



INTERLACE
RESTORING URBAN ECOSYSTEMS
RECUPERANDO ECOSISTEMAS URBANOS

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Urban Governance Atlas: Guidance on how to enter a policy instrument



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WELCOME! In this guidance document, you will find...

- An introduction to the Urban Governance Atlas and its key concepts
- Our approach to categorizing policy instruments
- A step-by-step explanation of how you can enter policy instruments in the Atlas
- A glossary with definitions of the key terms used within the Atlas

1. Urban Governance Atlas: An introduction

Interested in urban nature and how it's managed? Wondering what cities are doing to develop more and better green spaces? Want to share your knowledge and experiences for other cities to learn from? Then the Urban Governance Atlas is just the thing for you!

The **Urban Governance Atlas (UGA)** will be an interactive online database of around *250 good practice policy instruments* that support the use of nature-based solutions (NBS) for urban ecosystem restoration and more inclusive green space planning.

Being developed as part of the **INTERLACE project**, the UGA is the first database of its kind and will allow users to explore a different kinds of policy instruments being applied across the world, especially those coming from countries in the European Union (EU) and the Community of Latin America and Caribbean States (CELAC). By focusing on instruments that have been proven to work well in practice, the UGA will **support cities to become greener and more inclusive**. In addition to targeting government administrations, urban planners and decision-makers, the UGA also aims to serve as a resource for civil society (e.g. community experts or neighbourhood representatives NGOs), the scientific community, development cooperation communities, and technicians, NBS designers and landscape architects.

To help cities figure out which policy instruments could be relevant for their local context and how to design them for success, the UGA focuses on the factors making each instrument successful, lessons learned in the design and implementation, and the approaches to governance (e.g. stakeholder involvement, institutional arrangements and participatory methods used).

In addition to serving as a resource, the UGA also **provides an opportunity for you** to promote policy instruments that have worked well and help other cities to learn from these! By adding policy instruments to the UGA database, you can:



The UGA is complementary to the Urban Nature Atlas (UNA, <https://una.city/>), which is a collection of more than 1000 inspiring nature-based solutions from European cities and beyond. The UNA was produced within the Naturvation project (<https://www.naturvation.eu/>) – with the support of some INTERLACE partners - and focuses on the NBS themselves. This is an important distinction, as the Urban Governance Atlas ***focuses on the policy instruments behind NBS and their governance – not the NBS themselves.***

2. Key concepts

2.1 Nature-based solutions for ecosystem restoration

The INTERLACE project focuses on (peri-)urban nature-based solutions which restore, rehabilitate and (re)connect ecosystems along the urban-rural nexus. By fostering ecosystem recovery and contributing to healthy ecosystems, these solutions increase resilience and conserve biodiversity, while also benefiting society, the environment and the economy. Related measures focus on **improving the condition of an ecosystem or re-creating or re-establishing an ecosystem that was lost** (see Box 1 for examples).

Box 1: Examples of urban NBS that contribute to ecosystem restoration

- Cleaning up waterways and degraded waterbodies
- Creating urban woodland and other wildlife habitat in parks, schools and other public spaces
- Restoring, rewilding or renaturing (degraded) urban wetlands, forests, landscapes, rivers, etc
- Rehabilitating contaminated industrial areas, brownfields, or fallow land and turn them into urban nature reserves and recreation areas
- Restoring of coastal marshes to reduce flood risk and defence costs
- Replacing non-permeable / sealed surfaces with natural landscape features

Within the UGA, we prioritize **policy instruments that foster the deployment or maintenance of NBS for ecosystem restoration in (peri-)urban areas**. But we will also include policy instruments that support the uptake of other types of urban NBS or related concepts which do not necessarily focus on ecosystem restoration, i.e. actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems while providing wider societal, environmental and economic benefits. Other related concepts under the NBS-umbrella are also to be included (see Box 2 for examples).

Box 2: Examples of NBS-related terms relevant for inclusion in the UGA

- Nature-based solutions / approaches
- Ecosystem-based approaches / adaptation / mitigation / disaster risk reduction
- Green / blue infrastructure
- Working with nature
- Renaturing (urban areas) / rewilding (landscapes)
- Green building, façade, roof and wall
- (Urban) park / forest / river / lake / wetland
- Green corridors / areas / spaces / fields
- Community gardens / allotments
- Flood management / water management
- Sustainable urban drainage systems, rain gardens, natural water retention measures
- Integrated landscape / coastal / rainwater management
- Ecosystem / nature / stream / river / etc restoration
- Nature and biodiversity conservation ; protected area management
- Ecosystem services
- Sustainable urban development / planning
- Green / resilient city
- (Urban) reforestation / urban canopy cover / urban tree cover

The UGA will include information about each instrument's relation to NBS and ecosystem restoration and how these concepts are addressed in the instrument's objectives/aims, funding opportunities, etc.

2.2 Policy instruments and their governance

The UGA looks at aspects relating to policy instruments' governance (e.g. how they were designed and are implemented), financing, success factors/lessons learned and achieved/planned outcomes and impacts. While many definitions exist, **policy instruments** can be broadly understood as tools “developed by the government as a way to implement their policies and influence the behaviour of citizens and businesses”. The UGA chooses to expand this definition, in recognition of the important and growing movement from public participation (i.e. government-led) towards active citizenship, i.e. where citizens self-organise as (co-)producers of urban sustainability.

Policy instruments in the UGA include instruments which have been:

- (1) **initiated by governments** to promote NBS update or (2) **initiated by non-governmental actors, but formalised by the government** (e.g. through allocating funding, integration into a policy, mainstreaming via a guidance document)

Policy instruments can range from being rather soft, such as informational systems like monitoring or awareness raising, to command-and-control instruments such as municipal green planning and economic instruments that set incentives for specific actions.¹ NBS also “often require interdepartmental teamwork or the support of other governments at the same level (horizontal cooperation) or at upper levels (vertical cooperation)”.² Following the active citizenship model, policy instruments can also include e.g. informational campaigns started by non-governmental actors to support the uptake of government policies, such as informing society about a government subsidy program for implementing NBS on private land. A categorisation of policy instruments utilised in the UGA is presented in the following section.

Governance refers to the “formal and informal institutions, rules, mechanisms and processes of collective decision-making that enable stakeholders to influence and coordinate their needs and interests”³. In essence, governance provides the structure “by which groups, such as communities, define their interests, rights, responsibilities and the ways in which they will interact with each other and with institutions of authority to manage a particular resource”⁴. In the UGA, we look specifically at the type of involvement of different governmental and non-governmental actor groups in the initiation and implementation of the respective policy instruments.

2.2.1 Types and examples of policy instruments

For the purposes of the Urban Governance Atlas and we classify policy instruments according to the following categories: legislative, regulatory and strategic instruments; economic and fiscal; agreement-based or cooperative; knowledge, communication and innovation. Each category is defined below. It should be noted that these types are described in their ideal form, but in practice they are commonly used in combination as a policy mix. Economic incentives, for example, are based on laws and laws are often supported by information instruments.

¹ Droste N., Schröter-Schlaack C., Hansjürgens B., Zimmermann H. (2017). Implementing Nature-Based Solutions in Urban Areas: Financing and Governance Aspects. In: Kabisch N., Korn H., Stadler J., Bonn A. (eds) Nature-Based Solutions to Climate Change Adaptation in Urban Areas. Theory and Practice of Urban Sustainability Transitions. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-56091-5_18

² *Ibid.*

³ Tacconi, L. (2011). Developing environmental governance research: the example of forest cover change studies. *Environmental Conservation*, 38(2), 234–246. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44519550>

⁴ FAO (2011). Community-based fire management: A review. FAO Forestry Paper 166. Rome 2011. P 19-20. <https://www.fao.org/3/i2495e/i2495e00.htm>

Table 1: Types of policy instruments and real world examples

Legislative, regulatory and strategic instruments
<p>Governments apply principles to influence actor behaviour. Requirements can either be prohibitive (e.g. forbid behaviours), prescriptive (e.g. require behaviours) or voluntary (e.g. encouraging certain behaviours). These can be binding (e.g. laws or regulations) or non-binding to set a vision and strategic goals (e.g. strategies).</p> <p><i>e.g. The regulatory requirements for rainwater infiltration in Dresden provide special regulations and guidance for local for citizens to choose the right type of measures for their property. This instrument aims to influence actors to prevent water shortages and ensure high-quality drinking water availability⁵.</i></p>
Economic and fiscal instruments
<p>Governments influence market mechanisms through e.g. disincentives, incentives, payments, subsidies, financing mechanisms and market-based instruments. Compliance often has a more voluntary character as they simulate the involved actor to act in a certain way by rewarding or financially discourage certain behaviour; other instruments are mandatory (e.g. payment for rainwater discharge).</p> <p><i>e.g. The Green Roof Subsidy programme in Hamburg, is an example of an instrument through which the government influences market mechanisms by providing subsidies of 30-60% of the cost of construction for each (private or public) owner that voluntarily decide to implement a green roof⁶.</i></p>
Agreement-based or cooperative instruments
<p>Government and/or involved actors jointly and voluntarily decide to behave in a certain way. They often arise from a shared agenda, mostly consisting of both public as well as private actors. Often the agreements reached between the parties are fixed in a covenant code or agreement.</p> <p><i>e.g. Berlin's neighbourhood management programme adopts a partnership-based approach involving residents, social facilities, businesses, housing associations, local administrations and others. The local government provides different types of funding facilitating start-up financing for NBS projects.⁷</i></p>
Knowledge, communication and innovation instruments
<p>Try to influence behaviour through disseminating information to actors on certain issues or involving (novel) actors in critical processes in innovative ways in the hope that this will inspire voluntary behavioural changes. These instruments can target a broad audience using the media or can be targeted educational programs to reach a specific audience.</p> <p><i>e.g. The Regenwasseragentur in Berlin is an innovative institution created specifically to promote and help implement Berlin's regulations related to rainwater management⁸.</i></p>

⁵ Dresden, 2020a. *Zum Umgang mit Niederschlagswasser*. Stadtentwässerung Dresden. <https://www.stadtentwaesserung-dresden.de/service/grundstuecksentwaesserung/mit-regenwasser-wirtschaften.htm>

⁶ Hamburg, 2020. *Green Roofs*. <https://www.hamburg.com/residents/green/11836394/green-roofs/>

⁷ Berlin, 2019a. *20 Jahre Berliner Quartiersmanagement in Zahlen und Fakten*. Stadt Berlin, Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung und Wohnen. https://www.stadtentwicklung.berlin.de/wohnen/quartiersmanagement/download/aktuelles/kurzinfo_20_jahre_quartiersmanagement_in_zahlen_und_fakten.pdf

⁸ <https://www.regenwasseragentur.berlin/>

Urban Governance Atlas: Guidance for entering a policy instrument

Policy instruments supporting NBS within these categories can exist across diverse policy arenas, e.g.:

- Ecosystem based adaptation
- Ecosystem restoration / recovery and landscape management
- Ecosystem / nature /biodiversity conservation and protection, protected areas management
- Green space / park management; public space management
- Disaster Risk Reduction policies, plans and interventions
- Environmental education
- Urban and territorial planning, sustainable development
- Housing sector strategies (green-infrastructure, sustainable housing, sustainable buildings and construction)
- Water and river management, urban sewage or drainage policies

Table 2 presents the four instrument types, with examples from across these policy arenas.

Table 2: Categories and examples of policy instruments

Category	Subcategory	Examples
Legislative, regulatory and strategic instruments	dedicated strategy or plan	NBS, green infrastructure, or green space strategy or plan
	sectoral or overarching strategy or plan	adaptation, biodiversity, circular city, smart city strategy or plan; masterplan, integrated plans; action plan on (innovation/green) public procurement
	urban planning mechanisms	spatial (zoning), infrastructure or socio-economic development plans; green space factor restrictions on development of green areas; targets (regulation and planning) standards; scoring
	standards	green public procurement standards
Economic and fiscal instruments	disincentives	taxes and charges/fees, tariffs; trading of permits for using a resource or trading
	payments, subsidies, incentives	subsidies or payments to landowners/ private actors for practices; public financing/grants; payments for insurance covering the risk associated with newer green technologies
	financing mechanisms / market-based instruments	'green finance' or debt-based instruments; blended finance; payments for ecosystem services (PES); public-private-partnerships (PPP)
Agreement-based or cooperative instrument	direct engagement of citizens / multistakeholder collaboration	citizen science programmes, citizen assemblies, participatory budgets, neighbourhood development plans, community management of green spaces on public lands, community asset transfer
	joint regional planning/ action	inter-municipal exchange platforms
Knowledge, communication and innovation instruments	communication / awareness raising	targeted educational programs; certification (labelling) or ranking; awareness raising campaigns
	knowledge and innovation	communities of practice; living labs; creating workshops; pilots; constructing business cases or land use plans; green hubs

2.3 Good practices

The UGA aims to feature *good practice policy* instruments. These should meet several of the criteria listed below (see Box 3) in a unique or noteworthy way. Instruments can also be at different stages of implementation, such as showing promise or already having been demonstrated or replicated. This flexible approach also leaves room for different social, cultural, and geographic contexts.

Box 3: Criteria for good practice policy instruments

1. **Inclusivity:** integrates all relevant actors through participatory action; allows those affected by the instrument to influence decision-making processes
2. **Effectiveness:** has been implemented, tested, accepted and effective in achieving its objectives ('verification in practice') and/or has the potential to be successful; cost-effective
3. **Multifunctionality:** is designed to support the deployment or maintenance of NBS that address multiple objectives and/or produce diverse (co-)benefits, ideally including contributions to social equity
4. **Long-term sustainability:** has a monitoring system in place, its application is enshrined in law, and/or it has secured long-term funding
5. **Locally appropriate:** design, framing and approach are consistent with the local institutional-cultural context
6. **Upscalability / replicability:** has been replicated elsewhere, become a blueprint, or has the potential to be applied in other cities and contexts; adopts a flexible approach that has the potential for transferability
7. **Innovation:** applies an innovative approach (e.g. exploring new financing sources and types of PPPs/cooperation)
8. **Policy business case:** contributes to the financial feasibility of nature-based solutions implemented by private business, private non-profit sector, or private households

3 Adding a policy instrument to the UGA

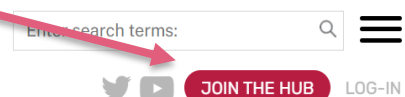
Do you have a policy instrument in mind that you think could be a great addition to the Urban Governance Atlas? If so, please first ask yourself the following questions:

1. Does this instrument support the use of urban NBS or related concepts? (see Boxes 1 & 2)
2. Can the instrument be considered a 'good practice'? (see Box 3)
3. Do you have access to relevant documents and information about the policy instrument?

If you've answered 'YES!' to all three questions, we would be happy to guide you through the process of adding the policy instrument to the UGA in three easy steps: (1) Join the INTERLACE Hub; (2) Fill in the questionnaire; (3) Publish your draft. More detailed instructions can be found below. This process should only take around 4 hours, depending on your level of familiarity with the instrument.

Step 1: Join the INTERLACE Hub

1. Visit: <https://interlace-hub.com/>
2. Click 'Join the Hub' on the upper righthand side



3. Make a profile and log-in to the Hub

Step 2: Fill in the online questionnaire

Now the part where you can share your knowledge and experiences of a policy instrument! Please visit the following site to learn more about how to add a policy instrument to the UGA: <https://interlace-hub.com/adding-your-policy-instrument-urban-governance-atlas>

The questionnaire is comprised of 6 sections, as follows:

1. **Overview:** general description of the instrument location, scale, aims and relation to NBS
2. **Governance:** highlights the different governance arrangements around the instrument such as the initiating body, actors involved and the process of designing and implementing the instrument
3. **Financing:** general information on the instrument's sources and amount of funding
4. **Results, success factors, and lessons learned:** reflections on the instruments results and the lessons learned including success factors and good practice characteristics

5. **Related instruments:** linkages to other instruments which are also included in the UGA

6. **Sources and further information**

Please fill in the questions in English or Spanish questionnaire here: <https://interlace-hub.com/add-your-policy-instrument>, noting the instructional text under many of the questions which is meant to guide your answers.

You are welcome to use any combination of the following resources: available policy and other documents; your first-hand knowledge; and insights from interviews. In Section 6 'Sources and further information', you have space to cite all documents you used as well as list yourself and any interviewees under 'Interview(s)'. Please leave yourself and the interviewee(s) anonymous, but instead add your and/or their organisation/affiliation.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

When filling in the questionnaire, please ***focus on the policy instrument itself, NOT on the NBS that the instrument supports.***

For example, if you select a financing instrument that funds restorative NBS, the answers to the survey should relate to the instrument characteristics and to the collaborative process around its design and implementation.

The answers should ***NOT*** focus on how collaboratively the NBS funded under the instrument were designed or implemented.

This is a critical distinction as the **UGA aims to provide insights on available policy instruments and related governance challenges** and does NOT seek to be a repository of NBS case studies and their results/challenges (this has already been done in the [Urban Nature Atlas](#)).

Step 3: Save, edit and publish your draft

During Step 2, you can save your draft answers using the 'Save' button at the end of the questionnaire. This will save the form to the Interlace Hub, but will not automatically publish the form. Each submission will be manually reviewed before it is published.

To edit your policy instrument, click on '[My Account](#)' at the top right of any Interlace Hub page. You'll be able to find all your policy instruments under the 'products' tab. Click on 'edit', make any changes and remember to click 'save' at the bottom of the form.

Next steps

After submitting the completed questionnaire for a policy instrument, it will undergo a review by the INTERLACE team. Should any questions arise from our side, we would contact you via email to ask if you are able to provide further clarifications.

Once all 250 policy instruments have been submitted, reviewed and finalized, we will officially launch the Urban Governance Atlas in August 2022 – which we will of course inform you of to celebrate together!

In case of any questions that arise in any of these steps, please contact:

McKenna Davis (mckenna.davis@ecologic.eu) for content questions

or

The INTERLACE Hub team for any technical issues (<https://interlace-hub.com/contact-hub>)

We would be very happy to help you!

4 Glossary

- **Co-design:** the act of creating with stakeholders specifically within the design development process to ensure the results meet their needs and are usable. (Co-design may also be called participatory design- a term which is used more often within the design community.) Stratos Innovation Group
- **Co-governance:** a situation in which an institution *normally of government* shares with one or more entities, typically community-based organisations (*or individual citizens*), the decision right in respect of a matter over which the institution has the formal decision-making power. IGI Global (*amended*)
- **Ecological restoration:** assisting in the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded or destroyed to good condition as a means of conserving biodiversity and ecosystem resilience
- **Evaluation:** is the systematic assessment of the design, implementation and/or results of a programme, project, activity, policy, strategy or other undertaking
- **Governance:** formal and informal institutions, rules, mechanisms and processes of collective decision-making that enable stakeholders to influence and coordinate their interdependent needs and interests and their interactions with the environment at different scales
- **Green infrastructure:** intentionally and strategically preserves, enhances, or restores elements of a natural system, such as forests, agricultural land, floodplains, riparian areas, coastal forests (such as mangroves), among others, or creates natural systems to provide infrastructure (for example, wastewater treatment). Natural infrastructure can function on its own or be used as complementary to “grey” infrastructure
- **Monitoring:** a routine process of collecting and recording information in order to track progress towards expected results
- **Nature-based solutions:** actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits
- **Policy instrument:** tools developed by the government as a way to implement their policies and influence the behaviour of citizens and businesses”. The term policy instruments in the UGA include instruments (1) which have been initiated by governments to promote NBS update or (2) which have been initiated by non-governmental actors but have been formalized by the government typology.
- **Rewilding:** is a progressive approach to conservation. It’s about letting nature take care of itself, enabling natural processes to shape land and sea, repair damaged ecosystems and restore degraded landscapes. Through rewilding, wildlife’s natural rhythms create wilder, more biodiverse habitats
- **Reforestation:** the process of restoring and replanting forest areas that have been depleted, usually through deforestation. It can be used to rectify the effects of deforestation or improve the quality of

human life by soaking up pollution and dust from the air, rebuilding natural habitats and ecosystems, mitigating global warming

- **Restoration:** the action of returning something to its previous condition. It can be applied to ecology as the attempts to return ecosystems that have been destroyed by human activity to their more natural, original state
- **Urban ecosystems:** those areas where the built infrastructure covers a large proportion of the land surface, or as those in which people live at high densities



INTERLACE is a four year project that will empower and equip European and Latin American cities to restore urban ecosystems, resulting in more liveable, resilient and inclusive cities that benefit people and nature.

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INTERLACE es un proyecto de cuatro años que busca empoderar y soportar ciudades de Europa y América Latina en la restauración de ecosistemas urbanos, resultando en ciudades más vivibles, inclusivas y resilientes para el beneficio de la gente y la naturaleza.

Project Partners



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