefficiencies if available funds are uncertain. Too much money may go to other interventions, and not enough to urban forests from other sources, including increased urban forestry allocations in national budgets.

Opportunities for Action

Implement global and national policies and goals locally through SPUF

The importance and contributions of urban and peri-urban forests are clearly reflected in the global goals. These include the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals and, in particular, SDG 11 on making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, sustainable, and environmentally friendly. SPUF provides an important framework for improving the urban and peri-urban forest through local action, and there is scope to significantly improved SPUF strategy in advance progress.

Coordinate SPUF with other sectors and policies

SPUF contributes to a wide range of other sectors and policies, important synergies can be achieved between policies and programs. This includes, agriculture, urban planning, public health, public education, climate action, land use, forestry at large including in rural areas, agricultural policies, and economic development. Often, different synergies are missed because of the lack of policy coordination and alignment. Strong baseline data and monitoring them, clear goals and targets, effective coordination mechanisms, and strong political support are among the elements that can strengthen coordination and deployment.

Involving national and regional authorities and policy makers in the strengthening of SPUF governance and collaboration

In many countries, the responsibility for SPUF has been left to local governments, but there is a need for broadening the governance framework. This includes regional and national authorities as well as local authorities or responsibilities. Collaboration between actors with different authorities, policies, and programs, and funding streams for SPUF, governments can foster a culture of cross-level collaboration. Innovative ways should be identified for promoting SPUF in collaboration with local stakeholders, for example, by exploring opportunities for new governance.

Develop and diversify funding for SPUF

SPUF is a nature-based solution that offers essential goods and services to local communities. However, it needs predictable and reliable funding to allow for long-term planning and implementation. Although existing funding streams for urban and peri-urban forestry are limited, they are often inefficiently allocated. SPUF may contribute to prioritizing new existing and new public and private sector funding streams to ensure the long-term viability of SPUF and improve the business case for SPUF. This can also work together and enhancing access to those funding streams. Structural planning, goal monitoring, and reliable public financing can also help to catalyze other sources of funding. Successful examples of innovative funding can also be shared and replicated among cities, sub-national, and national authorities.
Urban and peri-urban forests are a nature-based solution. They form part of the critical infrastructure of sustainable cities.

To maximize ecosystem services over time, they should:

a) Be resilient, sustainable, and multifunctional;

b) Be properly planned, designed, established and managed over time as part of an interconnected socio-ecological network;

c) Equitably provide benefits to all segments of urban populations.
Sustainable Urban & Peri-Urban Forestry Approaches

A strategic & structural approach to the sustainable management of urban and peri-urban forests is required.

It is critical to plant the right tree in the right place, for the right reasons.

Greater awareness about the roles & benefits - and greater capacity to act - will enhance outcomes.

Coordination & collaboration across sectors, boundaries & levels of governance are the roots of sustainable urban and peri-urban forestry.
Draft Regional Urban Forestry Opportunity Plan 2022
Regional Urban Forestry Opportunity Plan: Goals

a) Raise awareness of the benefits and the need for sustainable resource management.

b) Strengthen governance, policies, regulatory frameworks, & financing at national, subnational, & local levels.

c) Provide guidance for, and enhance the development and implementation of, masterplans, management plans and good practices.

d) Strengthen technical and human capacities for the programme implementation.

e) Build inclusive partnerships & participatory approaches for developing and delivering programmes & initiatives

Most actions are applicable at multiple levels:

- 56% - UNECE regional level
- 91% - National level
- 74% - Local level
Planned activities 2023

a) Promote sustainable urban forestry through outreach to engage countries and cities to make a pledge to the **Trees in Cities Challenge** to expand urban forest cover and strengthen management and policy;

b) Organization of meeting(s) and activities of the **Informal Network of Experts on Sustainable Urban Forestry**;

c) **Project work** integrating urban forests and greening

d) International Day of Forests – possible event on trees in urban environments
Thank you!