



Urban Pollinator Corridors Lab





Milan Pollinator Network: Reconnecting Biodiversity through Green Corridors

The U.BI.TEACH e-LAB in Italy could focus on the creation of an experimental urban pollinator network connecting parks, school gardens, community spaces and regenerated urban areas across Milan. The initiative would engage Higher Education students in the co-design of biodiversity-friendly micro-interventions capable of improving ecological connectivity for pollinators and small urban fauna.

The project would be hosted within the Italian U.BI.TEACH Observatory e-LAB as an interactive digital space where students, researchers, municipalities and citizens can upload ideas, maps, monitoring data and pilot experiences related to pollinator-friendly urban design.



Main objectives

The proposal includes:

- creation of pollinator-friendly green corridors connecting urban parks and neighbourhood green spaces
- integration of native flowering vegetation along cycling and pedestrian routes
- development of biodiversity micro-habitats within regenerated districts and public spaces
- enhancement of school gardens and university campuses through pollinator-friendly landscaping
- promotion of citizen science biodiversity monitoring activities
- creation of GIS biodiversity maps identifying ecological gaps and priority intervention areas
- The project idea was uploaded and presented within the Italian U.BI.TEACH Observatory e-LAB “window space”, where students shared conceptual materials, biodiversity analyses, maps and visual proposals.



Project Concept

The proposal developed by students aims to create a network of pollinator-friendly ecological corridors connecting parks, school gardens, regenerated districts, urban forests and neighbourhood green spaces through nature-based urban interventions.

The project idea proposes transforming underutilised or fragmented urban spaces into biodiversity-supporting environments capable of facilitating species movement and improving ecological continuity within the city.

Students proposed interventions that could be integrated into:

- pedestrian and cycling routes
- tramway green corridors
- regenerated railway areas
- school courtyards and university campuses
- public squares and neighbourhood parks
- community gardens and urban agriculture spaces





Proposed interventions

The students designed a series of biodiversity-oriented actions including:

Pollinator-friendly vegetation

The proposal recommends the introduction of native flowering species selected according to seasonal blooming cycles in order to guarantee continuous food resources for pollinators throughout the year.

Suggested vegetation includes:

- lavender
- salvia
- wildflowers
- rosemary
- native grasses
- pollinator-friendly shrubs

Students also proposed avoiding highly ornamental non-native species with limited ecological value.





Proposed interventions

Ecological micro-habitats

The proposal includes the installation of small biodiversity-supporting elements such as:

- insect hotels
- pollinator nesting areas
- deadwood habitats
- micro-wetlands
- biodiversity patches integrated into public spaces

These interventions aim to support both pollinators and other forms of small urban fauna.

Biodiversity corridors and ecological continuity

Students identified several potential ecological corridors capable of linking fragmented green infrastructure systems across Milan, including connections between:

- Parco Nord Milano
- Navigli corridors
- Parco Agricolo Sud Milano
- regenerated railway yards
- neighbourhood parks
- and school environments





Proposed interventions

ECitizen science and participation

The project strongly integrates participatory approaches by involving citizens, schools and local communities in biodiversity monitoring activities.

Students proposed:

- pollinator observation campaigns
- biodiversity mapping workshops
- educational signage within green corridors
- biodiversity monitoring through iNaturalist
- public awareness activities on pollinator conservation



Expected impacts



The students identified several potential benefits generated by the proposal, including:

- improved ecological connectivity within urban districts
- increased pollinator biodiversity
- enhanced urban ecosystem resilience
- increased environmental awareness among citizens
- stronger integration of biodiversity into urban regeneration projects
- improved climate adaptation through nature-based solutions
- greater student engagement in sustainability challenges

The project also demonstrates how Higher Education students can actively contribute to the development of innovative urban biodiversity solutions responding to real local environmental needs.



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