

Addressing Climate Change in Cities – Policy Instruments to Promote Urban Nature-based Solutions

Publication

[Report](#)

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Nature-based solutions (NBS) are solutions that are inspired and supported by nature. They can be used in urban settings to complement or replace "traditional" or "grey" solutions to social and environmental challenges, such as air pollution, the heat island effect, water scarcity, flooding, loss of nature and lack of social cohesion.

Although significant potential exists, NBS remain underutilized by cities as solution to address climate change. Barriers that have prevented wider uptake in the European context include a lack of relevant experience with and knowledge of NBS planning and implementation as well as a shortage of locally adapted policy instruments to support mainstreaming across sectoral policies.

This guidance document responds to these gaps and highlights a range of policy and supporting instruments relevant for NBS design, implementation and maintenance. Policy instruments include regulations, strategies, programmes, action plans and financial incentives. The guidance aims to support policymakers, city officials and local citizens and initiatives in the design and implementation of such policy instruments for increased NBS implementation. Each instrument is briefly described, including how it works and what benefits it can deliver. Case studies from Germany and Europe showcasing how different cities approach NBS and foster their integration into their policy frameworks illustrate each of the instruments.

This policy guidance was produced as part of the project [Climate NBS Poland](#), supported by the European Climate Initiative (EUKI) of the German Ministry of Environment. It is complemented by the publication [Addressing Climate Change in Cities – Catalogue of urban nature-based solutions](#) which aims to support planners, designers and landscape architects in various sized urban areas in Europe and beyond in applying NBS instead of or alongside traditional grey infrastructure approaches.

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