

Side event to the United Nations Fourth Forum of Mayors' meeting

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# SOLUTIONS FOR A TRIPLE PLANETARY CRISIS IN CITIES

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Organized by  
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)  
Global Cities Hub  
and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)



FORUM OF  
MAYORS  
2024

## PROGRAMME

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*Hybrid Event*

Tuesday, 1 October 2024

8:00 - 9:45 CET

Room H 200, Building H, Palais Des Nations

Join online via [Teams Meeting](#)



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## Background

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After 200 years of unprecedented urbanization, cities today are on the frontline of the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and the pollution. Every day our cities add around 200,000 more people and by 2050 more than two-thirds of the global population will live in urban areas. Thus, cities must be a core part of the solution as we address this crisis.

Cities and regions are essential social and economic hubs that can be sources of and affected by pollution, both within and outside their borders. As such, they can play a key role in driving efforts reduce pollution, and make their voices be heard for example through [Local and Subnational Governments Coalition to End Plastic Pollution](#), participating in the negotiation of the new treaty on plastic pollution.

Cities and regions are also very exposed to the effects of climate change, biodiversity loss and desertification, facing mounting challenges, including deadly heatwaves, extended droughts, more intense floods and loss of nature and biodiversity to pests and disease, development and the changing climate.

Nature-based solutions have potential to help to enhance resilience to these and other impacts, while also delivering additional benefits, such as improved physical and mental health, green job creation, and reduced pollution and enhancing access to ecosystem services such as water, food and clean air.

Planning a sustainable city that addresses the triple planetary crisis means planning a city with nature – green spaces and tree planting in urban areas and around them. The UNECE [Trees in Cities Challenge](#) invites mayors to make tree planting and sustainable urban forestry pledges to demonstrate their commitment and leadership in such efforts.

Rethinking cities and regions in this way also requires the strengthening of linkages between the national and local governance levels to better design and translate policies and commitments into the real world. The [Trees in Dry Cities Coalition](#) invites local and national governments, together with stakeholders from all sectors to advance these efforts at the local, national and international levels.

Rethinking our relationship to nature poses questions on how to regenerate already densely built cities with forests, nature and biodiversity, including the potential to use these nature-based solutions to reduce and remediate pollution. It also poses questions on how cities can help to deliver global goals on ending plastic and other forms of pollution.

In this context, this side event will explore how cities can contribute to local, national and global efforts to tackle the triple crisis of pollution, biodiversity loss and climate change.

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# Agenda

8:00 - 8:30 **Breakfast offered by IUCN**

8:30 - 8:35 **Opening**

Ms. **Paola Deda**, Director, Forests, Land and Housing Division

8:35 - 8:50 **Keynote speech: Enhancing Resilience and healthy cities through nature-based solutions**

Mr. **Stewart Maginnis**, Deputy Director General, IUCN

The presentation will focus on uncovering potential for Nature based Solution to make cities more resilient and healthier within a rapidly urbanizing world.

### Discussants:

8:50 - 9:00 **Presentation of the Local and Subnational Governments Coalition to End Plastic Pollution**

Mr. **Magash Naidoo**, Head, Circular Development, ICLEI

This presentation will focus on potential input to the upcoming Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution (INC-5) meeting, particularly as relevant to local government on the topics of implementation mechanisms, capacity building, and funding and resources.

9:00-9:10 **Localizing the Rio processes: urban forests as an integrated solution**

Ms. **Stefania Romano**, Coordinator, Transformative urban nature action, UNECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section, UNECE

This presentation will highlight the potential of urban forests as a nature-based solution to deliver climate action, biodiversity and sustainable development, and will present tools and opportunities to support local governments to implement this NBS to deliver on global goals for climate, biodiversity and the SDGs.



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## Agenda

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### **Engaging sub-national governments in developing NDCs**

Ms. **Gulnara Roll**, Head, Cities Unit, UNEP Climate Change Division; and Head of the secretariat of the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction

9:10 - 9:25

This presentation will highlight how UNEP and its partners are helping cities, regions, and countries address the triple planetary crisis—climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution—through climate mitigation and adaptation strategies. It will also show how these actions support the development of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), emphasizing the crucial role of cities and local stakeholders in driving global climate solutions.

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### **Moderated Discussion**

9:25 - 9:45

Moderator: Ms. **Kamelia Kemileva**, Co-Directrice, Global Cities Hub

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9:45

### **End of meeting**

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