

LIFE TreeCheck: Project description

Climate change is considered to be one of the biggest challenges of the 21st century which is already affecting the livelihoods as well as ecosystems. Cities, among others, are particularly threatened by climate change due to high population density and centred economy, both exposed to the risk of accelerating temperatures and changing precipitation patterns. High-density urban infrastructure results in a city's elevated temperature in comparison to its surroundings, known as the urban heat island (UHI) phenomenon, posing amplified impacts of climate change, especially during heat waves and summer months.

LIFE TreeCheck (LTC) project focuses on green infrastructure minimising the urban heat island effect. The project is coordinated by Environmental Partnership and associated partners: the Carpathian Development Institute, Global Change Research Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences, EKOTOXA, Ökotárs Alapítvány, LEMITOR Ochrona Środowiska and SAFE TREES. LTC takes place in Central European (CE) cities in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Poland and Hungary.

The main aim of LTC is to decrease UHI effect by increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning and decision-making processes related to green infrastructure through development and application of climate governance tools, an increase of local public authorities' capacity, stakeholders' involvement and raising public awareness of UHI and available mitigation options. Specific objectives of the project are increasing capacities and understanding of CE urban authorities, city planners, urban green infrastructure managers on the positive impact of improved planning and management of green infrastructure preventing the UHI effect for the citizens and the urban environment, and increasing awareness and active involvement of citizens with respect to urban green infrastructure in the cities.

These goals will be achieved through a series of activities. The first group of activities includes communication strategy which helps to identify relevant stakeholders and the state-of-the-art analysis. The second group is targeting urban authorities and includes the LifeTree Check Pro software and methodology guide which will provide support when preparing investment and land use plans. Activities targeting urban residents emphasise the citizens' involvement in green infrastructure monitoring and maintenance through awareness raising and TreeCheck App. Other activities also include training activities such as lectures, roundtables or workshops, transfer of knowledge and multiplying the project results, monitoring and evaluation of project benefits and the implementation of the communication strategy, and project dissemination.

The activities are expected to achieve the main aim and objectives and result in increased compliance and enforcement of the European climate change adaptation strategy in CE by means of design and implementation of concrete governance steps, new tools for decision-makers and professionals to strengthen the implementation, planning and management of urban green infrastructure and tools strengthening citizen involvement, increased participation and changed behaviour among CE citizens.