

Christopher HEENAN 9/15/2024 ↻

## World Habitat Day 2024 : "Engaging youth to create a better urban future."

On 7 October 2024, the Global Observance of World Habitat Day, will be under the theme "Engaging youth to create a better urban future." The world is rapidly urbanizing, and many urban residents these days are young people, especially in some countries in Africa and Asia. It will focus on how we can engage the new generation in planning their urban present and future through participatory processes and local leadership opportunities.

↻ CHRISTOPHER HEENAN 9/15/24 11:58AM

### Wetlands in cities

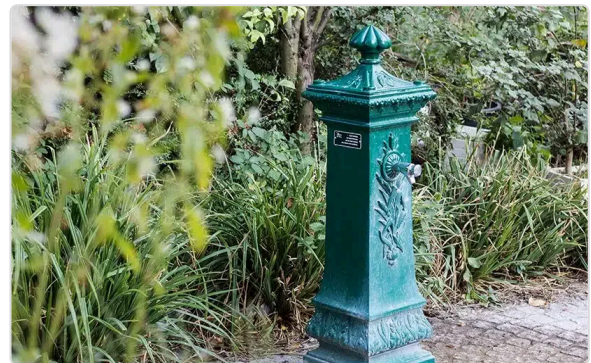
According to the United Nations, 55% of the world's population currently lives in urban areas, with this number projected to grow to 68% by 2050. While wetland ecosystems are increasingly being recognized as highly valuable natural assets that provide a wide range of benefits to urban communities, the services they provide are under immense pressure due to rapid urban expansion and human activity. With 35% loss globally since 1970, wetlands are our most threatened ecosystem, disappearing three times faster than forests.



The-value-of-wetlands-for-cities-FACT-SHEET-9-Oct\_compressed

↻ CHRISTOPHER HEENAN 10/3/24 1:31PM

**Water fountains to allow people to hydrate free of charge with drinking water.**



↻ CHRISTOPHER HEENAN 10/3/24 1:34PM

**Receive bonuses if we collect rainwater in tanks to water our garden.**



CHRISTOPHER HEENAN 10/3/24 1:38PM

**It would be an ideal futuristic city where society, nature and water are not lacking while being in balance.**



CHRISTOPHER HEENAN 10/3/24 1:39PM

**In the cities of the future, water will be essential for sustainable development. Faced with urbanization and challenges, effective management of water resources will become essential.**

Rainwater harvesting and green infrastructure systems help prevent flooding. Water quality will be monitored by smart sensors to ensure access to drinking water.



The reuse of wastewater will be optimized for uses such as irrigation. The integration of aquatic spaces, such as canals and fountains, will enrich biodiversity and provide places to relax.

The water will help regulate urban temperatures during heat waves. Thanks to advanced technologies, the management of water networks will be more efficient.

Thus, water will be at the heart of strategies to create resilient and sustainable cities.

CHRISTOPHER HEENAN 10/3/24 1:41PM

**In the near future, our cities could be transformed by modern and sustainable water towers. These iconic structures would not only serve as reservoirs but also as green spaces and community centers, equipped with solar panels and gardens. With smart technologies, they would ensure efficient water management while strengthening our commitment to a more sustainable and connected city.**



GONÇALO GOMES 10/4/24 10:23PM

**The Role of Wetlands in a Sustainable Future** 🌿

Wetlands are powerful tools for creating better cities. They reduce flooding, purify air and water, support biodiversity, and store carbon. By integrating wetlands into urban spaces, we enhance resilience to climate





change and improve the quality of life for all.  
It's our duty to protect them!

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⇌ CHRISTOPHER HEENAN 10/3/24 1:42PM

**We would have the impression that the city would emerge from the waves, connecting them together there would be footbridges that would dance to the rhythm of the ride.**



⇌ CHRISTOPHER HEENAN 10/3/24 10:26PM

Water makes Venice one of the most beautiful cities in Europe.  
That's why we need to protect it.



⇌ JANINE E LEONOR 10/4/24 9:43PM

### **How wetlands can improve cities**

Wetlands have the potential to become the green heart of future cities. They not only cool the environment and control flooding, but also filter water and shelter wildlife, turning urban areas into natural sanctuaries. They represent the perfect harmony between nature and urbanization, establishing areas that not only safeguard the city, but also provide its residents with a place to breathe, relax and reconnect with nature.



⇌ JANINE E LEONOR 10/4/24 9:55PM

The Douro River plays a crucial role in Porto, shaping the city's culture and identity, as well as being a major tourist hub, mainly due to its connection with Port wine production. As well as boosting the economy, the river also provides entertainment, with leisure spaces along its banks, and contributes to sustainable progress through the production of hydroelectric power.

The Douro river makes Porto one of the best and most beautiful cities in the world 🇵🇹  
That's why we need to protect it ❤️💚



⇒ MARGARIDA AND M. LEONOR 10/4/24 11:00PM

**A poem about the importance of wetlands  
and the future they can provide...**

**(written by Margarida and M. Leonor)**

In the heart of the land, where waters rest,  
The wetlands wake, nature's quiet quest.  
Beneath their stillness, a secret they keep,  
A promise to cities, a future we seek.

They filter the streams with a gentle hand,  
Cleansing the waters, renewing the land.  
They cradle the storms, as floods rush by,  
A shield for the city beneath open sky.

The reeds stand tall, roots deep in the ground,  
Where toxins and waste  
can no longer be found.  
In the whisper of winds  
through the cattails' sway,  
A cleaner tomorrow begins today.

A haven for life, where creatures roam,  
These wetlands offer a shared, peaceful home.  
For humans and nature, a bond to restore,  
A future of balance, forevermore.

So let us protect these wetlands that glow,  
For in their care, our cities will grow.  
Cleaner and brighter, with each passing stream,  
The wetlands will bring us  
the world that we dream!



⇒ MARIA LEONOR AND MARGARIDA 10/4/24 11:07PM

**Alqueva dam**

Water is an essential factor for life  
and, consequently, for agriculture.  
Irrigation plays a fundamental role  
in this sector and the Alqueva  
dam is an example of success.  
Alqueva, the largest artificial water reservoir  
in Western Europe, is a clear example of  
how irrigation can make all the difference in  
agriculture. In this case, in the middle of  
Alentejo, it made it possible to integrate  
spring and summer crops in a dry area.



Written by Maria Leonor and Margarida 🇵🇹

⇒ MARIA 10/5/24 7:55AM

**How can wetlands help in urban floods?**

As cities grapple with the increasing frequency  
and intensity of storms due to climate change,  
the natural functions of wetlands become  
essential in flood mitigation strategies.

Wetlands possess a unique ability to absorb  
and retain water, acting as natural sponges.  
During heavy rainfall, these ecosystems can  
capture excess runoff, which helps reduce the  
volume of water entering urban drainage





systems. By absorbing this water, wetlands lower peak flow levels, thereby decreasing the risk of flooding in adjacent neighborhoods.

The vegetation found in wetlands plays a crucial role in stabilizing soil and preventing erosion. By anchoring the soil, wetlands minimize the loss of sediment into waterways, which can obstruct flow and exacerbate flooding. This stabilization helps maintain clearer channels for stormwater runoff.

In addition to flood management, wetlands improve water quality. They filter out pollutants and sediments from stormwater, which is especially critical during flood events when water quality can degrade rapidly. By maintaining clean water, wetlands support healthier aquatic ecosystems.

In conclusion, incorporating wetlands into urban planning enhances the overall resilience of cities facing climate challenges. As extreme weather events become more common, the ecosystem services provided by wetlands are crucial in protecting communities from the impacts of flooding.

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↩️ **GUILHERME LOPES** 10/7/24 9:51AM

**How Wetlands Can Improve Future City Life**

Wetlands offer natural solutions for cities facing climate change. They reduce flooding by absorbing excess water and act as carbon sinks, helping to lower emissions. Wetlands also improve air quality, boost biodiversity, and provide green spaces for recreation.

By integrating wetlands into urban planning, cities can become more resilient, sustainable, and healthier places to live, better equipped to handle climate challenges in the future.

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↩️ **SALMA ARCOS** 10/7/24 1:05PM

**What could happen if wetlands disappear in a country?**

1. Biodiversity Loss: Wetlands are crucial habitats for many species. Their loss can lead to declines in biodiversity and the extinction of certain plants and animals.

2. Water Quality Degradation: Wetlands filter pollutants and improve water quality. Without them, water sources may become contaminated, leading to health issues for humans and wildlife.

- 3. Flooding: Wetlands act as natural buffers, absorbing excess water during heavy rains. Their disappearance can increase flood risks in nearby areas.
- 4. Climate Change Impacts: Wetlands store carbon dioxide, helping to mitigate climate change. Their loss can release stored carbon, exacerbating global warming.
- 5. Economic Consequences: Many industries, such as fishing and tourism, rely on healthy wetland ecosystems. Their disappearance can harm these industries, leading to job losses and economic decline.
- 6. Soil Erosion: Wetlands help stabilize shorelines and prevent erosion. Their loss can result in increased erosion and land loss.
- 7. Altered Water Cycles: Wetlands play a vital role in regulating local and regional water cycles. Their loss can disrupt these cycles, affecting agriculture and water supply.
- 8. Cultural Impact: Many communities have cultural ties to wetlands for recreation, traditional practices, and heritage. Their loss can impact community identity and practices.

For all this, the preservation of wetlands is important and must be priority

➡ **DEPENDABLE ELEPHANT** 10/7/24 1:10PM

**A better urban future**

Creating a better urban future involves reimagining cities to be more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient. Here are some key components to consider:

- 1. Sustainable Transportation
  - Public Transit Expansion: Invest in efficient, reliable public transportation systems to reduce reliance on cars.
  - Walking and Cycling Infrastructure: Develop pedestrian-friendly streets and dedicated bike lanes to encourage non-motorized transport.
- 2. Green Spaces
  - Urban Parks and Green Roofs: Increase access to green spaces through parks, gardens, and green roofs, promoting biodiversity and improving air quality.
  - Community Gardens: Support local food production and community engagement through the creation of community gardens.
- 3. Smart City Technology
  - Data-Driven Urban Planning: Use data analytics to optimize city services, manage resources, and improve quality of life.
  - Smart Infrastructure: Implement smart grids and energy-efficient buildings to



reduce energy consumption and enhance sustainability.

#### 4. Affordable Housing

**Inclusive Housing Policies:** Promote policies that ensure affordable housing options for all income levels, preventing displacement and fostering diverse communities.

**Mixed-Use Development:** Encourage mixed-use neighborhoods that combine residential, commercial, and recreational spaces.

#### 5. Resilience to Climate Change

**Flood Management Systems:** Design urban areas to manage stormwater effectively, incorporating green infrastructure like bioswales and permeable pavements.

**Energy Resilience:** Invest in renewable energy sources and decentralized energy systems to ensure reliable power during disruptions.

#### 6. Community Engagement

**Participatory Planning:** Involve residents in urban planning decisions, ensuring their voices and needs are heard.

**Local Initiatives:** Support grassroots projects that enhance community well-being and foster local ownership.

#### 7. Economic Sustainability

**Support for Local Businesses:** Create policies that favor local entrepreneurship and small businesses, contributing to a vibrant local economy.

**Job Training Programs:** Invest in workforce development initiatives that prepare residents for jobs in sustainable industries.

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⇒ **SUPPORTIVE BAT** 10/7/24 1:10PM

**Maria Inês Costa**

#### **Urban Design & Planning Workshops**

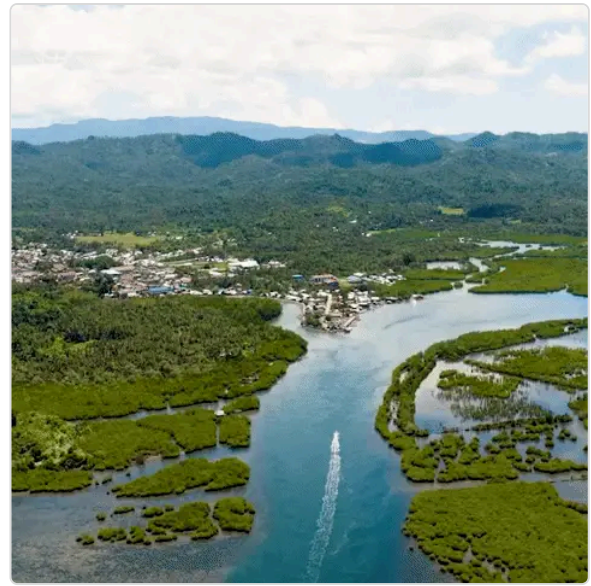
Offer design thinking workshops and urban planning training where youth can collaborate with urban planners and architects. These could focus on improving public spaces, transportation, and sustainability.



↩ ANA AND HELENA 10/7/24 2:54PM

**Contribution of wetlands for a better future- Ana and Helena**

Wetlands can enhance future city life by reducing flood risks, purifying water, cooling urban areas, and supporting biodiversity. They also sequester carbon, improve air quality, and offer recreational and aesthetic value. Additionally, wetlands increase cities' resilience to climate change, making them essential for sustainable urban development.



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↩ CRISTINA 10/7/24 11:58PM

**Wetlands play a crucial role in enhancing urban environments and improving city life in several ways:**

- **Flood Mitigation:** Wetlands absorb excess rainwater, reducing flood risk and protecting infrastructure.
- **Water Quality Improvement:** They filter pollutants and improve water quality by trapping sediments and nutrients, benefiting nearby water sources.
- **Biodiversity Support:** Wetlands provide habitat for diverse species, promoting urban biodiversity and ecological resilience.
- **Recreation and Aesthetics:** These areas offer spaces for recreation, such as walking trails and birdwatching, enhancing the quality of life for residents.
- **Climate Regulation:** Wetlands store carbon, helping to mitigate climate change and improve air quality.
- **Education and Research:** They serve as valuable sites for environmental education and research, promoting community awareness and engagement.

Incorporating wetlands into urban planning can lead to healthier, more sustainable cities.

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⇒ ELIAS BELOUKAS 10/10/24 9:45PM

### **Engaging youth to create a better urban future**

The skatepark in Kungsbacka is a great example of how water is included in the city. There are water drains that collect daywater as well as many other uses for water in the park. Water is for example used in drinking fountains and other fountains used for playing.



⇒ ELIAS BELOUKAS 10/10/24 9:50PM

### **The importance of water resources for both the students and for biodiversity**

These pictures were taken right outside our school. We really appreciate having these water resources close to us. Here you can do things like go boating and feed birds. These places are also very important for biodiversity and it is important to preserve them.



⇒ CHRISTOPHER HEENAN 10/11/24 10:34AM

Les zones humides jouent un rôle fondamental dans notre environnement. Elles sont des écosystèmes riches en biodiversité, abritant une multitude d'espèces animales et végétales. En plus de cela, elles régulent les eaux en absorbant les excès lors des inondations et en maintenant l'équilibre des niveaux d'eau. Leur capacité à filtrer naturellement l'eau leur permet de purifier les polluants, améliorant ainsi la qualité de l'eau que nous utilisons. De plus, ces zones sont essentielles dans la lutte contre le changement climatique, car elles stockent du carbone dans leurs sols, contribuant à réduire les gaz à effet de serre.

"L'eau, précieuse amie,  
nous berce et nous nourrit,  
Elle danse dans les rivières, éclatante de vie.  
Face à sa puissance, nous restons ébahis,



Mais ensemble, main dans  
la main, tout devient infini.”

⇨ **CHRISTOPHER HEENAN** 10/11/24 10:35AM

Ma ville du futur est remplie d'eau. Une ville où l'eau circule partout, les bâtiments sont couverts de végétation, et les toits remplis de panneaux solaires, les gens se déplacent principalement en bateau qui avance grâce à leurs panneaux solaires. (l'énergie solaire alimente tout) et l'eau est recyclée et utilisée pour créer de l'électricité.



⇨ **CHRISTOPHER HEENAN** 10/11/24 10:37AM

In the near future I see very green cities surrounded by forests with lots of canals and rivers to produce renewable energy and tourism.



⇨ **CHRISTOPHER HEENAN** 10/11/24 10:40AM

I see my futuristic city as very green and sustainable. there will be waterfalls that join the rivers and lakes. it will be an autonomous city from A to Z.



⇨ **CHRISTOPHER HEENAN** 10/14/24 1:06PM

Cities of the future with lots of vegetation and huge rivers and waterfalls, the buildings would be adapted to the passage of the different watercourses.



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