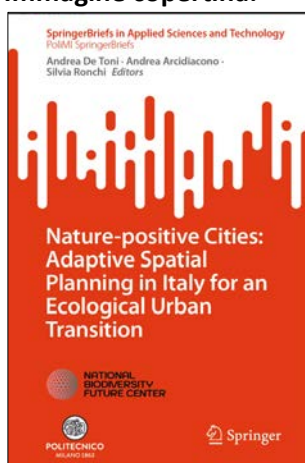


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Autori MARIA CHIARA PASTORE, ANNARITA LAPENNA & LUCA LAZZARINI
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Abstract:

Over the past decade, biodiversity has gained increasing prominence within European policy frameworks. The link between biodiversity and urban environments is explicitly recognized in the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030, which identifies the planning and development of urban green spaces as essential measures for advancing nature restoration goals and promoting the sustainable management of ecosystems across all sectors. A central element of the Strategy is the Nature Restoration Regulation, which entered into force in June 2024. This Regulation designates urban ecosystems as key areas for implementation, requiring that, by 2030, there should be no net loss in the total national area of urban green spaces or urban tree canopy cover within urban ecosystem areas, followed by their progressive increase in subsequent years. Article 14 of the Regulation further obliges each Member State to prepare a National Restoration Plan, detailing the measures necessary to achieve the legally binding targets established by the Regulation. In Italy, although urban greening policies are still limited, they represent an emerging and valuable foundation for supporting the actions outlined in the EU Biodiversity Strategy and, more importantly, for facilitating the implementation of the Regulation. Within this context, Urban Greening Plans (in Italian, Piani del Verde) constitute a significant field of investigation for assessing their potential alignment with the targets set by the legislation. Accordingly, this chapter seeks to provide an overview of current greening policies in Italy and to examine the Urban Greening Plan as a strategic planning instrument capable of contributing to the achievement of the objectives and targets established by the Regulation with regard to urban ecosystems.