

IFLA ClimateACTION! 2019-2021

framework for planning our future

Landscape architects accept that because of increased greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, the earth is warming, impacting seasonality, weather and climate. Continuing and escalating changes in weather and climate have immediate, long-term and trickle down effects on both human society and the ecosystems that shelter and sustain us.

Landscape architects, who have long been the architects for nature, understand how the well-being of humankind is tied to the well-being of the natural environment. IFLA supports its members as leaders in advancing interdisciplinary efforts to reduce emissions, to prepare for disaster and to plan for change. In 2017, in response to this planetary crisis, IFLA launched the Global Accord - adaptation for a changing world (GA), which promotes three basic principles (resilience, transformation, sustainability) to guide planning and design for the future.

IFLA recognizes that there is much that we can do to ensure that human society is better able to meet the coming challenges. In the coming years, IFLA will undertake an ambitious plan to challenge landscape architects and others to reduce their contributions to greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation), while incorporating the principles of resilience and transformation into planning and design practice (adaptation), and ensuring the sustainability of project sites, communities and environments.

In September 2019, responding to devastating information released by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), a Climate and Biodiversity Emergency Statement was presented for ratification to the World Council of IFLA.

To this end, the IFLA EXCO, in collaboration with the IFLA Working Group on Climate Change (WGCC) and the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (CSLA), is pleased to present the 2019-2021 plan for ClimateACTION! The Plan is a call to action for landscape architects throughout the globe to reduce their own emissions, to protect nature, and to become more creative in designing for the future.

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Co-Chair (Logistics) IFLA Working Group on Climate Change

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THE BUILDING BLOCKS

IFLA and its National Association Members will challenge landscape architects throughout the globe to advance the following ClimateACTION! 2019-2021 Plan:

INSPIRING CHANGE: While working to reduce emissions globally, IFLA members will first seek to reduce their own contributions to greenhouse gas emissions that occur as direct consequences of the practice of landscape architecture. The change we seek will be measured by a reduction in the carbon footprint of landscape architecture meetings, activities, initiatives and built environments; and in the advancement of the Global Accord principles of resilience, transformation and sustainability.

CELEBRATING ACTION: IFLA will utilize all tools at its disposal (e.g., IFLA website; World Congress Awards; IFLA newsletter) to identify, to celebrate, and to diffuse the work of national member associations and individual landscape architects who seek new pathways to access and utilize emerging science, who advance nature-based solutions, and who use innovation to create the sustainable and flexible world of the future.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS: IFLA will continue to reach out to affiliated organizations, and to align professions to strengthen existing relationships and to build new ones to ensure collaboration on a wide range of initiatives intended to reduce emissions, prepare for disaster and plan for the future.

PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION: IFLA will support change in curricula and instructional programs, as well as in the provision of opportunities for post-graduate professional upgrading and training to ensure that established science on climate change is reflected in education programs, that innovation and creativity in design are promoted as needed skills, and to advance training in leadership and management of interdisciplinary teams.

INITIAL AND ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Through the work of several IFLA bodies, progress is already underway, and more is planned.

The IFLA GLOBAL ACCORD (GA): In 2017 the GA was ratified by the World Council, by the five IFLA World Regions, and by a number of IFLA national member associations. By ratifying the GA you contribute to the collective voice, acknowledging the role and responsibility of landscape architects to reduce emissions, to protect nature, and to plan for a changed future. All are welcome to sign on, including national member associations, regional component associations, landscape architecture and multi-disciplinary firms, and individuals.

IFLA NATIONAL ORGANIZATION ISSUES AND ACTIONS SURVEY: In 2019 the WGCC circulated a survey on climate to the National Association Members of the World Council. Information gathered from the survey responses will be used to develop an IFLA resource portal to share position papers, tools and resources; encourage cross collaboration; and identify national and regional champions who can be paired with those National Associations seeking assistance.

INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF NATURE (IUCN) MEMBERSHIP: Pending successful application of IFLA to become an NGO Member of the IUCN (application review ongoing), the WGCC will support IFLA's efforts to advance IUCN initiatives of shared interest through collaborative efforts at all geographic scales (e.g., Nature for All, green and blue infrastructure, ecosystem protection and restoration; urban design; sensitive site scale design).

IFLA will also encourage National Associations as well as individual landscape architects to participate in IUCN at the national and local levels.

For more information on the IUCN, please visit their website at: www.iucn.org/

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NEW PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES



EVERY BIT COUNTS [REDUCING EMISSIONS]

Reducing our collective and individual carbon footprint is a significant challenge to landscape architects whose work on the land can contribute significantly to global emissions loading through their choice of building materials, maintenance methods for landscapes, and with the removal of existing vegetation. IFLA believes that if landscape architecture professional associations, firms and individuals are to be leaders we must first examine our own behaviour and demonstrate our commitment through our own actions.

CLIMATE POSITIVE DESIGN CHALLENGE/CARBON FOOTPRINT CALCULATOR. The Climate Positive Design Challenge will be officially launched in September 2019. The Challenge is a call to action for landscape architects to examine their contributions to greenhouse gas emissions. The Challenge includes a call to measure and provides access to an online Carbon Footprint Calculator which will detail the emission contributions of projects.



LOVE EVERY LEAF [VALUE, CONSERVE, PROTECT AND ENHANCE NATURE]

There is no doubt that ecosystems, habitats and species throughout the world are in decline. IFLA believes there is much to be done to value, conserve and enhance natural assets.

NATURE FOR ALL: Landscape architects understand that personal experience with nature is a powerful first step towards valuing the contributions made by natural systems to human health, well-being and prosperity. To this end, IFLA will support the IUCN #NatureForAll program, joining a diversity of organizations focused on collective efforts to increase the opportunities for all people to experience nature, and to grow public support for conservation.

VALUING NATURAL ASSETS: IFLA will work with economic and accounting professions and partner with the IUCN to promote a universally accepted definition for natural assets and to advance a more comprehensive understanding of the values natural assets contribute to human societies.

ONE TREE/ONE PLANET: Forest cover is an important element in the fight against global heating however, society often does not value or nurture forests for their important contributions to emission reductions and carbon sequestering. One Tree/One Planet is an IFLA inspired initiative that encourages every person to plant and nurture at least one tree. Over the next two years, IFLA proposes that landscape architects throughout the world plan a billion trees.



INNOVATE, TRANSFORM AND CREATE [PREPARING, TRANSITIONING, SUSTAINING]

IFLA recognizes that preparations for a changing world requires not only advance understanding and enhancement of resilience to severe weather events, it requires innovation and ingenuity to visualize and to create transformative communities for the future. IFLA will advance support for interdisciplinary approaches, recognizing the roles to be played by informed risk assessment, innovative planning and design, and insightful leadership for interdisciplinary teams.

NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS. Nature-based solutions seek to engage society in the protection and enhancement of the ecosystems which have for generations provided needed services in food, water, security and trade. Through collaborative efforts with partners such as the IUCN, IFLA will seek out and support opportunities to value and to promote nature-based solutions and to conserve and enhance natural assets.

In Canada, the CSLA is supporting eco-system based low carbon resilience (LCR) approaches to planning and design. LCR combines efforts towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving sequestering of carbon (mitigation) while planning for enhanced resilience to disaster, lower energy demands, improved reliance on fossil fuels, and enhanced urban canopy (adaptation).

SHARING THE WORK: A LIST OF TASKS

IFLA recognizes the value inherent in the work of every landscape architect. We invite you to work with us to advance the plan for ClimateAction! to provide us with ideas, experiences, challenges and successes – and we petition you to take ACTION in your own practice.

Here is a list of things we can all do – individually, collectively – together, to get started.

- Ratify and continue the dissemination of the Global Accord (GA) Seek out the best emerging science at all scales appropriate to your work and proactively adapt that knowledge for use in decision-making on planning and design.
- Ensure that planning and design done today provides the most flexibility for future alternatives, and ensures that decisions today enhance the options available to future generations.
- Reduce the carbon footprint of landscape architecture practice Establish, develop and promote the profession, discipline and education of landscape architecture, with its diverse range of arts and sciences, as leaders and advocates for climate action.
- Collaborate and cooperate with international and national bodies to advance the elements of the plan for ClimateACTION!
- Establish, develop and promote inclusion of knowledge and training on climate science and climate impacts within the highest standards of education and professional practice Reach across disciplinary and cultural boundaries to seek new knowledge, share experiences and resources and exchange ideas that advance collaborative action.
- Encourage and support the establishment of climate focused committees and working groups within the IFLA World Regions and national associations.
- Promote virtual themed congresses, conferences and other relevant meetings.