

URBES – Urban biodiversity and ecosystem services

URBES addresses significant scientific knowledge gaps on the role of urban biodiversity and ecosystem services for human well-being. This is of importance for building the ability of European cities to adapt to climate change and reduce their ecological footprints. URBES focuses particularly on functional diversity, urban ecosystem services, institutions, economics, and resilience science. It strives to translate cross-disciplinary research insights into principles, land use scenarios, landscape designs and applications. In addition, URBES pioneers the development of the TEEB approach in an urban context. This project is innovative in integrating monetary and non-monetary valuation techniques. It also studies the implications that these results might have on governance, and develops guidelines for implementation in urban landscapes.

URBES is developing a tool box that intends to promote sustainable management of urban biodiversity and generation of ecosystem services. In doing this, it involves and communicates the results of biodiversity research to important stakeholders. Several cities are used as sites for the empirical studies: Berlin, Stockholm, Rotterdam, Salzburg, and to some extent, Helsinki and New York City. URBES consists of nine research institutes in Europe well placed to take on the challenging cross-disciplinary tasks of the project. Two other institutes (University of Helsinki and The New School in New York City) are also participating in this project.

To achieve the ambitious goals of URBES, the scientific objectives of the project address the most pressing research questions in the field, in a cross-disciplinary way. They are:

- Relationships between urban biodiversity, ecosystem services and land use;
- Valuation of biodiversity and ecosystem services, including monetary and non-monetary evaluation approaches of separate ecosystem services, where indicator sets are developed and integrated in a multi-criteria analysis;
- Governance and management of urban biodiversity and ecosystem services;
- Communication and training.

URBES is developing a professional communication and training program together with ICLEI and IUCN. It will actively liaise between important policy mechanisms and contribute to global partnerships with e.g. CBD, TEEB, IPBES, as well as with the EU on the post-2010 EU Biodiversity Strategy, and on the Thematic Strategy on the Urban Environment. It will also provide inputs into national strategies regarding biodiversity and environmental issues.



Partners:

Stockholm Resilience Centre, SWEDEN,
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SWEDEN
Erasmus University Rotterdam,
THE NETHERLANDS
Humboldt-University, GERMANY
Kiel Institute for the World Economy,
Mistra Urban Futures, SWEDEN
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University of Kiel, GERMANY
University of Salzburg, AUSTRIA
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