



1st October 2018

## THE CHALLENGE OF GREENING OLD CITIES IS ADDRESSED AT AIPH INTERNATIONAL GREEN CITY CONFERENCE, ITALY

The International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH) held its International Green City Conference on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2018 in Padova, to address the challenge of greening old cities.

Invited delegates included city decision makers, planners, landscape architects, horticulturalists and others interested in retro-fitting old cities with living green. Topic areas presented and discussed included which plants to use and the benefits of living green on the health of citizens and environmental biodiversity.

Opening the conference, AIPH Green City Committee Chair, Ms Karen Tambayong stressed that whilst talking about green cities has become fashionable, sustaining our eco-systems, which were not designed for the strains placed upon them, remains our greatest challenge.

The first main speaker, Professor Valerio Morabito from Pennsylvania University, presented studies of how old cities are rising to the challenge of greening. Using examples of cities across Italy, he presented the latest thinking and innovation in designing green space. Starting with the relationship between city and green, his work aims to give cities a new vision. He explained: "In my plans I always try to subtract weight and give cities lightness."

Professor Paolo Semenzato from the University of Padova gave a review on how city greening makes its citizens healthier and suggested that instead of referring to 'cultural heritage' we should focus on 'cultural landscape'.

Stefano Carosio of Unismart, who is working on European projects with the European Commission, said that 'innovating cities' is the new focus for Europe and the challenge for us is to ensure that greening is a key aspect of this. He urged AIPH and its members to develop and put forward the challenges. He said "AIPH members, as growers, are key enablers for greening. Companies, practitioners and organisations such as AIPH must work closely with the industry to ensure it happens."

Professor Bert van Duijn, from Leiden University in the Netherlands, demonstrated how greening can be created within buildings using novel solutions. The benefits of 'inside greening' include physical and psychological health benefits, cleaner air, climate control and financial savings.

Dr Chiara Catalano of Zurich University of Applied Sciences gave the final presentation on how urban biodiversity can be increased through greening, expressing that cities could be vastly different from the grey, lifeless environments we experience and instead become vibrant centres of biodiversity. Her research suggests that solutions such as green roofs, careful plant selection and a planned use of greening techniques, can make cities better for all living organisms.

Ms Tambayong, who is passing her role as Chair of Green City to Mr. Bill Hardy (Canada) this month, said: "After nine years of championing the AIPH Green City concept, we are in a stronger position to invest in the future and put Green City at the centre of this with AIPH as the engine. AIPH is the international facilitator for sharing best practice and making changes. Watch as we move forward and we hope you will be part of our plans."

ENDS.

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**Notes for Editors:**

International Association of Horticultural Producers (AIPH)

Since 1948, AIPH has united horticultural producers in an international community that thrives to this day. Much has changed in that time. Technologies advanced, cities rose from the ground, and we have become more connected than ever. As a result, our essential bond with nature has been weakened. AIPH strives to reignite and uphold an appreciation of plants that we believe is a basic human instinct. We support the work of grower associations globally and together we champion a prosperous industry, growing plants that enhance lives, advance societies and sustain our planet, for this generation and the next.