



## SESSION DESCRIPTION

# E3 Preserving cultural and natural heritage for enhanced urban resilience

## Presentations

**Date:** Friday, 27 April, 2018

**Time:** 14:30-16:00

**Rooms:** S29-31

**Language:** English

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## OBJECTIVE

*“The city, however, does not tell its past, but contains it like the lines of a hand”- Italo Calvino*

Preserving cultural and natural heritage is a challenge for most growing cities of the world, but a necessary effort which could allow them to maintain their uniqueness and quality of life, while simultaneously enhance their climate resilience. The momentum of cities, often generated by citizens, to preserve historic heritage sites could also be a powerful force that drives nature-based, climate-resilient and sustainable solutions for urban environments of tomorrow that incorporate the wisdom of past urban planning.

This session started with a presentation by the City of Bologna, Italy, which is planning to transform its historic center by greening public spaces, improving sustainable mobility and prioritizing the establishment of creative and sustainable socio-economic districts. Next, the City of Guimarães, Portugal, presented its vision “*Guimarães Mais Verde*” (“*more than green*”), which incorporates activities and policies that construct a biocultural mosaic, singular and unique to the City. Then the attention shifted to Asian cities, many of which are under an unprecedented urbanization pressure that often leads to uncontrolled development. From Zamboanga City, Philippines, we heard how the local government is approaching protecting key biodiversity areas which, with their essential role in ecosystem services, are the basis of the philippino natural heritage and life. Lastly, the “heritage journey” ended in Mexico, where, due to large-scale nation-wide privatization, local governments have limited influence over surrounding ecosystems and are unable to effectively protect and manage natural heritage. The presentation argued for the creation of Mexico’s Public Lands Initiative (MPLI), which has the potential to advance urban and regional sustainability and socioecological resilience by drawing novel institutional, financial, and socio-cultural linkages that engage citizens and local governments with their regional landscapes and ecosystems.

## OUTCOMES

- Participants were exposed to the benefits of preserving cultural and natural heritage in urban environments and ways of mainstreaming such activities in urban planning;
- They gained insights into the complex relationship between land ownership, conservation and urban planning and how this connects to urban resilience and sustainability efforts; and
- They were inspired by successful examples of natural and cultural heritage protection and citizens’ engagement.



## METHODOLOGY

- The facilitator provided an overall introduction to the session and contributors. **(5 minutes)**
- Each presentation was allotted 10 minutes. **(4 x 10 minutes)**
- The facilitator managed questions and answers. **(40 minutes)**
- Closing remarks by the facilitator. **(5 minutes)**

## CONTRIBUTORS

Facilitator *Nealla Frederick, Climate Adaptation Specialist, The Nature Conservancy, St. George's, Grenada*

Presenter *Giovanni Fini, Coordinator, Environmental Quality Unit, Bologna City, Bologna, Italy*

### **Resilience of historic city centers to cope with climate change**

By adopting Local Adaptation Plan on Climate Change, the City of Bologna has translated into action its political commitment to address urban sustainability and resilience. Thanks to its participation as leading partner in ROCK H2020 project, the city is now testing actions in a pilot area and also supporting a systemic transformation, for new “shared responsibility” towards heritage. Adopting a multi-level collaborative and systemic approach that boost the exploitation of cultural heritage as a powerful environmental catalyst for regeneration, sustainable development, and economic growth, ROCK will produce outputs related to three main domain of innovation: organizational, technological, social.

Presenter *Jorge Cristino, Deputy Mayor's Aide, Guimarães City, Guimarães, Portugal; and*

*Isabel Loureiro, Executive Coordinator for Guimarães Structure Mission EGC 2020, Guimarães City, Guimarães, Portugal*

### **Guimarães 2030 sustainable plan: How can a city become greener?**

Guimarães, with 900 years of history, is known as the “Birthplace of the Portuguese Nationality” and World UNESCO Heritage. The city strives to honor its proud heritage by becoming Portugal’s most sustainable and resilient city in the future, after been European Capital of Culture 2012, European City of Sport 2013. Its vision is to be ‘more than green’. To this end, over the past 30 years, our environmental governance has aimed at becoming a model of urban development characterized by difference, boldness and innovation.

Presenter *Eduardo M. Bisquera Jr., Assistant City Environment and Natural Resources Officer, City Government of Zamboanga, Zamboanga, Philippines*

### **Building the resilience of key biodiversity areas at the local level: Experiences from Zamboanga City, Philippines**

Biodiversity and ecosystem services are co-dependent, and have a direct impact on all our lives. Simply put, reduced biodiversity means local food supplies and fresh water are at risk and our natural heritage becomes more vulnerable to disasters and the stresses of climate change. Local governments play a key role in protecting and preserving biodiversity. Zamboanga’s mission is to sustain the protection, conservation and development of biodiversity through participative and pro-active governance focused on community-based approaches such as increasing knowledge and competencies of stakeholders, building partnerships with adjacent local governments and the private sector and working with citizens to shift the culture towards a positive view on biodiversity.



Presenter *Paulo Quadri Barba, Phd Candidate, University of California, Santa Cruz, USA*

**Conservation for cities and cities for conservation: Restoring Mexico's public lands**

As economic and political powerhouses, cities have the capacity to influence and transform land use and socioecological landscapes well beyond their political boundaries. In Mexico, however, city governments remain institutionally disarticulated from their surrounding ecosystems and landscapes. Throughout the XX Century, Mexico almost entirely lost its public lands to private property, severely limiting the ability to protect and manage its natural heritage. Our project is spearheading efforts to regain some of those public lands through land purchases funded by local and federal carbon taxes and regional markets. In this scenario, cities may hold the key to find optimal governance schemes.

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***Further recommended reading***

UNESCO, The Porticoes of Bologna, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5010>

UNESCO, Historic Centre of Guimaraes, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1031>

Guimarães mais verde, <http://www.guimaraesmaisverde.pt/>

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