

6th ESP Europe Conference

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SESSION DESCRIPTION

ID: T20c

Co-creating with people and nature: inclusive NBS to promote justice and equity for building sustainable, resilient, and liveable cities

Hosts:

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Abstract:

Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) are increasingly promoted as strategic and practical approaches to address societal challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and human well-being. NBS directly enhance ecosystem services, including provisioning, regulating, and cultural services, while contributing to biodiversity conservation and climate adaptation. However, ensuring that NBS are inclusive, equitable, and empowering for communities remains a critical challenge. Inclusive NBS are essential for enabling just sustainability transitions, which achieve long-term ecological restoration while promoting social equity and participatory governance.

Recent research highlights key principles and practical frameworks for inclusive NBS: engaging all relevant stakeholders, ensuring equitable benefit distribution, and fostering empowerment through multi-level participatory and collaborative governance. These frameworks are structured around capacity building, stakeholder involvement, inclusive NBS design, and fair benefit distribution. By linking NBS implementation to ecosystem services and social justice, these approaches provide practical guidance for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to ensure meaningful, locally-relevant, and socially equitable outcomes. However, gaps remain in understanding how these frameworks perform in real-world contexts, how they can be operationalized across different governance and cultural settings, and how trade-offs between ecological, social, and economic objectives are negotiated. Evidence on best practices for co-creating inclusive NBS that simultaneously enhance ecosystem services, social equity, and resilience is still fragmented, and guidance for practitioners to implement them effectively is limited.

Considering these gaps, the session will explore:

- Frameworks and approaches for realizing inclusive NBS that enhance ecosystem services and drive transformative sustainability transitions.
- Case studies demonstrating practical integration of ecosystem service (co-)benefits, social equity, and community empowerment.
- Governance mechanisms, stakeholder engagement strategies, and participatory tools that enable fair distribution of ecosystem service benefits.

- Methods for co-producing knowledge with diverse stakeholders to guide inclusive, ecosystem-service-informed NBS interventions.
- Opportunities and challenges in designing NBS that deliver both ecological outcomes and social co-benefits, aligned with nature- and people-positive objectives.

We invite scientists, practitioners, policymakers, and civil society representatives to share experiences, frameworks, conceptual and practical approaches, and social innovations. The session provides a collaborative space to explore inclusive NBS and identify actionable pathways for integrating social justice, ecosystem services, and transformative sustainability in Europe and beyond.

Goals and objectives of the session:

The session aims to:

- Examine how NBS can be designed to enhance ecosystem services while promoting inclusivity, equity, and empowerment.
- Showcase frameworks, strategies, and examples that integrate ecological and social co-benefits.
- Discuss inclusive governance, participation, and stakeholder engagement mechanisms that support just sustainability transitions.
- Provide actionable guidance, tools, and checklists for implementing inclusive, ecosystem-service-informed NBS.
- Facilitate knowledge exchange and dialogue on transformative NBS interventions that deliver ecological, social, and cultural benefits.

Planned output / Deliverables:

- Co-production of a discussion paper summarizing insights, recommendations, and lessons learned from the session.
- Practitioner-oriented guidance and recommendations for implementing inclusive NBS across multiple ecological and social contexts.

Session format:

We plan to open the session with an introductory note from the session chairs (10 min), followed by 1–2 time slots of 1,5–2 h each (depending on the number of contributors, with presentations of 10 min each), and conclude with a discussion (20 min). Thank you!

Voluntary contributions accepted:

Yes, I allow any abstract to be submitted to my session for review

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