



# Periurban Parks

## Their place in EU Policies

**Position Paper**  
EUROPARC Federation  
September 2019



# Introduction

## Three quarters of the European population live in an urban area.

Living in a city has many advantages such as opportunities for work, education and culture but, living in an urban area can also bring stresses. Most urbanisation patterns in the last 50 years have produced spreading cities, with increased population numbers, traffic congestion, higher temperatures, noise and air pollution (*Urban Europe, statistics on cities, towns and suburbs 2016 edition*). Besides, the urban lifestyle frequently causes conditions and habits that negatively affect citizens' physical & mental health and overall well-being.

In this context, the EUROPARC Federation highlights that **Protected Areas** - especially those located in the periphery of cities are vital in **providing nature-based solutions** to these issues.

Periurban Parks are wilder, more biodiverse and substantially larger than most common urban parks. This is why **Periurban Parks deliver numerous benefits** like clean air and temperatures control, fresh water, food and timber production and habitats for biodiversity.



Furthermore, they provide citizens with cultural greenspaces for recreation, education and outdoor sport in a healthy natural environment, services that are very much needed in dense compact cities. Periurban Parks are the **heart, soul and lungs of a city!**

## About EUROPARC



[www.europarc.org](http://www.europarc.org)

The EUROPARC Federation is the largest and most representative Protected Area network in Europe, comprising almost 40% of the Natura 2000 network. Nature and Regional Parks alone cover 8% of Europe's land.

Our members manage Europe's Protected Areas, covering almost every regional, national, European and international designation, such as National Parks, Nature and Regional Parks, Natura 2000 Sites, Biosphere Reserves, Ramsar Sites, Geoparks, World Heritage Sites.



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Periurban Parks  
 - as they are referred  
 to - are natural or rural  
 protected sites, including  
 Natura 2000 sites,  
 that are located in the  
 outskirts of cities.

photo: the **Collserola Natural Park** is a Periurban Park in the outskirts of Barcelona, Spain, with a fundamental role in improving air quality and providing recreational opportunities to the city inhabitants © Photo by João Romba

**Cover photo:** Mt Hymettus Aesthetic Forest, Athens  
 © Photo by George Pavlakis

Our membership reaches a constituency of about 25% of the European population touched by Protected Areas, with our Periurban Parks having 25 million visitors annually.





# Key concepts about Periurban Parks

“Periurban Park” is not a protection category in itself, but it can be defined in any of IUCN’s Protected Area Management Categories.

“Periurban” refers to the location where the park is found.

The term “Periurban” means “on the edge of an urban settlement”.

## Typical features

Periurban Parks provide **key ecosystems services** for a good quality of life, among which are included:

- **Climate regulation**
- **Flooding regulation**
- **Air pollution abatement**
- **Biodiversity & habitats conservation**
- **Food and biomass production**
- **Sociocultural services** (recreation opportunities in a natural environment, physical and mental well-being, environmental education)

Typically, Periurban Parks receive **large numbers of visitors**, including **many who visit frequently, even daily**, offering a huge potential available to large parts of the population.



of Periurban Parks

## Main threats

- Are threatened by **urban sprawl, encroachment** and intensification of **urban development**
- Are affected by **heavy infrastructures** (such as highways, railroads, power lines, pipes, etc.)
- Are subject to such **urban edge effects** as more frequent and more severe **fires, air, noise, water and light pollution**, and introduction of **invasive alien species**
- Are often affected by **vandalism, littering, dumping, illegal occupation**, etc.
- Are affected by **intense visitor pressures**



faced by Periurban Parks



Under a scenario of further urbanisation, and hence a further loss of natural habitats and biodiversity, EUROPARC Federation calls upon **cities to be actively involved in the protection of the remaining valuable nature in their vicinity and so derive the many benefits Periurban Parks can bring.**

## EUROPARC Federation states

- 1** The EU currently faces numerous environmental challenges, many of which - biodiversity loss and climate change - are partially derived by the **unprecedented rates of urbanisation** of the last 50 years.
- 2** Despite this urban expansion, **we can still find some natural and rural areas around cities** that contain a considerable level of biodiversity and other areas that have the potential for ecological restoration and the recovery of nature.
- 3** There is a high demand from urban society to **reconnect with nature for better health**, overall physical and mental well-being, practicing outdoor sports, and for educational purposes.
- 4** If these remaining periurban areas are protected, they can be managed as Periurban Parks both to satisfy current societal demand for nature to **deliver important ecosystem services** and be considerable natural assets for the neighbouring towns. In so doing, they reduce the impact of climate change and contribute to halting global biodiversity loss.
- 5** The contribution of Periurban Parks to biodiversity protection, ecosystem services, agriculture, health, urban and cultural agenda **should be recognised by the EU and national and regional authorities with appropriate financial, legal and political engagement**. Specific measures, programmes and funds should be adopted to support natural protected areas located in urban regions and periurban contexts.
- 6** **The role of the EU is essential to boost and require that all cities in Europe design and protect their own Periurban Park** to put nature within reach of all European citizens.



# Periurban Parks play an important role in several European policies



## 1. EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy

**Most Periurban Parks host high levels of biodiversity and many of them are classified as Natura 2000 sites.** Therefore they contribute to *Target 1 - Fully implement the Birds and Habitats Directives of the EU Biodiversity Strategy.* Well managed, Periurban agriculture parks and Periurban forests have also a role in *Target 3 - Achieve more sustainable agriculture and forestry.*

- **Protecting and restoring part of the remaining natural and rural landscape located in the fringes of European cities would help to achieve Target 2 - Maintain and restore ecosystems and their services.**



## 2. Climate change

Periurban Parks play an important role in urban adaptation to climate change by protecting cities from floods and reducing urban heat island effect. At the same time, they also contribute to climate change mitigation through the **absorption of CO<sub>2</sub> and greenhouse gases and help to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.**

- **Protecting natural spaces in the surrounding of cities should be prioritised in the Mayors Adapt Initiative, set up within the EU Adaptation strategy.**



## 3. Nature-based solutions & Re-naturing cities

Periurban Parks provide nature-based solutions to **mitigate the urban heat island effect and reduce the intensity of floods.** Periurban Parks use nature-based solutions in order to resolve other challenges such as connectivity with other areas and to the city.



## 4. Green Infrastructure

Periurban Parks are key areas of land to build green infrastructure around cities and act as **multi-functional areas that connect the wider countryside with the city.**

- **The Green Infrastructure Strategy is as a big opportunity for European cities to protect open natural spaces in their boundaries and restore degraded habitats that, if well managed, will deliver numerous ecosystem services to the neighbouring cities and improve the quality of life in them.**

However, implementation of binding policy would guarantee the role of Periurban Parks and secure their longlasting protection: **with appropriate resources allocated, Periurban Parks would be able to improve their management and the services delivered to society.**



## 5. Agriculture

Periurban agricultural parks not only have a significant **economic function, but also relevant social and environmental functions**, providing the production of local food and the important human connection with nature.



## 6. Urban Agenda

Periurban Parks are **natural and legal barriers to urban development**. They have a vital role in **territorial planning** putting a check on the unlimited growth of cities.

- **Protecting natural spaces in the edge of cities would help to prevent urban sprawl.**



## 7. Health Agenda

Periurban Parks offer the necessary locus for active living and outdoor physical activity, reducing stress through the **restorative effect of nature**. Periurban Parks, especially those which grow organic fruit and vegetables, also contribute to the **promotion of healthy local food**.



## 8. Culture

Periurban Parks are **repositories of cultural heritage** and host old cultural traditions alongside modern events that connect people to their heritage and landscape.



## 9. Environmental education

Periurban Parks play substantial and vital roles in Environmental Education not only for schoolchildren, but also in long-life learning. In addition, they are great places to host **outdoor learning experiences** of all types.



## 10. Outdoor Sports

Periurban Parks are ideal healthy green spaces to practice outdoor physical activity on a frequent, even daily, basis. They are important to **promote healthy aging and a healthy way of life** for an urban society.



European robin, Arche de la nature, Le Mans © Joël Huard

# 1 EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy

DG ENV Directorate-General for the Environment

In May 2011, the European Union adopted a new strategy to halt biodiversity loss in the EU, restore ecosystems where possible, and step up efforts to avert global biodiversity loss. The **EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020** sets out **6 targets and 20 actions** to halt the loss of biodiversity in the EU by 2020. However, the **2015 Mid-Term review** highlighted the need for much greater effort to reach the targets in due time.

## Periurban Parks & the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy

**Periurban Parks already contribute to achieve the first three targets of the EU Biodiversity Strategy** (Target 1. Protect species and habitats. Full implementation of the EU nature legislation, Target 2. Maintain and restore ecosystems. Greater use of green infrastructure & Target 3. Achieve more sustainable agriculture and forestry).

Most **Periurban Parks host a rich and diverse wildlife and many of them are classified as Natura 2000 sites**, thus contributing to Target 1. Protect species and habitats.



Botanical garden, Mt Hymettus Aesthetic Forest, Athens  
© Philodassiki enossi athion

## Resources:

**Biodiversity and Natura 2000 In Urban Areas - Nature in cities across Europe: A review of key issues and experiences.**

Report done for Bruxelles Environnement-IBGE/Leefmilieu Brussel-BIM undertaken by Kerstin Sundseth & Geert Raeymaekers, Brussels.



**Case Study:**  
**Promoting Biodiversity – Arrangements and Monitoring of Snake Populations**

[europarc.org/case-studies/promoting-biodiversity-arrangements-and-monitoring-of-snake-populations-analysis-and-put-in-perspective-with-site-attendance/](http://europarc.org/case-studies/promoting-biodiversity-arrangements-and-monitoring-of-snake-populations-analysis-and-put-in-perspective-with-site-attendance/)

## Resources:

In addition, Periurban Parks play a decisive role in Action 3: Raise awareness of Natura 2000, get citizens involved and improve the enforcement of the nature directives.

Periurban Parks are key to transmitting natural values and biodiversity knowledge to society. Periurban Parks have environmental education programs addressed to primary and secondary schools, families and the general public.

Some of them have special programs addressed to business and enterprises as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility programs.

Periurban Parks' main role is to restore and maintain healthy ecosystems in order to provide ecosystem services to the nearby city. Periurban Parks are core areas from which to build Green Infrastructure in two directions : towards the city and the wider countryside. Therefore, **Periurban Parks heavily contribute to Target 2. Maintain and restore ecosystems. Greater use of green infrastructure.**



**Case Study: Education and interpretation in the Nature Park Medvednica (HR)**

[europarc.org/case-studies/education-interpretation-nature-park-medvednica/](https://europarc.org/case-studies/education-interpretation-nature-park-medvednica/)



**Case Study: Creation of an educational botanical garden in Mt. Hymettus Aesthetic Forest (GR)**

[europarc.org/case-studies/creation-educational-botanical-garden-mt-hymettus-aesthetic-forest/](https://europarc.org/case-studies/creation-educational-botanical-garden-mt-hymettus-aesthetic-forest/)



**Case Study: Corporate Social Responsibility Activities in Collserola Nature Park (ES)**

[europarc.org/case-studies/corporate-social-responsibility-activities-in-collserola-nature-park/](https://europarc.org/case-studies/corporate-social-responsibility-activities-in-collserola-nature-park/)



**Webinar: Life on the Edge - Greening the city boundary**

[europarc.org/webinar-greening-the-city-boundary/](https://europarc.org/webinar-greening-the-city-boundary/)



Periurban Parks play also a role in favouring a more sustainable agriculture by promoting sustainable local agro-food systems known as Km0 agriculture.

With their location close to cities, periurban agriculture parks have access to a large local market. Thus, **Periurban Parks contribute to Target 3. Achieve more sustainable agriculture and forestry.**



**Case Study: Transition to agroecology in Collserola Nature Park enhanced with a participatory process (ES)**

<https://www.europarc.org/case-studies/transition-agroecology-collserola-nature-park-enhanced-participatory-process/>

# By creating spaces for nature, Periurban Parks increase the biodiversity in cities.



# 2 Climate Change

DG CLIMA Directorate-General for the Climate Action

In April 2013, the European Commission adopted an **EU strategy on adaptation to climate change**. The strategy aims to make Europe more climate-resilient. It also launched, together with the European Environment Agency, the European Climate Adaptation Platform, or **Climate-ADAPT**.

Climate Change is undoubtedly one of the major current environmental concerns, causing negative impacts on fauna and flora. Moreover, because of climate change, the frequency and intensity of both heavy precipitations and heat waves have increased, causing catastrophic floods, premature deaths and economic damages. As a result of excessive urbanisation, land in cities has become essentially impermeable and temperatures are higher than in adjoining rural areas, thus creating the so-called “**urban heat islands**”.

Periurban Parks contribute to:

## Climate Change Adaptation

- **Periurban Parks reduce the urban heat island effect**  
Green areas such as periurban parks can be up to 2° C – 4° C cooler than urban areas, thus reducing the impact of heat waves. Vegetated areas, through evapotranspiration and shadowing, improve thermal comfort in densely populated cities. Green spaces at the fringes of cities can also provide a cooling effect if ventilation channels direct this air into the city.
- **Periurban Parks protect the city from floods**  
Non-urbanised land such as that found in Periurban Parks, is permeable which enables aquifers to refill, thus reducing the excess of water on surface, after heavy storms. In addition, a significant part of rainfall is retained by vegetation.

## Climate Change Mitigation

- **Periurban Parks help to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions**  
By providing nature and recreation opportunities close to cities, Periurban parks contribute to reduce the use of car to further away places, reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and therefore mitigating Climate Change.
- **Periurban Parks absorb CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gases**  
Periurban parks – especially those who are being reforested - act as carbon sinks. Trees absorb large quantities of carbon in its growth stage. CO<sub>2</sub> storage in the ground is also very important.

For all the reasons stated above, EUROPARC calls upon the **Covenant of Mayors Initiative on Climate Change Adaptation to sign up to the Mayors Adapt initiative**, to protect large natural spaces in their surrounding as part of their comprehensive local adaptation strategy to Climate Change.

## Periurban river parks

- [Vitoria-Gasteiz green belt \(ES\)](#)
- [Parc Fluvial del Besòs \(ES\)](#)
- [Area protette del Po torinese \(IT\)](#)

## Resources:

[2009 BCN CC Talks](#) – Periurban Parks help to mitigate both the causes and consequences of climate change

[Video: Protected areas and climate change](#) – Ignace Schops, EUROPARC President

# Nature-Based Solutions & Re-Naturing cities **3**

DG RTD Directorate-General for Research & Innovation



Salburua Park, Green ring, Vitoria-Gasteiz

## Periurban Parks & Nature-Based Solutions

- Periurban Parks provide nature-based solutions to response to climate change and flooding
- Periurban Parks can use nature-based solutions in order to resolve other challenges such as connectivity with other areas and to the city.

**Some Periurban Parks are currently participating in projects related to nature-based solutions:**

**Nature-based solutions** to societal challenges are defined as solutions that are inspired and supported by nature; which are cost-effective; simultaneously provide environmental, social and economic benefits and help build resilience. Such solutions bring more and diverse natural features and processes into cities, landscapes and seascapes, through locally adapted, resource-efficient and systemic interventions.



Nature engineering in Portofino Park, Italy



Vltava river in Prague, Czech Republic

Parco di Portofino participates in the T.R.I.G-Eau project (2014 - 2020 INTERREG V-A Italy - France (Maritime)). The project aims to **develop the resilience of the territories by promoting green infrastructure for the management of meteorological outflows**, in order to re-stabilise the water cycle, promoting infiltration and reducing the runoff effect.

UNaLab – Horizon 2020. The city of Prague is promoting the Confluence Soutok Berounka - Vltava Periurban Park - through the UNaLab project. Partner cities commit to **address challenges on climate and water related issues through nature-based solutions**.



Visitors trail in Portofino Park, Santa Margherita Ligure

# 4 Green Infrastructure

DG ENV Directorate-General for the Environment

The **EU Green Infrastructure Strategy** was launched in 2013 in order to help stop the loss of biodiversity and enable ecosystems to deliver their many services to people and nature. The green infrastructure basically consists of a strategically planned network of natural and semi-natural areas, with other environmental features, designed and managed to deliver a wide range of ecosystem services, such as water purification, air quality, space for recreation and climate mitigation and adaptation.

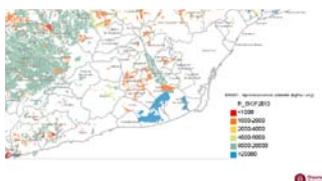
The Green Infrastructure is multi-scalar and ranges from a countryside scale with large protected areas, N2000 sites, and their ecological corridors to an urban scale where open space is limited and basically consists of city parks, street planted trees, green walls & roofs.

The periurban scale is an intermediate scale, where both urban and countryside scales meet and where very dynamic processes linked to urban sprawl tend to occur. The typical Green Infrastructure elements found in this zone are semi-natural areas, agricultural areas, alluvial plains, and many other green elements devised to connect these different land pieces that will eventually constitute the Green Infrastructure network.

## Periurban Parks & Green Infrastructure

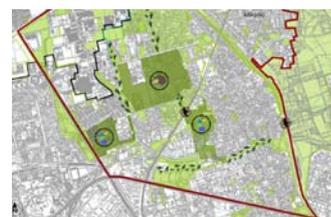
In urbanised territories, the deployment of the Green Infrastructure is challenging due to heavy infrastructure and continuous urban sprawl that renders permeability and connectivity difficult among the few open spaces left. This is why consolidated **Periurban Parks act as important nature core areas from which to build Green Infrastructure** towards both the city and the wider landscape.

Many cities and metropolitan areas have already included Periurban Parks in their strategic urban plans as part of the Green Infrastructure.



Case Study: SITXELL – Incorporation of the ecological values of natural spaces to urban and land planning

[www.europarc.org/case-studies/sitxell-incorporation-ecological-values-natural-spaces-urban-land-planning/](http://www.europarc.org/case-studies/sitxell-incorporation-ecological-values-natural-spaces-urban-land-planning/)



Case Study: Ecological connection among the municipalities of Milan, Cormano and Novate Milanese

[www.europarc.org/case-studies/riconnettimi-ecological-connection-among-municipalities-milan-cormano-novate-milanese/](http://www.europarc.org/case-studies/riconnettimi-ecological-connection-among-municipalities-milan-cormano-novate-milanese/)

## Financing instruments for Green Infrastructure:

LIFE (DG ENV), Cohesion funds (DG REGIO), Rural Development funds (DG AGRI), Horizon 2020 (DG Research and Innovation).

# Agriculture 5

DG AGRI Directorate-General Agriculture



Apple producer, Arche de la Nature, Le Mans

## Periurban Parks & Agriculture

- Periurban agriculture has a significant economic function, but in addition the spaces destined to it fulfil relevant **social and environmental functions**.
- Periurban agricultural parks play a fundamental role in territorial planning, because they put a check on the unlimited growth of cities, they generate landscape and they **humanize the urban environment**.

- Periurban agricultural parks act as a **green lung for large cities** and they increase biological diversity.
- Periurban agricultural parks can help to meet the demand for **Km0 products**.
- Periurban agriculture contributes to **food sovereignty of cities**.



The communal garden Niguarda managed by the Parco Nord Milano, Italy, is a project of urban social agriculture started in 2014 to promote social cohesion through sharing of agricultural and manual practices  
 © photos by Fabio Campana

## Case Studies & Resources:

### Parco Agricolo Sud Milano (IT)

- [Parco agricolo sud Milano: best practices for periurban agriculture](#)
- [Urban agriculture: taking care of vegetables and citizens](#)

### Parco Nord Milano (IT)

- [Orto Comune Niguarda](#)

### Parc naturel de la Serra de Collserola (ES)

- [Transition to agroecology in Collserola Nature Park enhanced with a participatory process](#)
- [Enhance controlled grazing as a cost-effective and ecological tool for fire prevention in Collserola Natural Park](#)

### Proceedings Meeting

- [Periurban agriculture, problems, challenges and opportunities](#)



# 6 Health Agenda

DC SANTE Directorate-General Health and Food Safety

## Periurban Parks & the Health Agenda

- Periurban Parks offer a good scenery to **practise outdoors physical activity on daily basis**, thereby contributing to reduce obesity and sedentary behaviour.
- Periurban Parks put nature within reach which allows citizens to experience the **restorative effect of nature**, thereby reducing stress and mental health disorders.
- Periurban Parks are key to **promote active aging**.
- Periurban Parks offer a large amount of **biodiversity in their soils** –bacteria, plants, fungi – which is needed to build healthy immune systems.
- Periurban Parks, especially those which grow organic fruit and vegetables, contribute to the **promotion of healthy food**.
- Periurban parks offer the opportunity to approach citizens and children to nature and **reduce what has been named as nature-deficit disorder**.

The European Commission promotes investing in health as a broader means of **achieving smart sustainable and inclusive growth**.

This takes the form of promoting effective, accessible and resilient health systems, investing in health through disease prevention and health promotion, and fostering health coverage as a way of reducing inequalities and tackling social exclusion.



### Resources:

EUROPARC Toolkit

Health & Well-being benefits from Parks and Protected Areas

[europarc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/EUROPARC-Toolkit\\_Health-and-Protected-Areas.pdf](http://europarc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/EUROPARC-Toolkit_Health-and-Protected-Areas.pdf)



Webinar:  
Parks as “Natural Health Centres”

[europarc.org/webinar-parks-as-natural-health-centres/](http://europarc.org/webinar-parks-as-natural-health-centres/)



Case Study: Local experiences of promoting Health & Well-being in protected areas of Barcelona Province (ES)

[europarc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Webinar-Parks-as-Natural-Health-Centres\\_Carles-Castell\\_Barcelona-Diputacio.pdf](http://europarc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Webinar-Parks-as-Natural-Health-Centres_Carles-Castell_Barcelona-Diputacio.pdf)



Case Study: OPEN & AIR Encouraging the Use of the Outdoors (FI)

[europarc.org/case-studies/open-air-encouraging-use-outdoors-2/](http://europarc.org/case-studies/open-air-encouraging-use-outdoors-2/)



Case Study: Sharing of “nature sports” experiences (natural training) with tourism and healthcare professionals (FR)

[europarc.org/case-studies/sharing-nature-sports-experiences-natural-training-tourism-healthcare-professionals/](http://europarc.org/case-studies/sharing-nature-sports-experiences-natural-training-tourism-healthcare-professionals/)

# Urban Agenda 7

**DG ENV** Directorate-General for the Environment  
**DG REGIO** Directorate-General for Regional & Urban Policy  
**DG RTD** Directorate-General for Research & Innovation  
**DG JRC** Joint Research Centre



Monsanto Forest Park, Lisbon © Barbara Paris

The **Urban Agenda for the EU** was launched in May 2016 and seeks to improve the quality of life in urban areas, through the establishment of partnerships such as the one on **Sustainable Use of Land & Nature-Based Solutions**, whose main objective is to ensure the efficient and sustainable use of land to help create compact, liveable and inclusive European cities for everyone.

Urban sprawl is a major concern for many countries and cities. Its negative impact on financial, environmental and social aspects is visibly growing. On a larger scale, this reduces biodiversity, land for agriculture and increases greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution.

**Finding the balance between compactness on the one hand, and achieving high standards of quality of life in a healthy urban environment** on the other one, is the major challenge for Europe's urban areas.

## Periurban Parks & the Urban Agenda

- Periurban Parks are natural and legal barriers to urban development; thus preventing urban sprawl.
- Periurban Parks are important non-built spaces that act as "territorial separators" to avoid the fusion of neighbouring cities into one single mega-city, thus preserving their identity.
- Periurban Parks provide high quality, large green spaces which are very much needed in compact cities.



Parco Nord Milano, Milan



# 8 Culture

DG EAC Directorate-General Education, Youth, Sport and Culture

Parks and Protected areas form the bedrock of much of Europe's Cultural heritage.

**Cultural identity is rooted in the connection to the land.** It is reflected in architecture, crafts, literature, art and food.

## Periurban Parks & Culture

- By their location, Periurban Parks usually contain many pieces of cultural heritage: churches, farms, springs, old industrial buildings, water mills, etc.
- Many Periurban Parks host old cultural traditions: pilgrimages, local festivals.
- Many Periurban Parks are open-air settings in which cultural events are organised such as open-air theatres, concerts, festivals, photography contests, Land-Art, etc



Case study: The *Casa del Parco*, an interactive multimedia facility (IT)

[europarc.org/case-studies/casa-del-parco-interactive-multimedia-facility-located-inside-cascina-centro-parco/](http://europarc.org/case-studies/casa-del-parco-interactive-multimedia-facility-located-inside-cascina-centro-parco/)



Case Study: To host a massive event in a Natura 2000 site, the *Grand Parc Miribel-Jonage* (FR)

[europarc.org/case-studies/host-a-massive-event-in-a-natura-2000-site-grand-parc-miribel-jonage/](http://europarc.org/case-studies/host-a-massive-event-in-a-natura-2000-site-grand-parc-miribel-jonage/)



Casa de la Dehesa de Olárizu, Green ring, Vitoria-Gasteiz

# Environmental Education 9

DG EAC Directorate-General Education,  
 Youth, Sport and Culture



Environmental education at Arche de la Nature, France

## Periurban Parks & Environmental Education

- Periurban Parks provide nice natural settings where teachers can take their pupils for **outdoor learning experiences**. Their proximity to cities make them more accessible and affordable in comparison with other natural protected areas.
- Periurban Parks are equipped with **environmental education centers and have special environmental education programmes** adopted for students of all ages. They also offer environmental education activities for visitors.



### Case Studies & Resources:

- Shaping the future now - the Nature Park Schools and Kindergartens (AT)
- Quinta do Pisão Nature Park - A landscape-scale conservation project that links wildlife and people (PT)
- Education and interpretation in the Nature Park Medvednica
- The Gardens of Science and "Oxy.gen" (HR)
- Pedagogical workshops for preschool & school age children, teachers and parents in nature in Mt. Hymettus Aesthetic Forest (GR)

### Proceedings

L'éducation à l'environnement: un enjeu primordial pour les parcs naturels périurbains



Environmental education at Arche de la Nature, Le Mans



Environmental education at Parco Nord Milano, Milan



# 10 Outdoor Sports

DG EAC Directorate-General Education,  
Youth, Sport and Culture

Outdoor Sports and physical exercise practiced in natural environments have a strong **positive effect on practitioners' physical and mental health**.

In addition, outdoor sports strongly contribute to the role of protected areas in general and Periurban Parks in particular as promoters of territorial socio-economic development and **sustainable green jobs creation**.

## Periurban Parks & Outdoor Sports

- Because of their proximity to towns, Periurban Parks are ideal natural settings for people to practice outdoor sports regularly, even on a daily basis.



Case Study: Sharing of "nature sports" experiences (natural training) with tourism and healthcare professionals (FR)

[europarc.org/case-studies/sharing-nature-sports-experiences-natural-training-tourism-healthcare-professionals/](http://europarc.org/case-studies/sharing-nature-sports-experiences-natural-training-tourism-healthcare-professionals/)



## Resources:

EUROPARC and ENOS, the European Network of Outdoor Sports, have set **10 Good Principles for Outdoor Sports in Protected Areas**. The principles are available at: [www.europarc.org/outdoor-sports](http://www.europarc.org/outdoor-sports)



EUROPARC Spain and FEDME (The Spanish Federation for Mountain Sports and Climbing) produced in 2016 a **"Guide to good practices for holding mountain races in protected natural areas"**. The aim is to provide to organisation bodies of mountain races, environmental administrations and race participants, with a set of orientation criteria to develop mountain races and large scale sport events inside protected areas.

The guide has been followed by several parks in Spain, and constitutes an important tool for the work of Periurban Parks. It is available in **Spanish** and **English**.

**EUROPARC calls upon cities to be actively involved in the protection of the remaining valuable nature in their vicinity and so derive the many benefits Periurban Parks can bring.**



**EUROPARC**  
 FEDERATION

This position paper was produced by the EUROPARC Federation, with the support of the EUROPARC Members that have joined the FEDENATUR / Periurban Parks Commission.

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