

4th ESP LAC 2023

International conference

La Serena, Chile, 6–10 November

Session Description

ID: T14

Integrating Nature-based solutions in spatial planning for tackling climate change and biodiversity loss in Latin American urban and peri-urban contexts

Format: Hybrid

Hosts

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Abstract

Nature-based solutions (NbS) have been defined by the IUCN as actions to protect, manage and restore natural or modified ecosystems to address societal challenges effectively and adaptively while benefitting people and nature. These solutions are increasingly mainstreamed in policies, plans and strategies at multiple levels in urban areas. They represent a cost-effective way to tackle climate change while also addressing biodiversity loss as two critical challenges for societies. To exemplify, and according to the latest Synthesis Report by the IPCC (2023), the current climate crisis generates devastating impacts that affect the poorest and most vulnerable populations globally and produce massive species extinction and irreversible biodiversity loss on ecosystems on which human societies depend.

Latin American urban and peri-urban contexts are projected regions where the effects and impacts of climate change will be more intense, mainly due to the conditions of poverty and inequality that exacerbate the expected impacts. Moreover, the region is one of the richest in biological diversity. Still, the effects of climate change threaten to increase the pressure on natural resources, directly affecting biodiversity and their potential to provide a range of ecosystem services, such as regulation of Greenhouse gas emissions and protection against extreme weather events. Moreover, these effects indirectly erode economic progress and further increase social vulnerabilities.

Spatial planning is a key decision-making process that defines a territory's development and the spatial allocation of land uses and natural resources. Integrating NbS into spatial planning and its instruments and tools at multiple scales is fundamental to ensuring the systematic implementation of NbS in urban and peri-urban areas. To support the mainstreaming and institutionalising of NbS into spatial planning, transformations at multiple levels are needed through restructuring, path-shifting, innovative and multiscale changes. Restructuring changes concern a reorganisation of planning procedures, instruments and regulations. Path-shifting changes involve adopting a pluralistic (i.e., use of different sources of knowledge), adaptive (i.e., enable learning), and proactive approach (e.g., through the implementation of

the mitigation hierarchy) to integrate intrinsic, instrumental and relational values attached to nature, and ultimately better inform planning decisions. Innovative changes aim to incorporate new knowledge, policies and technologies, such as those derived from grassroots initiatives, to ensure, for instance, that offsetting actions lead to Not Net Loss goals. Multiscale changes seek to empower minorities and involve multiple actors and sectors while strengthening coordination across spatial planning scales, such as mitigation hierarchy requirements and goals and accounting for climate adaptation needs at different temporal scales.

There is a current information gap on how NbS and/or related strategies and practices are or could be integrated into spatial planning processes and instruments to address the aforementioned concerns in Latin American contexts. Specifically, there is a poor understanding of the precise changes required to facilitate the integration of NbS in spatial planning in these contexts.

Goals & Objectives

The session is structured in two parts that will take a full day (based on the number of abstracts received):

The first is a hybrid and standard session with presentation slots. The aim is to explore how NbS are or could be mainstreamed and institutionalised in spatial planning for tackling climate change adaptation and biodiversity loss in Latin American urban and peri-urban contexts. To this purpose, we welcome abstracts that describe both theoretical/methodological contributions and empirical applications on the topic, including novel frameworks and methods that can be applied or adapted to Latin American contexts, as well as case study applications. As such, this session invites submissions from a wide range of actors, including planning practitioners, researchers and members or representatives of societal organisations.

In the second part, an interactive discussion forum will be organised around a set of questions dedicated to the presenters and the audience. Here, the aim is to collectively analyse how the four perspectives of spatial planning change (i.e., restructuring, path-shifting, innovation and multiscale) emerge from each contribution of the session, what specificities characterise Latin American contexts and experiences, and what challenges for implementing NbS in real-life spatial planning instruments still exist.

Planned output

The outputs and insights of the interactive discussion forum will be the basis for a co-authored comparative/perspective paper reflecting on the changes undergoing or needed in spatial planning to integrate NbS for tackling climate change and biodiversity loss in Latin American urban contexts. Drafting a policy brief will also be considered based on the discussions. Detailed contents and possible dissemination methods will be agreed upon during the session's second part.

Session format

We propose one session divided into two formats: abstract presentations and discussion forums. Based on the number of abstracts received, we foresee that the session could last the full day.

Acceptance of voluntary contributions

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

Relation to ESP Working Groups or National Networks

Thematic Working Groups: [TWG 14 – Application of ES in Planning & Management](#)