

Session 1A - Methodologies and tools for multi species co-existence and collaboration

09:30 - 11:00 Friday, 17th June, 2022

Room Room 1

Scientific Day - Theme 1. Co-creating NBS for Sustainable Cities

Presentation type Oral

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The Urban Environment has developed over the centuries into a complex machine to host human beings and their activities, actively excluding external factors that disturb anthropogenic activities. Part of this process consists of excluding “nature” (with the exception of a few selected species) from cities. Today a new consciousness of the effects of anthropogenic activities on our planet and the regulating properties of nature is causing us to reconsider the introduction of nature in cities. A discussion has begun in recent years on the process of rethinking cities as environments which can encourage multispecies co-existence and collaboration. Studies performed in different fields such as biology, ecology, urbanism and design agree that emphasizing the agency of life-forms and their ability to set goals may foster local and global sustainability. The example of natural ecological systems reveals that mutualistic attitudes between living beings help to shape their ecosystems, making them stronger, longer-lived and more resilient. Which methodologies and tools can we use to foster mutualistic multispecies attitudes in cities that are designed to exclude nature? The integration of nature in cities requires thinking beyond inherited categories and capacities as today co-existence and collaboration are mainly conceived and planned for a single space environment. The development of cities designed for multispecies habitation requires imagining environments able to attract and host different living organisms, which can foster dynamic processes of exchange. This session aims to widen the debate on Nature Based Solutions, a debate which usually focuses on plants and the ecosystem services that they provide from a human centred perspective, instead embracing a broader vision that takes all living beings equally into consideration (human, flora, fauna, microbiota), their encounters, contamination, collaboration and evolution-enhancing resilience. We welcome papers, projects and case studies by academics and practitioners, from different fields (architecture, ecology, botany, social sciences, etc.) focussing on the following questions: Which innovative methodologies and tools can most help us integrate living systems in urban environments? How can we foster mutualistic attitudes, enhancing urban resilience? Can we build the cities of the future through unexpected collaborations and combinations?