



THE FUTURE OF EARTH & BIODIVERSITY WEEK



Greening Cities - Urban Challenges and Climate Change

EU Pavillon EXPO Osaka 2025

September 20 2025, 10:30 – 13:30

ORGANIZER: Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and State Assets, Republic of Croatia

Across the globe, population density in urban areas entails numerous socio-economic, environmental and climate risks. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals implies a common effort by all stakeholders on this path.

Different concepts of green and compact cities, in addition to a rational use of land, aim to improve the development of green infrastructure, encourage circular management of space and buildings, and ensure a wider implementation of nature-based solutions. The development of green infrastructure not only helps mitigate the impact of climate change, such as urban heat islands, floods or landslides, but also improves air quality, ensures biodiversity and landscape diversity, and promotes social well-being. Increasing energy efficiency in construction and using renewable energy sources further contributes to reducing the carbon footprint and responding to climate change in urban areas.

On the path to building a sustainable urban environment, the role of the local community in creating public policies is crucial. Strengthening the sense of belonging and willingness to actively contribute to the implementation of green actions makes a difference and results in changes.

10:30 – 12:00 SESSION I - Green Transition in Public Policies

Moderator: Ingrid GOJEVIĆ, Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and State Assets, Croatia

Urban Green Renewal – Retrofitting of housing and public buildings

Irena KRIŽ ŠELENDIĆ, Director of energy efficiency and EU programs and projects, Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and State Assets, Croatia

Landscapes and spatial planning in Croatia

Sandra MOMČILOVIĆ, Head of Service, Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and State Assets, Croatia

Unique geothermal potential of Croatia

Marijan KRPAN, President of the Management Board of the Croatian Hydrocarbon Agency, Croatia

Moderated panel discussion with panelists and Q&A from the audience

12:00 – 13:30 SESSION II - Implementation of Green Policies – Greening cities in Croatia and Japan

Urban agenda for the EU – Implementation model for achieving SDGs

Alexandru MATEI, Senior Officer Urban Agenda and Partnerships, European Urban Initiative, France

Sustainable urbanisation – compact cities and the New European Bauhaus Implementation of greening policies in Osaka

Ana DEVČIĆ, transdisciplinary methods in planning expert URBANEX, Croatia

Zuiko TAKENO, Director of Parks and Greenery Department, Osaka City Construction Bureau, City of Osaka, Japan

Footsteps and tools for greening cities

Ozana PALIĆ Planning and green infrastructure expert, URBANEX, Croatia

Moderated panel discussion with panelists and Q&A from the audience

VIRTUAL EXHIBITION: reUSE & 59th Zagreb Architecture Salon

Moderator: prof. Mia ROTH ČERINA Ph.D., Croatian Architects' Association

We invite public officials, experts in spatial and urban planning, landscape, and environmental policies, as well as all interested parties, to be a part of this knowledge and experience exchange and join the discussion following the presentations given by Japanese, Croatian and EU experts. Greening cities is not an optional, but an inevitable part of sustainable development for human wellbeing, while still in harmony with nature.



LIST OF SPEAKERS



Irena Križ Šelendić, BSc of Civil Engineering, has spent her career in the construction sector, and has been working in the Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and State Assets in management positions since 2009. She participates in the creation of the legislative and strategic framework of the Republic of Croatia in the field of energy efficiency in buildings, coordinates the development and implementation of national strategies and programs for energy renovation of buildings, combating energy poverty, development of green infrastructure and circular management of space and buildings. She has received numerous awards for her contribution to public policies.



Sandra MOMČILOVIĆ, architect, with work experience in the private sector and state administration. During her work in the ministry, she has been working on the implementation of spatial planning and construction policies, conducting procedures for adopting spatial plans, issuing location permits and working on building inspection and the development of green infrastructure in urban areas. Today she works on spatial development topics and take part in international cooperation in the fields of landscape and architectural policies. She is a national contact point for New European Bauhaus.



Marijan Krpan, M.Sc. in Business Management and geological engineer, has over 30 years of experience in oil and gas exploration and production. He started at INA, Zagreb, a leading Croatian oil company, working on geological and petrophysical analyses, then participated in INAgip projects in Milan, Italy. He later held managerial roles at INA and gained additional expertise at Repsol in Madrid. Since 2018, he has been President of the Management Board of the Croatian Hydrocarbon Agency.



Alexandru MATEI, Alexandru is a passionate urban (re)thinker interested in understanding the complex processes and phenomena which take place in human settlements and in (co)creating innovative, just and sustainable solutions for them via a systemic innovative approach. Since 2004 he has dedicated his energy to improving the lives of local communities around EU, keen in positive transformations. His main interest lies in integrated and place based-approach territorial development, sustainable urban development and spatial planning. Currently a considerable part of his work falls under European projects, funding and policy (EU Urban Agenda, The New European Bauhaus, The New Leipzig Charter; Territorial Agenda, A long-term vision for the EU's rural areas, Horizon 2020/ Europe, SDG11).



Ana DEVČIĆ is transdisciplinary methods in planning expert, experienced in the field of urban and strategic planning, stakeholder engagement and co-development. She's been working with developers in co-designing and adapting concepts and project ideas to local needs, ensuring alignment with spatial planning frameworks, community priorities, and long-term development objectives. Ana has led development of functional urban areas strategies, management plans of historic cores empowering local communities as drivers of change and sustainable progress with the emphasis placed on interventions that enhance social infrastructure, improve accessibility to services, support urban renewal, and uphold high environmental standards.



Zuiko TAKENO is born in June 1967. He joined the Osaka City Construction Bureau in 1991 as a landscape architecture specialist. He has since been engaged in the planning, design, and management of park and greenery projects, including the development of coastal green spaces and the enhancement of major city parks such as Osaka Castle Park and Tennoji Park. In April 2025, he was appointed Director of the Parks and Greenery Department, where he is responsible for overseeing policies and initiatives aimed at creating a greener, more vibrant Osaka.



Ozana PALIĆ holds an MSc in Urban Planning and Policy Design (Politecnico di Milano) and an MSc in Landscape Architecture (University of Zagreb). At Urbanex, her professional focus is on the development and management of urban regeneration and renewal strategies and projects both at national and local levels. Main thematic areas of her work include sustainable land use, green infrastructure, activation scenarios for unused buildings and sites, and climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.



Ingrid GOJEVIĆ, architect with 30 years of experience, specialized in spatial planning, architectural and landscape policies, focused in global, European and EU cooperation in those fields. She is a national contact point for UN HABITAT, Council of Europe Landscape Convention, ESPON contact point, takes part in EU cooperation on territorial cohesion, urban development, implementation of the New European Bauhaus, also participating in the work of the Greening Cities Partnership of the Urban Agenda for the EU.