



## **Save-the-Date**

### **Evidence based policy making for sustainable cities The EU Urban Agenda, Nature Based Solutions and Green Infrastructure**

**31 May 2016  
Utrecht, The Netherlands**

This workshop aims for strengthening synergies between the EU Urban Agenda, the EU research agenda on Nature Based Solutions and the potential of Urban Green Infrastructure. We will show and discuss the potential of using spatially explicit data for evidence based local policymaking. Thus enhancing the awareness for and acceptance of nature based solutions and green infrastructure in the local policy arena.

The Netherlands and the European Commission/JRC have recently carried out a study amongst some EU member States on the policies, data and indicators that are currently used at a local level regarding Green Infrastructure. We also inventoried the needs that local communities/cities express with regards to urban green infrastructure. On May 31 we will present the results of our study, whose main objective is to draw lessons on how to map urban green infrastructure and ecosystem services, with a view to ease their inclusion in policy setting. We want to discuss with you how to build further on these results. We want to bring cities and other relevant stakeholders (policy-makers, urban planners, landscape architects, etc.) throughout Europe together to exchange knowledge and experience. In order to feed the results of our findings in the networks of cities, national governments and science.

We kindly invite you for the workshop "Evidence based policy making for sustainable cities", hosted by the city of Utrecht and the government of The Netherlands, in close cooperation with the European Commission, in the light of the Dutch EU presidency in 2016. In the course of April you will receive further information on the program and registration.

### **Context of the conference**

Through the EU Urban Agenda national governments, cities, European institutions and other stakeholders will be working together for a sustainable, innovative and economically powerful Europe that offers a good quality of life ([Urban Agenda](#)) One of the promising developments in this perspective is nature-based solutions. These are understood as living solutions that are inspired or supported by nature, which are cost-effective, simultaneously provide environmental, social and economic benefits and help build resilience, in particular in cities ([H2020 Nature Based Solutions](#)).

Urban green infrastructure is one of the carriers of nature-based solutions. To increase the awareness and acceptance of nature-based solutions it is essential to increase the evidence base of their effectiveness. The European working group on mapping and assessing of ecosystems and their services ([MAES](#)) works on the development of this evidence base. In the context of the MAES working group a pilot has been executed with regards to the use of spatially explicit data on urban green infrastructure. The pilot has resulted in a framework for the use of these data in local policy making. This may be with regards to climate resilience, social cohesion, health or other relevant issues. The work program 2016-2017 of Horizon 2020 includes calls for more than 130 mio. EUR on nature-based solutions (in SC 5) and re-naturing cities (in SCC-2). Also in this context the use of spatially explicit data may be very relevant.

Together with the European working group on Green Infrastructure we want to exchange experiences, learn and increase the evidence base between cities throughout Europe.

### **Program outline**

The program is aimed at representatives from local and regional policymakers, scientists, the private sector and civil society, as well as policymakers from national Member States and the EU Commission.

The workshop will be a mixture of plenary sessions and breakout sessions. It will overview the Urban Agenda, Nature Based solutions and Urban Green Infrastructure and how they may interact. It will go deeper into the findings of the MAES urban pilot which points out data and indicators that can be used to develop GI policy in cities. The pilot aims at providing guidance and examples on how to translate concepts for the enhanced delivery of multiple ecosystem services into concrete action. It will show the potential of using spatially explicit data for policymaking. We will share and discuss experiences and lessons learned, and discuss the needs for further developments. There will be opportunity to present showcases.

From the discussions, key messages will be derived that can form a basis for dialogue with policymakers on needs regarding local, national and European policy as well as on scientific knowledge and skills. The discussions may lead to a better understanding of the importance of spatially explicit data-use for local policymaking and the need to further cooperate on this.

It is the aim to involve local authorities, national authorities, science, business, and civil society from different backgrounds, sectors and Member States, as well as policymakers from Member States and the European Commission.

We will inform you further on the program and the way to subscribe in the course of April. Meanwhile, if you're interested, **please save the date of may 31.**