



# Final Conference: Guiding Cities to Deliver Regenerative Urban Transformation

10 February 2026 | Hybrid  
spinPLACE | Bankowa 5 St. | Katowice

## Agenda

TIME	SESSION
08:30 – 09:00	REGISTRATION & NETWORKING COFFEE
09:00 – 09:30	<b>OPENING SESSION</b>  Welcome speeches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Marcin Krupa</b> – Mayor of the Katowice City</li><li>• <b>Darko Fercej</b> – UPSURGE Project Coordinator, E-Institute</li><li>• <b>Claire Kwiatkowski</b> – Project Officer, European Commission</li></ul>
09:30 – 10:45	<b>SESSION 1 – SETTING THE SCENE: FROM POLICY VISIONS TO CITY ACTION: ADDRESSING THE URBAN REGENERATION CHALLENGE</b>  <b>Objective for this session:</b> <i>Present and discuss the current policy landscape related to regenerative transition of cities, the emerging obligations, opportunities and challenges for cities related to the EU Nature Restoration Law</i>  <b>Keynote:</b> <b>Paola Lepori</b> , Head of Biodiversity & Nature-based Solutions team at ICLEI Europe  <b>Session moderation:</b> <b>Priscila Franco Steier</b> , ICLEI Europe  <b>Discussion Panel:</b>  Issues discussed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Why cities must act now?</b></li><li>• <b>How can cities most effectively respond to the environmental/climate and related spatial and social challenges of regenerative urban transformations?</b></li><li>• <b>What are the biggest barriers cities face in responding to these challenges: financial, regulatory, organisational, or social?</b></li></ul> Panellists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Paola Lepori</b>, ICLEI Europe</li><li>• <b>Martin Grisel</b>, Director at EUKN (European Urban Knowledge Network)</li><li>• <b>Małgorzata Bartyna-Zielińska</b>, City Council of Wrocław</li><li>• <b>Helena Jadwischczok-Molencka</b>, the Silesian Marshal's Office</li></ul>

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10:45 – 11:15 COFFEE-BREAK

11:15 – 13:00 **SESSION 2 – INNOVATIONS FOR DELIVERING REGENERATIVE URBAN TRANSFORMATION: KEY UPSURGE ACHIEVEMENTS TO ADDRESS THE CITIES' CHALLENGES**

**Objective for this session:** *Highlight the key innovative achievements developed and tested under the UPSURGE project that may help cities effectively address the challenges of strategic planning, implementation and monitoring of regenerative actions*

**Introduction:**

*Key challenges of the Regenerative Urban Transformations addressed by the UPSURGE project* – **Darko Fercej**, E-Institute

**5 cluster presentations:**

- *UPSURGE innovations to support fit-for-purpose NBS design* – **Thomas Martinez**, The Tarrasense Conditioning Association [LEITAT]
- *UPSURGE innovations in support of NBS & communities engagement/society relations* – **Christina Haderer & Janine Maier**, University of Passau [UPASS]
- *UPSURGE innovations for fit-for-purpose NBS implementation and upscaling* – **Jennifer Mckinley & Bakul Budhiraja**, Queen's University Belfast [QUB], **Simon Elliott**, University of Antwerp
- *UPSURGE innovations for a holistic NBS environmental sensing and effectiveness monitoring* – **Ronald Chenú Abente Acosta**, Opencontent Società Cooperativa [OC]
- *UPSURGE innovations to support NBS strategic planning to enable regenerative transitions in cities* – **Tadej Zuman**, POR Consult, d.o.o./GCE

13:00 – 13:30 LUNCH

13:30 – 14:30 **SESSION 3 – REGENERATIVE INNOVATION IN PRACTICE: SPOTLIGHTS FROM THE UPSURGE PILOT CITIES**

Session moderation: **Jennifer McKinley & Bakul Budhiraja** [QUB]

*City Reflections on Key Innovative NbS and Highlights in Engagement Process*

- Maribor – Matjaz Fras
- Katowice – Magdalena Biela
- Budapest – Enikő Korpos
- Belfast – Debbie Caldwell
- Breda – Coen de Nijs

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## 14:30 – 16:00 SESSION 4 – SCALING NATURE-BASED INNOVATION ACROSS EUROPE

Session moderation: **Janine Maier & Christina Haderer** [UPASS]

*Navigating Sustainability and Scalability: Insights from UPSURGE Comparative Assessments and Simulations* – **Jennifer McKinley & Bakul Budhiraja** [QUB]

*Patras as an upscaling case of UPSURGE innovations* – **Konstadinos Konstadakopoulos / Vasilios Kantzaris** [PATRAS]

**Discussion Panel with UPSURGE demo cities:**

**Overcoming Challenges in Upscaling Nature-Based Solutions in Cities:**

Representatives of Cities:

- Maribor – Matjaž Fras
- Katowice – Lech Marek
- Budapest – Éva Beleznay
- Belfast – Debbie Caldwell
- Breda – D.J. Coort

**Topics:** *Key Challenges in design and implementation phases and Lessons learnt from deployment and engagement → how to upscale NBS based on UPSURGE Learnings*

## 16:00 – 16:15 COFFEE-BREAK

## 16:15 – 16:45 SESSION 5 – CONNECTING THE DOTS: THE EU REGENERATIVE LIGHTHOUSE & URBANBYNATURE”

*Launch of the UrbanByNature Services Portfolio as the UPSURGE legacy* – **Priscila Franco Steier**, ICLEI Europe

## 16:45 – 17:15 WRAP UP AND CLOSING REMARKS

**Key takeaways** by **Darko Fercej** – UPSURGE Project Coordinator, E-Institute

**Closing Remarks** – **Francesco Molinari**, Advisory Board Member of the UPSURGE project and specialist in R&D and innovation policy, innovative public procurement, and living labs

## 17:15 – 18:30 NETWORKING