URBANSHIFT CITY ACADEMY IN CHENGDU

DATES: 1-3 July 2025

AGENDA

URBAN BIODIVERSITY: DATA, TOOLS & FINANCE FOR STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

Expert Speakers (in person):

- World Resources Institute
    - John-Rob Pool, Senior Manager, UrbanShift & Nature-positive Urban Development, World Resources Institute
    - Dr. Ted Wong, Research and Project Associate, Data & Tools
    - Dr. Elizabeth Wesley, Data Scientist, Urban Surfaces and Extreme Heat, Data & Tools
    - Xiaoqian Jiang, Climate Lead & Sichuan Project Lead, Sustainable Transition Center, WRI China
- ICLEI
    - Karishma Asarpota, Senior Officer, Climate Action, World Secretariat Office
    - Yi Jiang, Project Coordinator, Beijing Office
- Anji City, China
    - Shijun Zheng, Director of Anji Branch, Huzhou Ecological Environment Bureau
- Quezon City, Philippines
    - Vincent Vinarao
- Melaka City, Malaysia
    - Nadhirah Binti Ahmad, Senior Assistant Manager, Melaka Green Technology Corporation
- National institute of Urban Affairs, India
    - Varsha Singh, Specialist - Knowledge Management and Communications

Expert Speakers (online):

- ICLEI Africa, Cities Biodiversity Center
    - Ingrid Coetzee, Director: Biodiversity, Nature & Health
- International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)
    - Michail Kapetanakis, Policy Advisor, Sustainable Infrastructure
- European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)
    - TBC
- International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH)
    - Dr. Audrey Timm, Technical Initiatives Manager & Lead, Green Cities

Context: Why is biodiversity important for cities and urban residents?

Biodiversity is crucial to cities and urban residents. It enhances ecological resilience, which is the ability of ecosystems to recover from disturbances such as extreme weather, pollution, or disease outbreaks. Yet, biodiversity is under threat globally and often overlooked at the city level. Diverse plant and animal species contribute to cleaner air and water, improved soil health, and better climate regulation, all of which are vital for sustaining urban environments. Green spaces with rich biodiversity also provide recreational benefits, improve mental well-being, and reduce urban heat island effects. By supporting and enhancing urban biodiversity, and thereby fostering biodiversity-based resilience, cities can better adapt to environmental challenges while improving the quality of life for their residents.

About the UrbanShift Urban Biodiversity Training:

The in-person Urban Biodiversity training at the UrbanShift China City Academy is titled "**Urban Biodiversity: Data, Tools and Finance for Strategy and Implementation**". It will build on the open-access, self-learning, online Urban Biodiversity capacity building module, published by UrbanShift in September 2022. The training will be delivered by World Resources Institute and is structured as a 3-day, interactive training that intends to build the capacity of city officials about the importance of urban biodiversity and how to integrate biodiversity considerations into traditional urban planning. It will also highlight useful and timely resources and tools available to cities and promote knowledge exchange and learning between participating cities. The training will consist of technical presentations, case study presentations from participating cities and external experts, facilitated discussions, and interactive exercises. Key concepts that will be integrated into the training include:

- **Data for biodiversity decision making:** How to use data and evidence-based insights to make informed urban biodiversity and planning decisions in cities
- **Valuing the benefits that urban nature and biodiversity provide to cities:** The concept of ecosystem and natural capital accounting, nature as infrastructure, and how cities can use related tools to measure the impact, value and benefits of urban biodiversity
- **Funding and finance for urban biodiversity:** Finance considerations for urban biodiversity and resources available to cities to implement urban biodiversity projects
- **Implementation case studies:** case studies, successes and lessons learned from cities in Asia

DATE & TIME	SESSION TITLE	DESCRIPTION	SPEAKERS	MODERATOR
DAY 1: DATA FOR URBAN BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT				
13:00-13:30 (30 mins)	Welcome & Participant Introductions	• Welcome to the Urban Biodiversity training • Meet the trainers • Establish common expectations for the training • Participant introductions (prompt for participants: *what does urban biodiversity mean to you?*)	• John-Rob Pool (WRI) • Ted Wong (WRI) • Elizabeth Wesley (WRI)	• Xiaoqian Jiang (WRI China)
13:30-14:00 (30 mins)	Presentation: What is Urban Biodiversity? Why Does it Matter for Cities?	• Introduction to the UrbanShift Urban Biodiversity online course • Familiarize participants with the concept of urban biodiversity and why cities should prioritize biodiversity considerations [John-Rob – 10 mins] • The imperative and opportunity for cities to contribute to national level biodiversity goals through the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the Global Biodiversity Framework [Ingrid – 15 mins] • Q&A [5 mins]	• John-Rob Pool (WRI) • Ingrid Coetzee (ICLEI Africa) *[online]*	• Ted Wong (WRI)

14:00-15:15 (75 mins)	How to Develop a Data Driven Urban Biodiversity Strategy	• Introduction to six requirements for cities to develop a biodiversity strategy [60 mins]
		  o Goals and Indicators
		  o Data Sources
		  o Data collection (including the importance of community participation and citizen science)
		  o Data Analysis
		  o Data Actionability
		  o Data Governance
		• Q&A [15 mins]
			• Ted Wong (WRI)	• Elizabeth Wesley (WRI)

15:15-15:30 (15 mins)		TEA BREAK		
15:30-16:00 (30 mins)	City Spotlights: Presentations from Participating Cities	• Quezon, Philippines [15 mins] • Anji City, China [15 mins] o Anji City Urban Biodiversity Case Sharing	• Vincent Vinarao (Quezon City) • Shijun Zheng (Anji City)	• John-Rob Pool (WRI)

Day 1 (vertical label for the day)

DATE & TIME	SESSION TITLE	DESCRIPTION	SPEAKERS	MODERATOR

16:00-17:30 (90 mins)	Interactive Exercise: Using Data to Create a New Park in PerfectPlace City – Part 1	• Split participants into diverse groups
		• Section 1 [45 mins]:
		  • Each group is given a priority urban issue: public access to parks, climate mitigation, water quality, etc.
		  • Groups discuss data priorities and develop indicators
		  • Groups present their indicators
		• Section 2 [45 mins]:
		  • Groups discuss how to combine data layers to choose locations of new parks
		  • Groups analyze data and propose park locations
			• Elizabeth Wesley (WRI)
			• Ted Wong (WRI)
				• John-Rob Pool (WRI)

END OF DAY 1				

DATE & TIME	SESSION TITLE	DESCRIPTION	SPEAKERS	MODERATOR
DAY 2: TOOLS TO MEASURE AND VALUE URBAN BIODIVERSITY & NATURE				
Day 2 — 09:00-09:15 (15 mins)	Day 2 Welcome	• Welcome • Overview of Day 2 agenda	• Elizabeth Wesley (WRI)	
09:15-10:00 (45 mins)	City Spotlights: Presentations from Participating Cities	• National Institute of Urban Affairs, India [15 mins] o On behalf of GEF-7 Indian cities • Melaka City, Malaysia [15 mins] • Q&A [15 mins]	• Varsha Singh (NIUA) • Nadhirah Binti Ahmad (Melaka City)	• John-Rob Pool (WRI)
10:00-10:45 (45 mins)	Interactive Exercise: Using Data to Create a New Park in a Hypothetical City – Part 2	• Groups present their proposed park locations	• Elizabeth Wesley (WRI)	• Ted Wong (WRI)
10:45-11:15 (30 mins)	TEA BREAK			
11:15-11:45 (30 mins)	Presentation: Nature as Infrastructure	• Conceptualizing nature as critical infrastructure and assigning value to the infrastructural services that nature provides in cities [20 mins] • Q&A [10 mins]	• John-Rob Pool (WRI)	• Elizabeth Wesley (WRI)

Time	Session	Details	Speaker	Facilitator
11:45-12:15 (30 mins)	Presentation: Introduction to the City Biodiversity Index	• How to use the self-assessment tool to assess and monitor the progress of city-led biodiversity conservation efforts against pre-intervention baselines [20 mins] • Q&A [10 mins]	• Yi Jiang (ICLEI)	• John-Rob Pool (WRI)
12:15-13:15 (60 mins)	LUNCH BREAK			
13:15-13:45 (30 mins)	Post-lunch Energizer			• John-Rob Pool (WRI)
13:45-14:30 (45 mins)	Presentation: Cost-benefit Assessments for Nature-related Projects	• Introduction to city-level cost-benefit assessments for nature (using nature as a proxy for biodiversity) • Illustrate the potential financial return on investment for nature-based projects in cities • Case study: Canal Restoration to Mitigate Flooding and Water Pollution in Kochi, India	• Michail Kapetanakis (IISD) *[online]*	• John-Rob Pool (WRI)
14:30-15:00 (30 mins)	Case Study Presentation: Chengdu's Urban Green Heart program	• Introduction to the AIPH Green City Awards [10 mins] • Case study presentation: Chengdu's Urban Green Heart program [20 mins] • Q&A [10 mins]	• Audrey Timm, AIPH *[online]*	• John-Rob Pool (WRI)
15:00-15:30 (30 mins)	Presentation: Introduction to Natural Capital Valuation	• Overview of natural capital valuation and how to use it to estimate the financial value of nature's contributions and incorporate nature into city project design • Case study from an Asian city • Q&A [10 mins]	• TBC (EBRD) *[online]*	• Elizabeth Wesley (WRI)
15:30-16:00 (30 mins)	TEA BREAK			
16:00-17:00 (60 mins)	Interactive Exercise: Conduct Your Own Cost-benefit Assessment	• Split participants into diverse groups • Using provided scenarios, brainstorm and discuss costs and benefits • Report back in plenary	• John-Rob Pool (WRI)	• Ted Wong (WRI)
17:00-17:15 (15 mins)	Day 2 Wrap Up & Preview of Day 3	• Preview of Day 3 agenda • Reminder about site visit	• Elizabeth Wesley (WRI)	
END OF DAY 2				

DATE & TIME		SESSION TITLE	DESCRIPTION	SPEAKERS	MODERATOR
			DAY 3: FINANCING & IMPLEMENTING URBAN BIODIVERSITY PROJECTS		
Day 3	09:00-09:15 (15 mins)	Day 3 Welcome	• Welcome • Overview of Day 3 agenda	• John-Rob Pool (WRI)	

	09:15-10:00 (45 mins)	Presentation: Urban Biodiversity Finance Guide – Sources of Finance for Biodiversity	• Overview of different financing sources and resources for urban biodiversity projects in cities
			• Showcase innovative mechanisms to finance urban biodiversity related projects
			  o Catalogue of financing and technical assistance opportunities for 2023 – 2024
			  o Biodiversity finance decision-making tree
			• Q&A [15 mins]
				• John-Rob Pool (WRI)	• Karishma Asarpota (ICLEI WS)

	10:00-10:30 (30 mins)	Interactive Exercise: Using the Biodiversity Finance Decision Making Tree - Part 1	• Split participants into diverse groups • Provide scenarios and ask the participants to identify the best financial pathways for the projects based on their characteristics and attributes	• John-Rob Pool (WRI)	• Karishma Asarpota (ICLEI WS)
	10:30-11:00 (30 mins)		TEA BREAK		
	11:00-11:30 (30 mins)	Interactive Exercise: Using the Biodiversity Finance Decision Making Tree - Part 2	• Report back in plenary	• John-Rob Pool (WRI)	• Karishma Asarpota (ICLEI WS)
	11:30-12:00 (30 mins)	Presentation: Technical Assistance Opportunities to Enhance Access to Finance for Biodiversity in Cities	• Overview of ICLEI's Transformative Actions Program (TAP) and case studies from Asian cities [10 mins] • How to prepare a TAP application [10 mins] • Q&A [10 mins]	• Karishma Asarpota (ICLEI WS) • Yi Jiang (ICLEI EAS)	• John-Rob Pool (WRI)
	12:00-12:30 (30 mins)	Wrap-up	• Feedback survey • Participants' reflections: What did you learn? What else do you want to know? How can we continue to help you?	• John-Rob Pool (WRI)	

	• What is the one thing you will do when you're back at the office, because of this training? • Group photo	