

# GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE CITYLAB



## Green Infrastructure Citylab 2 (Thursday 20 February 2014): REPORT

On 20 February 2014, the Gauteng City-Region Observatory (GCRO) held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Green Infrastructure Citylab. The Citylab builds on the foundation laid by the 'State of Green Infrastructure in the GCR' report (SGIR), launched in July 2013. The Citylab provides a platform for the co-production of policy relevant knowledge between government practitioners and researchers. The aim of this Citylab is to collectively develop, over the course of two years, a Green Infrastructure Plan for the Gauteng City-Region (GCR). This will feed into the Gauteng Integrated Infrastructure Master Plan (GIIMP) being developed by the Gauteng Planning Commission (GPC). The 2<sup>nd</sup> session focused on valuing green infrastructure and the data challenges experienced while trying to map green infrastructure as part of the SGIR.

### **Attendance:**

Timothy Nast	GPC
Thembeke Nxumalo	Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality
Phuti Ngoasheng	GDARD
Mahlodi Tau	SANBI
Elsabeth van der Merwe	Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality
Ilse Kotze	City of Tshwane
Susan Stoffberg	West Rand
Mokgema Mongane	GPC
Budu Manaka	SANBI
Tsamaelo Malebu	SANBI
Jan van den Ber	City of Tshwane
Stephan Du Toit	Mogale City Local Municipality
Ayanda Roji	Johannesburg City Parks & Zoo
Theo Bernhardt	Johannesburg City Parks & Zoo
Graeme Gotz	GCRO
Kerry Bobbins	GCRO
Christina Culwick	GCRO

### **Meeting proceedings**

The second Citylab meeting built on the discussions in the first session held on 23 January 2014. The meeting began with brief introductions and a summary of the Citylab structure. Participants gave feedback on the draft GI Citylab Mayoral Committee resolution, drafted by GCRO on request from municipal participants. Participants also discussed some of the important green assets in their municipalities. The key findings of GCRO's 'State of Green Infrastructure' report were presented, focusing on the spatial data challenges experienced in collating publically available digital spatial data. The Citylab concluded with a discussion on proposed terms of reference for commissioning expert input on how best to conduct processes of valuing ecosystem services and green infrastructure in the GCR. The commissioned expert input will inform a 'framework' for developing a

GI Plan – to be concluded as the output of the first phase of the Citylab and to be published as a GCRO Occasional Paper.

It was emphasised during the session that the GCRO is facilitating the Citylab and the contributions and inputs from the participants will form the basis of the GI Plan.

Key points that emerged from the session include:

- Participants indicated that they were pleased with the Mayoral Committee resolution. Suggestions were made to include a clause that stipulates that data from the Citylab process is freely accessible; and a clause that requires that products from the Citylab may need to be considered for adoption by the municipality. It was also requested that an invitation be issued to the Municipal Manager / Executive Mayor in each municipality, which will accompany the Mayoral Committee resolution to formalise the municipal participation in the GI Citylab.
- Bioregional Plans currently being development and approved provide an important resource where key natural assets in each municipality are identified.
- There are a series of aquifers in the West Rand that have been earmarked by DWA as critical water sources if there are any concerns or problems related to the Lesotho Highlands Water Project. Currently there is no collaboration across various bodies – including the agricultural community which extracts a lot of water from this resource – to ensure the quality and quantity of water from these aquifers.
- Participants emphasised the need for clear definitions and terminology between organisations and from national to local levels. Examples would be useful in assisting definitions. It may be useful to link up with other initiatives such as the Biodiversity Planning Forum.
- Challenges were highlighted regarding the responsibility of maintenance of waterways in municipalities. Municipal responsibility for stormwater is defined in the Constitutional schedules of competencies as ‘stormwater in urban areas’. Today municipal areas cover both urban and rural areas. The definition has meant that municipal departments and entities that take charge of stormwater regard their duties as ending at the edge of the built-up area, whereas the national Department of Water Affairs regards municipalities as responsible for the health and functioning of watercourses across their jurisdictions, and has at various points issued compliance notices compelling municipalities to address issues where stormwater flows into the natural system.
- The importance of having a clear goal was emphasised in guiding the process of mapping GI and developing the GI plan. Producing maps and a GI plan that are relevant to the GIIMP and planners is particularly important.
- Participants emphasised the discrepancies and differences in available spatial data according to departmental mandates and data use. It may be helpful to produce a list of what plans and projects are currently underway in each municipality. It was suggested that participants from the different municipalities should be responsible for writing the relevant section on their municipality for the plan. Together with this, it would be useful if municipalities could get a list of datasets that they could and could not produce so that they can start working to address these gaps.

- Incorporating GI into the Metropolitan Spatial Development Framework (MSDF) may be the most appropriate first step towards getting GI into municipal plans.
- Case studies proved invaluable for the SANBI Grassland programme and should also be considered for the GI plan. This can also provide a platform for municipal knowledge development and sharing. Where possible, municipal officials should be responsible for managing and guiding these case study investigations together with GCRO. It was suggested that a case study should be selected for each municipality to be used to inform ecosystem valuation for the final GI plan.

### Action items

*Note: Bold text indicates who is responsible for each item.*

1. Participant list – ensure the right people are included (**ALL PARTICIPANTS WITH GCRO**)
2. For the next meeting, a one page document that lists the current projects and plans that will be conducted in the coming year that could relate to Green Infrastructure and planning (**ALL PARTICIPANTS**)
3. The Mayoral Committee resolution will be updated to include comments (**GCRO**), which participants can adapt and use as required (**MUNICIPAL PARTICIPANTS**)
4. An invitation to the municipalities will be drafted to go alongside the Mayoral Committee resolution (**GCRO**)
5. ToR will be recirculated (**GCRO**) and comments to be sent before 12h00 on Monday, 24<sup>th</sup> Feb (**ALL PARTICIPANTS**)
6. Hosting upcoming Citylab sessions (**GCRO WITH WILLING PARTICIPANTS**)

### Upcoming Citylabs:

*3<sup>rd</sup> Green Infrastructure Citylab*

**Date:** Thursday 20 March 2014

**Topic:** Valuing Green Infrastructure & developing the process towards a GI Plan for GCR

*4<sup>th</sup> Green Infrastructure Citylab*

**Date:** Thursday 8 May 2014

**Topic:** Presentation and discussion on the draft Occasional Paper (Framework for developing the Guideline Green Infrastructure Plan for the GCR)