

Research Report

Global Mayors Forum



***The Question of Expanding Green Spaces and
Urban Parks to Enhance Quality of Life and Improve
the Environment***

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Introduction

The rapid growth of urban areas has led to a significant loss of natural landscapes and green spaces. This trend poses multiple environmental and social challenges, including poor air quality, heat island effects, loss of biodiversity, and decreased mental health. Expanding green spaces and urban parks offers numerous benefits, from improving public health to mitigating climate change. This report highlights the importance of green spaces in cities and presents ways to increase their availability and accessibility.

Urbanization has led to the reduction of natural spaces in cities, impacting both the environment and the well-being of residents. Expanding green spaces and urban parks is a key solution to enhance the quality of life for urban dwellers and improve urban ecosystems. This report explores the benefits of green spaces, outlines challenges cities face in expanding them, and provides recommendations for local governments to promote the creation of more parks and natural areas in urban environments.

The Committee

You will be a delegate in the Global Mayors forum, a unique committee within the United Nations that does not have any special rules of procedure. The General Assembly's rules of procedure apply to the Global Mayors Forum. The Global Mayors Forum discusses social, economic, and sustainable issues affecting metropolitan cities. Therefore, each delegate will represent a metropolitan city as their mayor. The delegate acts as the mayor for the capital city of their allocated nation. As a delegate of the Global Mayors forum you will partake in the debate about resolutions. Resolutions have to be handed in beforehand by each delegation. It is important to take into account that financial abilities in partaking in resolving the issue are not part of debates in MUNA, thus it is expected that a delegate does not speak against a resolution due to financial reasons.

Keywords

Green Spaces – Areas of vegetation, including parks, gardens, and green corridors, in urban environments that provide ecological, recreational, and aesthetic benefits.

Urban Parks – Public spaces within cities that are specifically designated for recreation, leisure, and green landscaping.

Urbanization – The process by which cities grow, often leading to the reduction of natural spaces in favor of buildings and infrastructure.

Air Quality Improvement – The process of reducing pollutants in the air, often achieved through the creation of green spaces that absorb harmful gases and particulate matter.

Urban Heat Island Effect – The phenomenon where urban areas become significantly warmer than surrounding rural areas due to human activity, concrete, and limited vegetation.

Biodiversity Preservation – The protection and maintenance of diverse plant and animal species, which can be supported by the creation of green spaces in cities.

Stormwater Management – Techniques used to manage rainwater runoff, where green spaces can play a role in absorbing water and preventing flooding.

Physical Health – The well-being of individuals in terms of physical activity, which can be improved through access to green spaces that promote outdoor exercise.

Mental Health – The psychological and emotional well-being of individuals, which can be enhanced by spending time in nature, reducing stress, and increasing overall happiness.

Social Cohesion – The sense of community and social bonding that can be promoted by shared public spaces, including parks and green areas.

Green Infrastructure – The use of natural systems, such as trees and plants, to manage environmental challenges like stormwater, air quality, and urban heat islands.

Community Gardens – Localized gardens that are managed by community members, often used for growing food, enhancing neighborhood green spaces, and fostering social interaction.

Sustainable Urban Planning – Planning that prioritizes long-term environmental, social, and economic benefits, including the incorporation of green spaces into city layouts.

Equitable Access – Ensuring all residents, regardless of income or background, have equal access to parks and green spaces.

Green Corridors – Networks of connected green spaces that provide pathways for wildlife and people, often spanning across urban areas to create eco-friendly transportation routes.

Public-Private Partnerships – Collaborative efforts between government bodies and private companies to fund, develop, and maintain green spaces and urban parks.

Urban Agriculture – The practice of growing food within urban areas, often in parks or unused spaces, which can contribute to both food security and environmental sustainability.

Tree Planting Initiatives – Programs aimed at planting trees in urban areas to improve air quality, reduce the urban heat island effect, and enhance the aesthetic value of cities.

Pocket Parks – Small parks created in vacant or underutilized spaces within.



Arguments

Environmental Benefits:

- **Air Quality Improvement:** Urban parks act as natural air filters by absorbing carbon dioxide and pollutants like nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, and particulate matter, leading to cleaner air.
- **Reduction of Urban Heat Islands:** Green spaces help reduce the urban heat island effect, which makes cities warmer than surrounding rural areas. Vegetation cools the air through transpiration and shading, reducing the need for air conditioning and helping to mitigate climate change.
- **Biodiversity Preservation:** Parks and green areas serve as refuges for wildlife, promoting biodiversity in urban settings. They support a variety of plant and animal species and act as corridors for migration.
- **Stormwater Management:** Green spaces, especially urban forests and wetlands, absorb rainwater, reducing runoff and helping to manage stormwater. This can reduce flooding and prevent water pollution.

Health and Social Benefits:

- **Physical and Mental Health:** Access to green spaces has been linked to numerous health benefits, including increased physical activity, reduced stress, and improved mental well-being. People living near parks are more likely to engage in outdoor activities, which can lower the risk of obesity, heart disease, and mental health disorders.
- **Social Cohesion:** Parks provide a space for social interaction, fostering community engagement and social ties. Green spaces are often places for family gatherings, outdoor events, and local activities that strengthen neighborhood bonds.
- **Recreation and Leisure:** Urban parks offer essential recreational spaces for residents, providing areas for sports, relaxation, picnics, and cultural activities.

Resolution

When composing a resolution, a delegate should carefully consider their country's perspective and opinion on the matter. This research report is a good starting point for your research. Try to think of ways that offer a solution for all countries involved to protect cultural diversity of national, ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities.

Remember to focus on all nations in the world keeping in mind the different crises in the world and the effects people all over the world experience from them. Make sure the measurements are realistic and achievable.

Moreover, you should keep in mind that different countries have different policies and keep the global differences in mind. These differences might be economic; however, they are also largely cultural. Make sure to research your country in detail, and keep in mind that you are speaking as if representing that nation. Therefore, make sure to have done some research about your country's policies before joining the conference.

References

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- World Bank. (2020). "The Importance of Green Spaces in Urban Planning."