

Creating an i-Tree Eco-based Urban Forest Management Toolbox: Turning i-Tree outputs into Climate-Adaptive outcomes, offering management strategies for growing the Swiss Urban Forest

Naomi Zürcher, Urban Forester / Consulting Arborist, Arbor Aegis / European Forum on Urban Forestry

ABSTRACT

Switzerland, in developing strategies to deal with the impact of a changing climate, has wisely chosen to focus on urban green and blue spaces in its scope and has awarded a grant to the submitted i-Tree Eco project, modeled in 6 diverse Swiss cities.

Given the demands of sprawling spatial development, the impact such development inflicts on the environment and thus, the public's health and well-being, combined with an inadequate implementation of Urban Forestry protocols and Best Management Practices, it was necessary to frame i-Tree within a much larger context.

This current project uses i-Tree outputs - the quantifying of today's tree-related Ecosystem Services (ES) - and invests that data into an Urban Forest Management Toolbox, enabling Climate Change adaptive Swiss Cities of tomorrow.

In addition to:

- translation of i-Tree Manuals into German and French,
- development of a multi-language i-Tree Eco laminated "Field Cheat Sheet",
- training in the i-Tree Eco application and data collection,

Urban Forest Toolbox methodologies, based on city-specific analyses, will:

- elucidate the use of i-Tree outputs as a foundation for creative, ES-oriented solutions to planning and managing an adaptive Swiss Urban Forest;
- incentivize increasing mature tree canopy by growing the existing Urban Forest / Forest resource;
- increase professional, decision-maker and the public's understanding of the climate-relevant ES Services provided by a healthy, viable tree resource through innovative communication tools;
- develop actionable strategies to realize a resilient and sustainable Urban Forest Ecosystem.

BIOGRAPHY

Growing up in Bronx NY and studying dance and music throughout my formative years, I would never have imagined the professional life realized. I studied Botany, Horticulture, Landscape Design, but nothing fit until my first hike in the Catskills (NY) Forever Wild forest. My tree journey led me to the developing world of Urban Forestry studies and relationships with Federal and State Urban Foresters, enabling me to:

Global i-Tree Science & Users Symposium
- June 16th – 19th, 2019 –
<https://www.esf.edu/itree/>

- co-author the Federal ReLeaf U&CF program for NY State;
- implement and chair ReLeaf in NYC;
- author Recommendations for an Urban Forest Management Plan;
- coordinate international and local educational conferences, seminars and workshops for professionals and concerned citizens;
- develop/initiate informed stewardship/citizen science opportunities for concerned NY residents, e.g. the Asian Longhorned Beetle NYC Public Outreach program (Federally-funded).

I became a Certified Arborist in 1996, working as a Consulting Arborist, specializing in reviewing/editing/authoring Tree/Landscape Preservation/Protection specifications for large public infrastructure projects, developing a “Building WITH Trees” approach to design and build. I co-organized and chaired NYC Root Zone, a 501-c-3, authoring publications and providing informal educational opportunities for landscape professionals. I am now semi-retired, living in Luzern Switzerland and working to enhance and advance European Urban Forestry through:

- contributions to the recently concluded COST GreeninUrbs;
- the Swiss federally funded Climate Change Adaptation project;
- implementation of i-Tree;
- European Forum on Urban Forestry steering committee membership.