



# TAKING ACTION FOR URBAN NATURE

Effective  
Governance  
Solutions



Led by Durham University, NATURVATION involves 14 institutions across Europe working in fields as diverse as urban development, innovation studies, geography, ecology, environmental assessment and economics. Our partnership includes city governments, non-governmental organisations and business. We will assess what nature-based solutions can achieve in cities, examine how innovation is taking place, and work with communities and stakeholders to develop the knowledge and tools required to realise the potential of nature-based solutions for meeting urban sustainability goals.

Author: Harriet Bulkeley, Durham University

Acknowledgements: Janice Astbury (DU), Francesc Barò (UAB), Hade Dorst (UU), Kathrin Hörschelmann (IFL), Stela Ivanova (IFL), Attila Katona (CEU), Ella Kim (UAB), Bernadett Kiss (LU), Panagiota Kotsila (UAB), Yuliana Lazova (IFL), Andrés Luque-Ayala (DU), Chris Martin (DU), Kes McCormick (LU), Laura Tozer (DU), Alexander van der Jagt (UU), Christine Wamsler (LU) and Anja Werner (IFL).

Citation: Bulkeley, H. (2019) Taking Action for Urban Nature: Effective Governance Solutions, NATURVATION Guide



This project has been funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 730243

# GROWING EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE SOLUTIONS

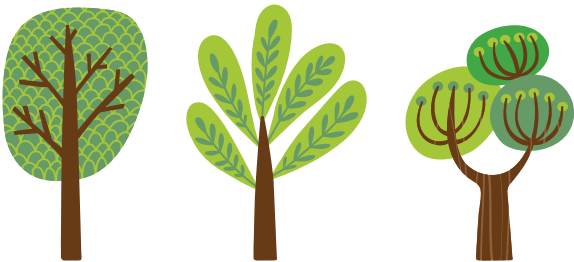
---

Taking Action for Urban Nature means growing effective governance solutions – approaches that can work to bring key actors and agendas together to enable nature-based solutions in cities.



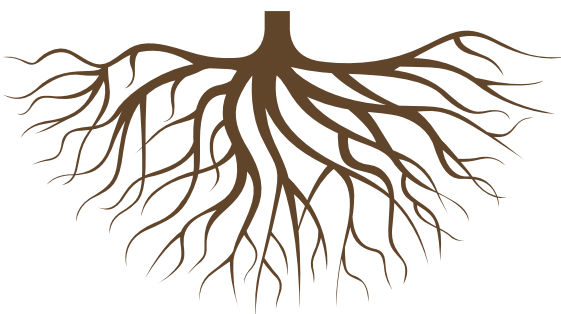
## 1. Bridge the Opportunity Gap

Bring the goals of actors working at multiple levels into alignment.



## 2. Try Different Governance Approaches

Governance comes in different shapes and sizes. Find the right approach for you.



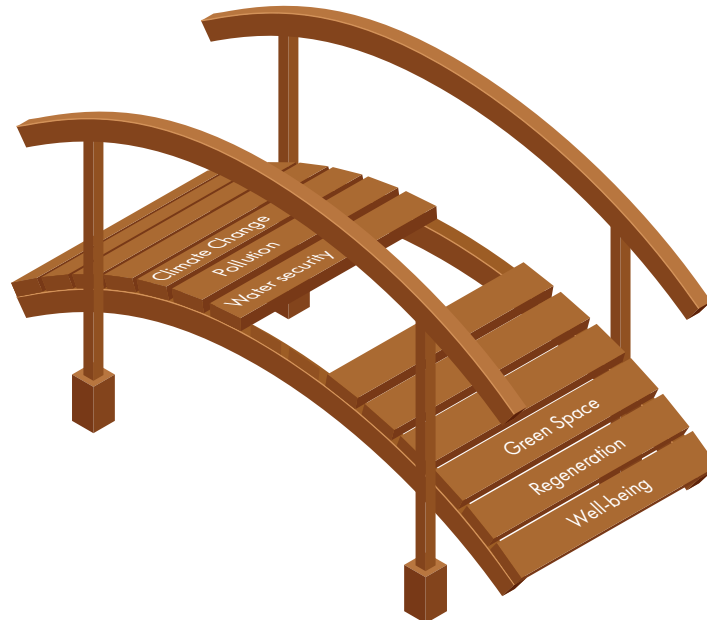
## 3. Develop Strong Roots

Extending the underlying principles and values of governance will make sure it can endure.

# AN EMERGING OPPORTUNITY GAP

---

Naturvation research shows that there is an *opportunity gap* emerging between top-down policies that promote nature-based solutions for biodiversity, climate and environmental goals and bottom-up initiatives that stress their values in providing green space, well-being and economic development.



## Filling the Gap: use four key governance tools that work



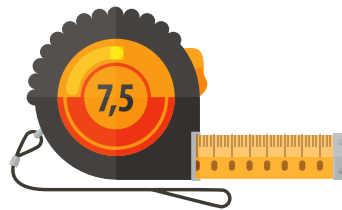
Identify champions who can speak for the value of nature in your city.



Identify those who can benefit from nature-based solutions and make their multiple benefits visible and valued.



Create and use windows of opportunity to bring nature-based solutions into the city.



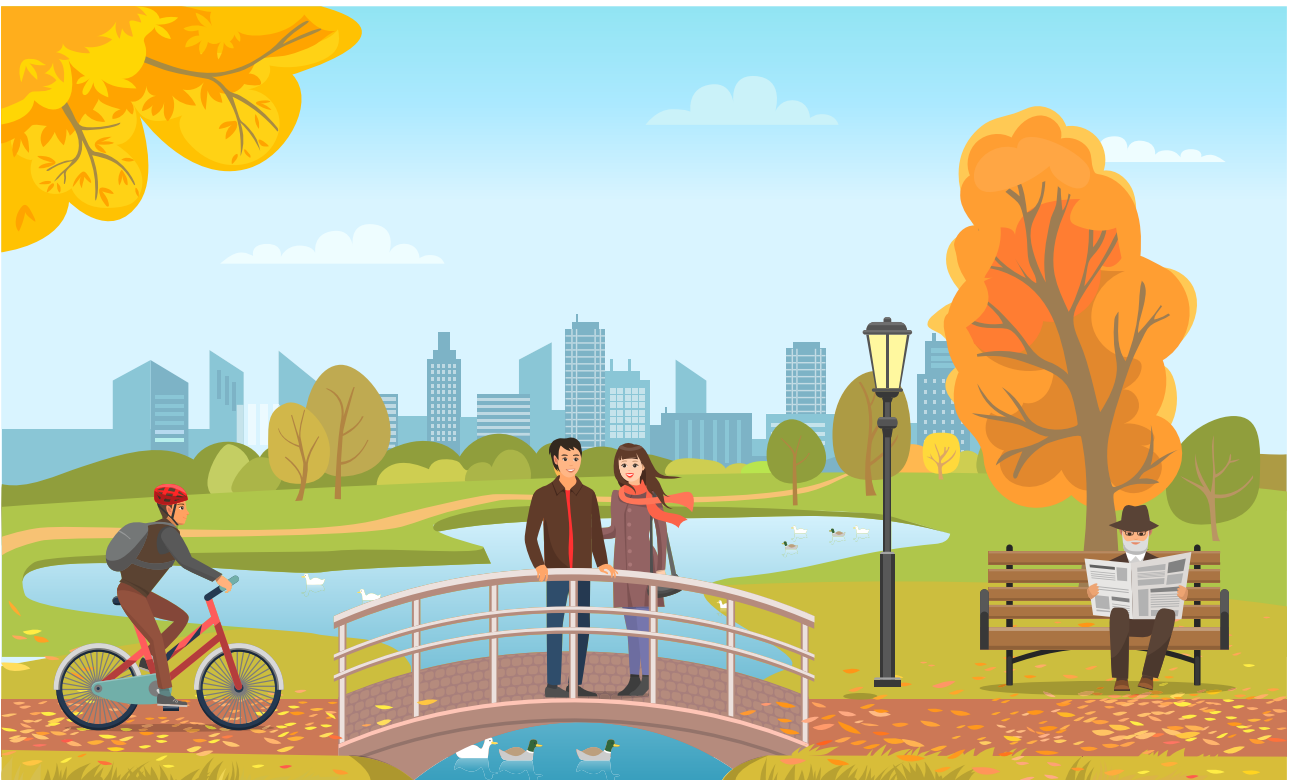
Work with change agents and bridge-building organisations to join up those who can benefit from nature-based solutions.

## REALISING THE OPPORTUNITY

---

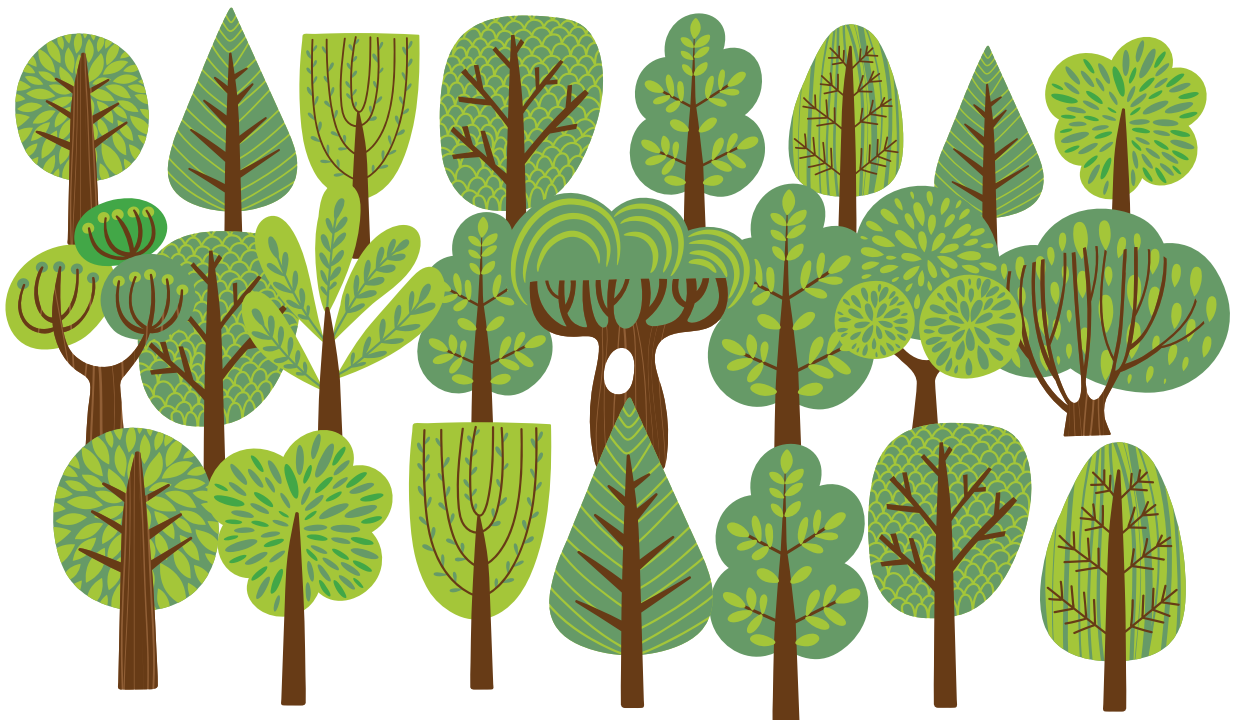
Using windows of opportunity, working with intermediary organisations and champions as well as making their benefits for a range of people and organisations visible and valued, are all proven to work in bridging the 'opportunity gap' that can occur between top-down priorities and bottom-up needs, and across different actors working in cities.

Aligning the policy goals of European and national governments with those of local authorities, community groups and businesses developing nature-based solutions on the ground will enable them to fulfil their potential to contribute towards multiple sustainable development goals.



## A DOZEN DESIGNS FOR NBS GOVERNANCE

---



- Our research shows that there is no one-size fits all approach to developing governance approaches that work for nature-based solutions.
- There is a strong emphasis on working together – partnership working, enabling and facilitating roles are important and effective forms of governance.
- There is also a key role for governments and their agencies, within cities and beyond, in establishing the right contexts for action and delivering nature-based solutions for their communities.
- We also need to recognise the vitally important roles that citizens, civil society groups and businesses play in implementing nature-based solutions.
- We have a wealth of proven approaches – pick the one that works for you.

# GOVERNANCE COMES IN MANY SHAPES AND SIZES

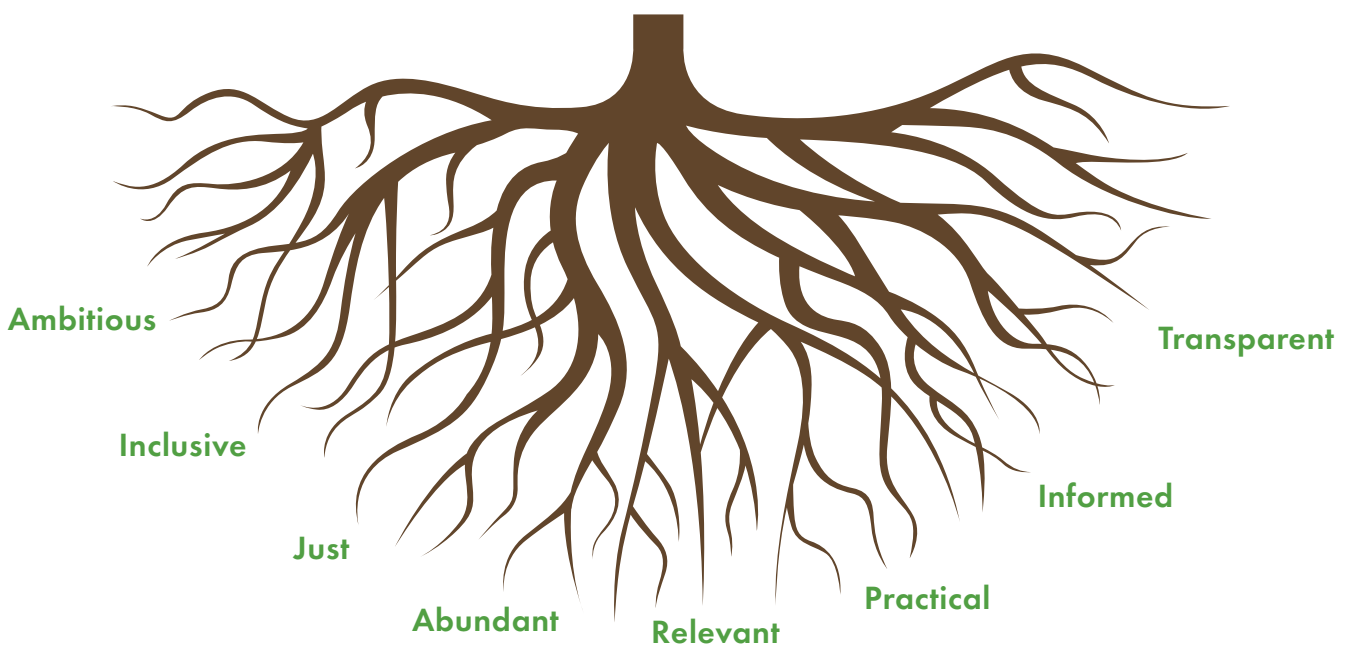
---



## ENSURING STRONG ROOTS

---

- Our research shows that growing effective governance for nature-based solutions depends on strong roots – core principles that underpin the development and implementation of initiatives.
- All of the projects we have analysed have some strong roots.
- However, very few projects have developed a strong root system, where multiple principles are used together to ensure that nature-based solutions can endure.
- Developing strong root systems can be challenging because these principles can conflict. Recognising these conflicts and purposefully addressing them will be vital for nature-based solutions to thrive.





# PLANTING THE SEEDS FOR GROWING GOOD GOVERNANCE

---



**For municipal governments**

Identify new opportunities for aligning your work with national and regional strategies; establish organisations that work across sectors; work across your city to find those who can champion and benefit from nature-based solutions; talk to community groups and private sector organisations to see how you can enable and empower their work or join together to form partnerships; evaluate your existing nature-based solutions and consider how to strengthen their roots.



**For national and regional governments**

Identify how nature-based solutions can be integrated into policy areas which matter for local communities, businesses and cities working with nature, such as health and economic development; consider how funding schemes can support the development of intermediaries and nurture change agents; support municipalities in scaling up their work; identify ways in which to enable and empower the work of businesses and civil society groups through providing knowledge and support; consider the adoption of key principles to strengthen the roots of nature-based initiatives in cities.



**For businesses and civil society organisations**

Make the co-benefits of your work with nature visible and valued by identifying the multiple beneficiaries who can gain from nature in cities; identify organisations that can act as intermediaries, building bridges between diverse opportunities and work with them to establish partnerships; recognise and celebrate your role as change agents in urban sustainability; try out different governance approaches to enable you to achieve your potential, for example working in partnership with diverse organisations; adopt principles for working with nature-based solutions that will ensure that they can endure.

# URBAN NATURE – A MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSE

Explore our Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) on nature-based solutions in cities!



Our course combines both technical knowledge and the social sciences to better understand nature-based solutions in a holistic perspective.

Nature-based solutions have the potential to provide multiple benefits across a range of sustainability challenges facing cities and urban areas.



Meet a team of researchers and practitioners from countries across Europe and the world who will provide insights, findings and practical experiences of nature-based solutions.

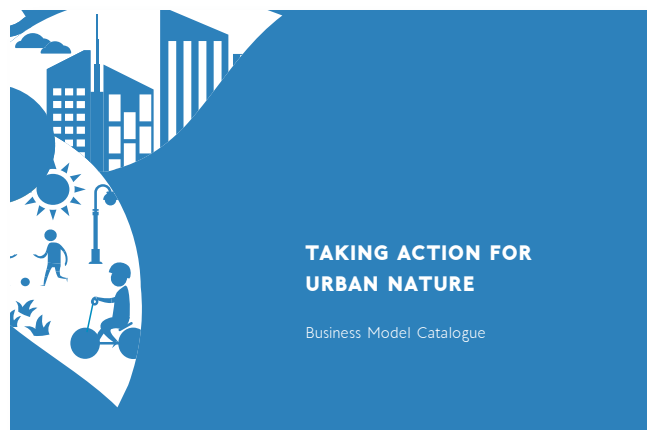
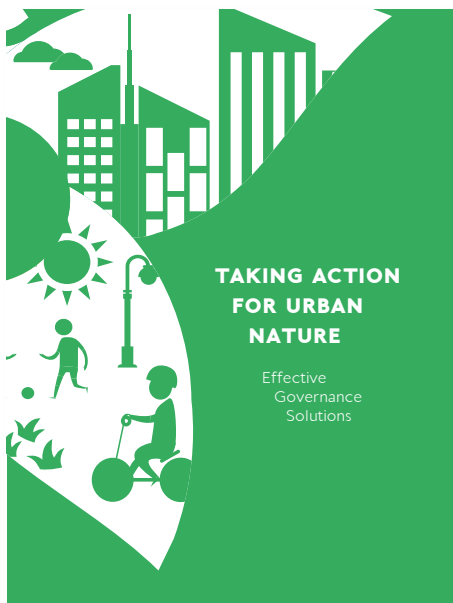
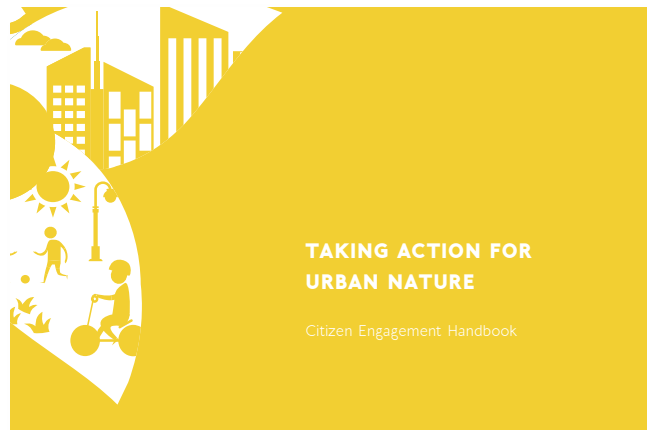
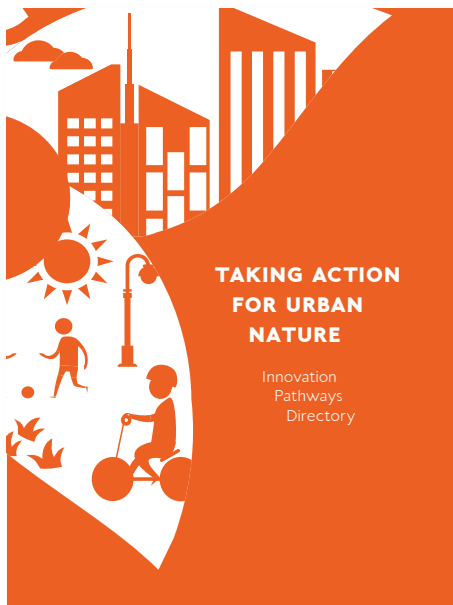
The aim of our course is to create an online learning community on nature-based solutions that connects the key themes of nature, cities and innovation.



# Taking Action for Urban Nature

Working with nature-based solutions can offer cities new ways of meeting their goals for sustainable development. Putting these solutions into practice often requires municipal governments, businesses, not-for-profit organisations and community groups to work together and develop new approaches. These NATURVATION guides have been prepared using fifty-four examples from eighteen cities working with nature to identify the innovation pathways, governance arrangements, business models, and citizen engagement approaches that can work to support action for urban nature. They are designed to support cities and their partners take forward their ambitions to work with nature for biodiversity, climate change and sustainability.

To download our guides, please visit: [www.naturvation.eu](http://www.naturvation.eu)





[www.naturvation.eu](http://www.naturvation.eu)

@naturvation