

**We, the participants of the Conference on Designing Climate Resilient Landscapes,
gathered in Prague, Czechia, in September 2022,**

recognizing the severity of the anthropogenic climate crisis and its impacts,

perceiving adaptation to climate change as an urgent need and our common task, while *acknowledging* that its success depends also on our strong and timely mitigation efforts, with global warming kept below 1.5°C,

recognizing that the climate, biodiversity, water, pollution and other crises are interconnected and therefore must be addressed together¹,

striving to significantly increase the number and area of climate-resilient communities and regions by 2030,² and to lead Europe into climate resilient development by 2050,³

emphasizing that rural areas cover most of Europe's terrestrial area and consequently successful adaptation has to focus on designing climate resilient landscapes,

stressing that an integral landscape management and planning is needed to deploy climate change mitigation, adaptation and ecosystem restoration measures efficiently, while respecting economic, social and cultural functions of the landscape,

highlighting that adaptation measures can be designed and implemented at any scope, any scale and any level, while considering the specific context of each country/region/area,

noting with concern that maladaptation often leads to adverse outcomes, such as additional financial cost or further deepening of social inequities, and must be therefore prevented,

conscious of the fact that addressing climate crisis and its impacts is an investment rather than a cost, and that its price is much lower than the future cost of inaction,

- 1) *Have identified* the following common elements of successful projects and policies which have already contributed to climate resilient landscapes:⁴
- They succeeded in mainstreaming climate change mitigation and adaptation;
 - They addressed different elements and functions of the landscape simultaneously;
 - They were based on the best available science and data;
 - They championed nature-based solutions, whenever possible;
 - They were based on systems understanding of environmental, social and economic aspects;
 - They valued the non-productive functions of agricultural and forest land;
 - They supported networking and cooperation among all stakeholders to provide mutual inspiration, share best practices, and find synergies among projects/policies;
 - Projects were embedded in national/regional/local policies/strategies;
 - Landscape visions and plans were based on a shared vision of stakeholders;
 - Projects leveraged local participation and action;
 - Local economic and social needs were addressed in building solutions;
 - Long-term financing was secured to maintain actions and scale-up their impact.

¹ Prague Manifesto for Biodiversity Conservation – ECCB 2022

² Communication from the Commission on European Missions, COM/2021/609 final

³ EU Strategy on Adaptation to Climate Change, COM/2021/82 final

⁴ Irrespective of the geographic/climatic/altitude area where they have been implemented

- 2) *Have identified* the following principal obstacles to a successful roll-out of projects and policies contributing to climate resilient landscapes:
 - Adaptation is rarely the focus of stakeholder attention, which adversely affects the allocation of both financial and human resources;
 - Serious information gaps persist among decision-makers and the wider public regarding adaptation measures and their importance for ecosystem services;
 - Insufficient attention is paid to governance structures, inclusiveness, justice and equity, including gender equity, when designing and delivering adaptation projects;
 - Opportunities to engage business actors and commercial financing are neglected;
 - Complex formal procedures and sectoral policies/strategies, without a financial support of concrete response measures, hinder efficient action;
 - Actions still do not reach sufficient scale to have a significant impact;
 - Some economic interests oppose climate resilient development of landscapes;
 - The tool of planning at landscape level is missing;
 - Insufficient attention is paid to reverse fragmentation of the natural environment.
 - Lack of knowledge, information and advisory services about promising forestry and other land management practices that reduce vulnerabilities, and enhance resilience and adaptive capacity
- 3) *Call upon* project designers and implementers to consider using the above-mentioned elements of successful projects and policies.
- 4) *Urge* EU Member States to cooperate in removing the above-mentioned obstacles wherever they persist, and in promoting integrated models of resilient landscape design and management.
- 5) *Remind* decision-makers of mutual benefits between climate change mitigation and adaptation, including emphasis on water retention (the sponge function of the landscape) together with biodiversity conservation and nature restoration.
- 6) *Underline* that the completion of legislative framework as foreseen in the Green Deal, including the nature restoration law, the soil legal framework and the EU forest strategy, is a prerequisite for an efficient implementation of nature-based adaptation measures.
- 7) *Exhort* businesses and the financial sector, in particular banks and insurance companies, to explore commercial opportunities of investing in nature-based solutions, ecosystem services recovery and landscape resilience.
- 8) *Stress* the importance of education and awareness raising on climate resilient landscapes, and of the involvement of young people in the action delivery.
- 9) *Appeal* to all institutions, public and private, as well as to individuals, to help plan and create climate resilient landscapes, based on their respective capabilities.
- 10) *Invite* decision-makers and project designers in both developed and developing countries to make use of innovative methods and transformative solutions presented at this conference.

**This is our
PRAGUE APPEAL**