



Professor Sarah Bekessy

Presentation Title

Designing Nature Positive Cities

Abstract:

The motivations for designing for nature in cities have arguably never been more compelling. Re-enchanting urban residents with nature can deliver a range of health and well-being benefits, while creating more climate change resilient cities. Creating ‘everyday nature’ in cities presents opportunities to reverse the fate of many threatened species and connect people with nature and living cultural traditions. But this requires more than just urban greening; it involves ensuring daily doses of nature in a way that also supports non-human organisms. The future of liveable cities may well depend on this new conceptualization, but a major shift in the way nature is conceived of and designed for is required. Key to achieving this shift is establishing meaningful professional engagement between ecologists, planners and designers. Building on our experience working in this interdisciplinary space, I outline principles, processes and challenges for effectively designing for nature positive cities.

Bio:

Professor Sarah Bekessy leads the ICON Science research group at RMIT University which uses interdisciplinary approaches to solve complex biodiversity conservation problems. She is particularly interested in understanding the role of human behaviour in conservation, in designing cities to encourage ‘every day nature’ experiences and in defining and measuring ‘nature positive’ development. She co-developed the Biodiversity Sensitive Urban Design protocol that has now been used by numerous developers, governments and non-government

organisations to design innovative urban biodiversity strategies. Sarah is a Lead Councillor of The Biodiversity Council.