

# EUROPEAN LANDSCAPE CONTRACTORS ASSOCIATION

PRESS RELEASE

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## **ELCA: Research workshop in Brussels with scientists and EU-politicians Considerable interest in the positive effects of green in cities**

Brussels / Bad Honnef. Well-known scientists from all over Europe presented their speeches in front of a panel of experts and EU politicians on research topics about Green and Health, Green and Particulate matter, Green and Urban climate as well as biodiversity in European cities. The European Landscape Contractors Association (ELCA) had invited to the research forum "Green City Europe" in Brussels in the Committee of Regions in the European Union. After the workshop with more than 100 participants ELCA president Emmanuel Mony gave the following statement: "We are very happy about the excellent interest and the positive reaction. With this contribution of the European landscape to a green sustainable urban development we want to start interdisciplinary research activities on a European level. We want to achieve, that the 8th European research frame plan provides the respective funds to close research gaps all about green."

### **EU-Politicians favour research concerning the welfare effect of green in the cities**

Members of the European Parliament. Karl-Heinz Florenz, Neukirchen-Vluyn and Werner Kuhn from Schwerin as well as Sirpa Pietikäinen from Finland have already promised ELCA to lobby research topics concerning the welfare effect of green in the city during the consultations concerning the "8<sup>th</sup> EU Research Frame Plan". ELCA vice-president and board member of the British Association of Landscape Industries Neil Huck: "The workshop has shown that European politicians think a green sustainable urban development to be very important. The landscape gardeners in Europe are much wanted contact partners with regard to planning, building, designing and maintaining of a future environment worth living in."

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Within the circle of international experts – among them scientists from Germany and members of the board of Federal Association of Gardening, Landscaping and Sports Ground Building e.V. (BGL) – the president of BGL Hanns-Jürgen Redeker pointed out: "Us landscape gardeners offer various solutions for a sustainable urban development regarding building and vegetation technology-related questions." ELCA president Emmanuel Mony underlined that for this purpose the European gardening and landscaping industry depended on well-founded and scientifically based research about green. He stated: "The Green City" is a model of the future and with the help of this model urban structures worth living in can be created." It is a Herculean task to safeguard and develop sustainable green cities and to implement the thus necessary education on the effect of green; this task calls for integrated and regionally agreed upon activities of all disciplines.

### **Effective Measures: Greening of roofs and high-quality green**

Especially the climate changes which have become obvious for some years and their global effects were researched more in detail within the frame of the ELCA-research workshop. Experts explained that it became obvious that cities and their emissions have the strongest effect on our climate. That is why the scientists are interested in effective measures of restraining further climate changes in cities, for example by integrating more green into the planning of cities. In this connection above all the positive effects of green roofs (for the management of precipitation) and of high-quality green were mentioned several times during the research forum in Brussels. Especially the positive effect of trees on the breaking up of heat islands in cities was discussed.

### **Green and free areas for health, clean air and a good urban climate**

The presentations by scientists from all over Europe have shown the diversity of research activities of the universities with regard to green in connection with climate change, urban development, health and biodiversity in Europe. Above all the research field Green and Health, which was presented among others by the scientists Dr Ulrika K. Stigsdotter (Denmark), Dr Jolanda Maas (the Netherlands) and Professor Dr Kalevi Korpela (Finland) provide gardening and landscaping with new approaches for focused public relations. Since green and free areas in cities improve the living environment, decline the susceptibility for and strengthen the power of resistance against psychic and physis diseases of the people in cities. Clean air and a healthy urban climate are important preconditions to maintain our health. Green supports health by prevention, maintaining and rehabilitation. Edward Demicoli from Malta, chairman of the Cabinet of the EU Directorate-General for health and consumers, pointed out that these were very interesting approaches, and that the cabinet of

John Dalli, EU-commissioner for Health and Consumer Politics would like to take a close look at them.

The scientists agree that it is time to advertise much more obviously with the numerous examples of successful green projects and their various advantages and positive effects – and if possible to a wide extent, to reach all possible target groups, from north to south in the contradictory context of nature and culture. This has also been the summary of Andreas Kipar (president of "Green City Italy"). He summed up that we had succeeded excellently in presenting the resulting requirements concerning the quality of green building in the ELCA-research workshop to all those involved.

The scientists who participated in the research forum appreciate that ELCA will work out a band of meetings within the near future.

**[\(Photo: 2011\\_05\\_26\\_ELCA\\_research\\_workshop\\_1.jpg; caption\):](#)**

In discussion with BGL president Hanns-Jürgen Redeker (l.): At the ELCA-research workshop in Brussels, Karl-Heinz Florenz from Neukirchen-Vluyn (r.), member of the European Parliament, promised to lobby for the research topics regarding the welfare effect of green in the city during the consultations of the "8. EU-research frame plan". Photo: ELCA

**[\(Photo: 2011\\_05\\_26\\_ELCA\\_research\\_workshop\\_2.jpg; caption\):](#)**

Well-known scientists from all over Europe made use of the interdisciplinary exchange of experience with experts and EU politicians at the well attended ELCA research forum "Green City Europe" at the EU-Commission of the Regions in Brussels. Photo: ELCA

**[\(Photo: 2011\\_05\\_26\\_ELCA\\_research\\_workshop\\_3.jpg; caption\):](#)**

The Finish member of the European Parliament Sirpa Pietikäinen wants to integrate the topic "Welfare effect of Green in the City" into the work of the EU committee for environmental questions, national health and food safety. Photo: ELCA

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This press release as well as the three photos can also be downloaded from the internet under: [www.elca.info](http://www.elca.info)