

Item 8 — Accelerating the FAO Green Cities Initiative

Tuesday, 29 September 2026 | 17:00–19:30

Mr. Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates,

India welcomes '*FAO's Green Cities Initiative*' and its emphasis on the urban and peri-urban forests and trees for building sustainable and resilient cities. India would like to reiterate that adequately protected and well-managed green spaces contribute to climate regulation, improve air and water quality, mitigate pollution, reduce noise and help regulate urban microclimates.

India believes that urban forestry should increasingly be integrated with urban planning, climate adaptation, biodiversity conservation, disaster-risk reduction and public health. Importantly, urban greening must be ecologically appropriate and locally adapted. Species selection should reflect local ecological and climatic conditions, with adequate attention to water availability, native biodiversity, ecological connectivity and long-term maintenance.

India's Nagar Van Yojana promotes development of urban and peri-urban forests and green spaces, bringing forests closer to citizens while contributing to biodiversity, environmental awareness, urban resilience and creating wholesome living environment.

The flagship programme '*Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)*' emphasises on the development and restoration of urban green spaces and parks. These green spaces enhance access to amenities, reduce carbon footprints, support groundwater recharge and improve citizens' quality of life.

India encourages FAO to support Members in integrating and strengthening urban and peri-urban forestry across national forest programmes, urban planning frameworks, including through targeted capacity development and technical assistance. FAO may also facilitate structured knowledge exchange among practitioners and policymakers from Member Nations to promote the sharing and scaling up of good practices.

India looks forward to working with FAO and Member States to advance greener, healthier, biodiverse and climate-resilient cities by strengthening linkages across the rural-urban continuum.

Thank you, Chair.