



European Network of Heads of Nature Conservation Agencies (ENCA). ENCA is an informal network which fosters exchange of information and collaboration amongst its partners, identifies future challenges and offers information and advice to decision-makers in the field of nature conservation and landscape protection.

ENCA brings together scientific evidence and knowledge of practical application together with experiences in administration and policy advice in the context of biodiversity and ecosystem goods and services. More details can be found under www.encanetwork.eu.

Statements are positions approved on by ENCA's active participants for communication to a wider public.

ENCA Document 21/2011

Concept of “Green Infrastructure” as used by ENCA

This description was endorsed by the participants of the 8th ENCA plenary meeting held in Inverness/Scotland on 17 May 2011:

Introduction

This note aims to support ENCA members by providing a working description of Green Infrastructure (GI). It has been prepared as a contribution to, and in the context of, an ongoing process which is developing a GI strategy for the EU and which should lead to a wider consensus on the definition, purpose and design of GI across Europe. As such, this note should be viewed as an interim description, representing the current views of ENCA members.

Description of Green Infrastructure

Infrastructure refers to the basic physical and organizational structures needed for a well functioning society. Well known components are for example roads, airports, telecommunication networks, schools and hospitals. Another component is the so called Green Infrastructure.

Green Infrastructure is a strategically planned and delivered coherent network of high quality green spaces and other environmental features. It should be preserved, designed and managed as a multifunctional resource capable of conserving biodiversity and delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits (ecosystem services) for local communities and the wider society. Its design and management should also improve ecological conditions and connections within and between rural and urban areas and respect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of an area with regard to habitats and landscape types. Green Infrastructure is key to a sustainable environment in which our economy and society can prosper. Green Infrastructure contributes to meeting environmental challenges including climate change and provides essential ecosystem services such as air and water regulation.

Green Infrastructure includes established green spaces and new sites. It can comprise a wide diversity of natural and semi-natural habitats and features such as wildlife sites, rivers and water courses, woodlands, hedges, parks, green roofs and other urban green spaces.