

The URWAN Checklist

15/06/2026 - 10:19

Checklist summary ([X] = selected, [] = not selected)

Interreg
Euro-MED



Co-funded by
the European Union

URWAN



Elements of the checklist

☒ Planning and Design

☒ Risk Management

☐ Implementation

☒ Financing and Maintenance

☐ Monitoring and Adaptive Management

☐ Mainstreaming and Scaling

☐ Technical Expertise

Planning team and Actional Plan

☐ Identify a planning leader and establish a planning team.

☐ Develop a planning action plan, including objective(s), activities, workplan, timeline and budget.

☐ Set up thematic and/or interdisciplinary working groups with clear roles and responsibilities.

☐ Ensure effective cost management during the planning phase

Recommendations

- Promote the presence of professionals in more than one working group to encourage knowledge sharing.
- Ensure regular revision of roles and responsibilities of the working groups.

Stakeholder engagement

☐ Map stakeholders at all levels (for example, within a Municipality identify key departments and offices).

☐ Develop a communication and engagement strategy with clear branding, tailored messages and tools (e.g. posters, web pages, etc.) for each stakeholder group, a workplan, timeline, and budget.

☐ Implement the communication strategy early on and sustain it throughout the planning, design and implementation phases.

Recommendations

- Develop a centralised, culturally responsive, and locally relevant communication strategy rather than relying on fragmented, project-based efforts to make NbS benefits visible and understandable to all stakeholders.
- Engage stakeholders early and continuously throughout planning, design, implementation and monitoring
- Ensure clear communication about roles, expectations and limits of influence to prevent disengagement and consultation fatigue.
- Invest time, resources, and funds to ensure the participatory processes can become a permanent element of urban planning
- Empower vulnerable stakeholders through transparent two-way dialogue to build trust and mutual understanding.
- Support long-term stewardship by fostering community ownership and integrating maintenance into city policies and cultural practices to prevent neglect or vandalism

Site selection

☐ Identify potential sites with relevant stakeholders and concerned public administrations.

☐ Define and agree on a set of criteria for the selection of the intervention site with relevant stakeholders and concerned public administrations.

☐ Screen potential sites through a suitability analysis based on the agreed criteria (such as ecological conditions, land availability, infrastructure constraints, connections to existing green and blue spaces, city priorities and implementation timeline).

☐ Select the final site(s) in agreement with the relevant stakeholders and concerned public administrations.

Recommendations

- Allow sufficient time for site selection, as it often requires coordination with public administration, evaluation of

- multiple options, and consideration of planning constraints and community involvement
- Consider the future investment plans in the area.

Baseline Assessment

- [] Inspect the selected site(s) in detail using field visits, measurements, photos, and existing technical and cartographic data.
- [] Conduct a Baseline Assessment to understand local environmental, social, economic, and regulatory conditions, identify key challenges and vulnerabilities, ensure alignment with city strategies, and guide the design of context-specific, evidence-based solutions.

Recommendations

- Plan the Baseline Assessment realistically, considering data gaps, uncertainties, and possible administrative delays
- Combine desk research with on-site assessments.
- Involve experts from different fields, seek external technical support when needed, and include local and citizen knowledge (e.g., citizen science).
- Keep the baseline assessment focused on what is needed for decision-making, rather than trying to collect every possible piece of data.

Co-design

- [] Organise a launch event to present the findings of the Baseline Assessment, introduce the co-design approach, gather participant feedback, and explore initial ideas through collective discussion and data collection.
- [] Synthesize insights from the first event to see whether a co-design process can be pursued and guide the organisation of the following co-design workshops.
- [] If possible, hold co-design workshops to develop and refine design proposals based on stakeholder input and site constraints.
- [] Prototype solutions through physical, digital, and governance methods in a co-creation workshop.
- [] Engage hard-to-reach groups to inform, brainstorm, vote on design options, and finalize key elements of the project.
- [] Organise a final event to present the intervention(s) – either co-designed or not - to the local community.
- [] Analyse and document the outcomes of the co-design process, including costs, feedback, and lessons learned.
- [] Keep participants involved through regular follow-ups (online or in person).

Recommendations

- Use co-design approaches and tools that have been tested in practice, such as the URWAN Start Park guidelines.
- Review and, where suitable, adapt or replicate solutions that have already proven successful, such as those in the URWAN NbS Catalogue.
- Design multifunctional solutions that build on existing interventions (including grey infrastructure) and address the complexity of urban areas.
- Promote innovation and co-creation by involving a wide range of stakeholders, allowing flexibility in the process, and using both local knowledge and technical expertise.
- Use recognized frameworks and standards for NbS to ensure the co-designed intervention(s) meet established criteria. These frameworks also support future monitoring and evaluation, improving transparency and accountability.

Feasibility Analysis

- [] Conduct a Feasibility Analysis to determine whether the co-designed intervention(s) are viable to undertake.

Recommendations

- Consider critical legal and regulatory aspects, such as land ownership and maintenance responsibilities, to ensure intervention(s) can be implemented in practice.
- If the budget allows, conduct a feasibility analysis with enough technical and economic detail to allow the project to proceed directly to implementation.

- Use feasibility results to build confidence in the co-designed intervention(s) among institutions and political stakeholders.
- Consider the potential nuisances associated with construction in the area and identify appropriate mitigation measures, such as redesigning the emergency plan.
- If possible, use decision-making tools such as digital twins to assess the feasibility of the alternative solutions.

Risk Management Framework

- [] Identify potential environmental and social risks and their impacts, such as gentrification, displacement, and unequal access to ecosystem services.
- [] Rank risks by severity and priority.
- [] Develop corrective measures to address these risks with input from affected stakeholders.
- [] Establish a Risk Management Framework and ensure regular review to maintain its effectiveness.

Recommendations

- Establish feedback channels so communities can help identify and address risks.
- Co-develop safeguards and corrective measures with stakeholders early and review them regularly to protect community rights and interests.
- Ensure safeguards and corrective measures are aligned with regulatory and planning cycles by integrating NbS into urban climate/disaster risk management frameworks.
- Communicate risks and safeguards transparently to build trust, prevent conflicts, and support adaptive management.
- If possible, use decision-making tools such as digital twins to evaluate risks, test scenarios and changes in a virtual environment without risking physical damage

Economic Justification

- [] Build a strong case for adopting NbS instead of conventional solutions by using multi-criteria impact assessments that go beyond traditional financial measures (such as Cost–Benefit Analysis (CBA) and Cost-Effectiveness Analysis (CEA)).

Recommendations

- Move beyond short-term, sector-based assessments and adopt longer-term, cross-sector perspectives when evaluating NbS.
- Use simplified valuation methods early in planning to build political and institutional support for NbS
- Explicitly identify and communicate NbS co-benefits and avoided costs, even without full economic valuation.
- Frame NbS benefits in ways that are relevant to multiple municipal departments to reduce siloed decision-making.
- If possible, use decision-making tools such as digital twins to assess the cost effectiveness of alternative solutions.

Distributional Equity

- [] Evaluate the potential impacts of the intervention(s) on the community.
- [] Develop and implement mitigation measures where unequal impacts are expected or observed.

Recommendations

- Evaluate the potential impacts of the intervention(s) on the community early to avoid risks of displacement, green gentrification, resistance, social tension, while ensuring accessibility and inclusiveness for all user groups.
- Communicate transparently with affected communities to build trust and adapt mitigation measures
- Align financing, planning, and implementation decisions to prioritise fair and accessible outcomes.
- If possible, use decision-making tools such as digital twins to evaluate the distribution of potential impacts of the intervention(s).

Financial Feasibility and Sustainability

- [] Develop a multi-year financial plan covering the intervention(s) construction, maintenance, monitoring, participatory and knowledge creation processes. Plan for both the initial costs and the recurrent expenses.
- [] Evaluate long-term risks (e.g., climate, maintenance failure, vandalism, financing instability) and integrate them into the financial planning process.
- [] Identify viable mechanisms to finance the intervention(s) that reflect the multiple benefits of NbS (e.g. health, flood mitigation, recreation, property values) and cover the entire lifecycle, from construction to

monitoring and maintenance.

[] Engage a broad range of stakeholders (public, private, community) and promote collaboration to share costs, risks, and benefits equitably.

Recommendations

- Engage private actors early by aligning the intervention(s) with business opportunities, regulatory requirements, and visibility incentives, while leveraging their technical expertise
- Public administrations can help reduce risks for private investment through supportive policies, co-investment, transparent market mechanisms, and well-documented demonstration projects.
- Build cross-sector partnerships to diversify funding and increase long-term sustainability.
- Use continuous monitoring and clear communication of the intervention's outcomes to demonstrate environmental, social, and economic value for communities and investors.

Integration into Financial Planning

[] Ensure investment plans integrate NbS as solutions to effectively address climate change and water management in cities. This can be achieved through dedicated budget allocations, performance-based incentives, strategic plan alignment, etc.

[] Ensure procurement procedures integrate NbS as solutions to effectively address climate change and water management in cities.

[] Ensure the NbS intervention(s) are aligned with existing policies and can benefit from related funding.

Recommendations

- Introduce NbS considerations early in city budgeting and project planning cycles, before funds are fully allocated
- Train municipalities, NGOs, associations who design the interventions and prepare tenders, as well as the contractors who must understand and implement NbS requirements
- Acknowledge current limitations in contractor capacity and adapt procurement requirements accordingly.
- Consider tailored approaches for small municipalities facing limited access to specialised contractors.
- Promote learning and knowledge exchange—locally and globally—to address gaps, strengthen implementation, and develop the NbS market.