Mainstreaming biodiversity and health linkages in the European Union

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EU programmes on Environment and Health

- 7th Environmental Action Programme
  - to safeguard the Union’s citizens from environment-related pressures and risks to health and wellbeing

- Research
  - The European Exposome Cluster

- EEAS
  - One Health (OH)

- Agriculture
- Transport
- Competition
- ...
EU Policy Framework(s)

- EU Action Plan for nature, people and the economy
- 7th EPA
- EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy and the Roadmap to Resource Efficiency
- EU Adaptation Strategy
- Green Infrastructure (GI) Enhancing Europe's Natural Capital
- H2020 Focus Area on Nature-based solutions (NbS)

Policy signals to decisionmakers, planners, promotors to invest in GI and adaptation projects at local, regional, national and cross-boundary level ...

Implementation can have significant health benefits
Some are being reviewed at the moment
Moved by Nature, Kuopio

Health and nature professionals worked together to allow vulnerable groups to benefit from access to physical activity in nature areas.

Volunteering for Natura 2000 will bring young people close to nature
Sustainable urban planning and design
18000 sites covering 27% of the EU territory. 50% of the EU city population lives within 5 km from a Natura 2000 site.

Medvednica Nature Park Natura 2000 site in Zagreb

Zadorra river – a Natura 2000 site in Vitoria-Gasteiz
Bosco Verticale - Vertical forest in Milan, Italy

Green corridors for urban well-being:
City of Barcelona, Spain
Nature's role for Health

if nature were a pill, it would be reimbursed by health care insurance

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**HEALTH BENEFITS**

NATURE IS THE BEST NURTURE

- Reduced anxiety & depression
- Decreased stress
- Increased energy
- Increased immunity
- 50% lower risk of diabetes
- Increased vitamin D production
- Increased weight loss & fitness
- Reduced symptoms of A.D.D.

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**SUGGESTED DOSAGE**

CONTACT WITH NATURE IS AN AFFORDABLE, ACCESSIBLE AND EQUITABLE FORM OF PREVENTATIVE AND RESTORATIVE MEDICINE.

- 2 MINUTES
  - Stress is relieved within minutes of exposure to nature
    (as measured by muscle tension, blood pressure and brain activity)

- 2 HOURS
  - Memory performance and attention span improves
    20% after spending an hour interacting with nature

- 2 DAYS
  - Levels of cancer fighting white blood cells increase 50%
    after spending two or more consecutive days in nature

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