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What makes the world's best urban parks?

Dr Digby Whyte, Australia, World Urban Parks CEO

Lists of the ten best parks in the World abound in the travel sections of internet news websites.



While these lists promote the benefits of having great urban spaces, they are often subjective. A recent article from acclaimed architecture critic Rowan Moore featured in the Guardian lists '[The 10 Best Parks](#)'. Would you agree?

As a champion of urban parks, open space and recreation World Urban Parks might be expected to provide some guidance or criteria, and objective standards can be found, such as the UK's [Green Flag Award](#).

What criteria would you recommend that would define the world's best urban green spaces? And what parks would become your top ten parks as a result? Do they require the scale and variety of the largest urban parks? This week saw the Large Parks in Large Cities conference of the World Wildlife Fund, taking place in Stockholm, reflecting the unique value large parks can play to city prestige, liveability and environmental sustainability.

Do the ingredients for the world's best parks include outstanding design or large areas of nature? Are they a cultural statement or a common ground? Do they reflect a high level of official or community management or environmental sustainability? Do they require emotional appeal or are they functionally effective?

We hope this continuing discussion will lead to a greater appreciation of quality parks and perhaps lead to the creation of a little bit of 'best urban park' in every park.

Readers are invited to provide their top ten parks in the world, and comment on the criteria they would use to formulate their own top ten list – please email office@worldurbanparks.org cc CEO@worldurbanparks.org with the details.

World Urban Parks update

Dr Digby Whyte, Australia, World Urban Parks CEO

This column provides an update on the new World Urban Parks 'pocket prospectus', simplified fees, plans for aligning activities and communications with topical themes, the debut of World Urban Parks on Twitter and coming benefits for members.



World Urban Parks Promotion

The first year of World Urban Parks is a significant one for developing membership.

With a membership spanning different nationalities, organisations and individuals the Board has revised promotion to make it easier to understand and membership fees to provide better value for members.

A one-page "[Pocket Prospectus](#)" is now available, to present the role, benefits and fees of World Urban Parks. This can readily be distributed through your networks and we encourage you all to spread the word. The full 10-page [World Urban Parks Prospectus](#) has been trimmed to 3 MB for easier circulation to those seeking further information.

The prospectus outlines the three main benefits of World Urban Parks – Advocacy, Best Practice and Collaboration. A new feature is that we will align our communications and activities around different themes every 2-3 months, such as climate change, equity of access, healthy parks healthy people, economics of parks, older adults et cetera.

On the topic of communications, we have acquired the Twitter handle [@WUParks](#). Any members who use Twitter are encouraged to include [@WUParks](#) in their tweet if you think it would benefit the World Urban Parks community.


Our membership fees, shown in the "Pocket Prospectus" are now simplified and have been revised and expressed in United States Dollars (USD) as a well understood and relatively stable world currency.

However, members can pay in the equivalent of any major world currency. There is now just the 'standard fee' shown that applies to 2015/16. When reviewing their memberships, members can stay on the standard fee if they have joined their national professional association.

The new organisation fees are now based on four sizes of organisation (relative to their budget) with a moderate fee reduction for most. All types of organisations now pay the same. Any organisation that has paid a fee in excess of the new structure will have their renewal invoice reduced by that amount.

The individual fees in \$USD regain some of the lost value of the declining New Zealand Dollar but remain moderately priced to ensure good value. Existing members who have yet to pay on an older invoice can still do so.

We have added the convenience of secure online credit card payment at <http://worldurbanparks.org/join-us/individual-membership-form>. Completing the membership form to update member details then opens the option to pay by credit card.

For any queries on these changes please contact ceo@worldurbanparks.org .

Coming membership benefits

A 2015 Member Contact Database (emails only) will shortly be circulated to members which will enable you connect and collaborate directly with colleagues around the world between conferences, regional activities, and committee and working group projects.

A free copy of *Outdoor Design Source* Directory with 600 pages of landscaping and external works products and services and industry associations will also be sent to members.

The Directory is mainly used by park and recreation managers, landscape architects and project managers and covers local government, parks, tourism and leisure industry, property development, environmental management, nurseries, irrigation, horticulture, lighting, erosion control, hard and soft landscaping, and more.



World Parks Day events from around the globe

The eighth annual World Parks Day will be marked around the world on Saturday 19 September 2015 in a variety of ways.

Parks around the world are getting behind World Parks Day in interesting ways this year, with events across the world. Japan has embraced this year's event, while other countries around the world from Ireland and Poland to Australia have organised events to showcase and relate the importance of their parks.

Organised by World Urban Parks, World Parks Day aims to communicate the critical importance of parks in a global context, promote best practice by learning from other parks services and encourage people to enjoy their local park and appreciate the importance of green space.

Parks around the world are getting behind this event in interesting ways this year, outlined below.

Parks around Japan have embraced the celebration and a number of parks have arranged activities to mark the day including Uminonakamichi Park Center, Mannou Park Center, Showa Administration Center, Yodogawa Park Center, Takino Park Center, Musashi Park Center, Echigo Park Center, Belmont Park Center and Azumino Park Center.

Hitachi Seaside Park in Ibaraki Prefecture has invited visitors to immerse themselves in the park's unique autumn colours and walk amongst 36,000 red Kochia bushes and millions of cosmos flowers.

One of Europe's largest parks, Silesia Park (Park Śląski) in Poland will mark the day with events, concerts and outdoor games.

Events in Australia include [practical conservation activities](#) in Tasmania, and music festivals and canoe races in Queensland. Broadwater Parklands on the Australian Gold Coast will celebrate World Urban Parks Day with a Wheelie Big Day, encouraging families with children to enjoy activities including pedal cars, mini-jeeps, train rides, slot car racing, skateboard demos and segway rides.

Ireland's Phoenix Park in Dublin, will mark the day with a special Honey Show that includes presentations, guided walks, demonstrations and a competition for local beekeepers to showcase the quality of their honey, while some UK organisations have called for the government to protect and invest in public green spaces.

There's still time to register your World Parks Day event — if you'd like to let us know what you've got planned or view our list of ongoing events around the world, why not visit our [World Parks Day page](#).






Join a Regional or Standing Committee

Our World Urban Parks committees and working parties welcome members who would like to engage in developing a range of activities and projects. Meetings are usually by Skype except where regional activities are organised.

World Urban Parks has four regions to provide relevant additional activities and opportunities to meet face to face, including annual Regional Congresses and technical tours of parks and facilities of host organisations. These are run by Region Committees and the Chairs of the Committees are keen to hear from members interested in becoming involved in committees and their working groups.

Currently the Europe, Asia-Pacific and Americas Regions are developing committees and you can contact their respective Chairs for more information on how to contribute.

- Europe: Contact Chair Anna Steidle at europa.office@worldurbanparks.org
- Asia-Pacific: Contact Chair Chris Rutherford at asiapacific.office@worldurbanparks.org 
- Americas: Contact Catherine Nagel at americas.office@worldurbanparks.org 
- or simply contact office@worldurbanparks.org  and we will connect you with the right person.

Further information can be found on the World Urban Parks website www.worldurbanparks.org under the menu item 'About Us'.

There are also two standing committees involved with a range of member services and projects that welcome committee or working group members. The Knowledge and Standards Committee is involved with setting international standards, World Congresses, awards, best practice, benchmarking, and scientific research and knowledge sharing.

The Membership and Partnerships Committee is involved with membership development and service, communications, and partnerships with organisations. If you have expertise in funding and finance you may like to contribute to the Funding and Audit committee that helps develop funding opportunities and monitors budget performance.

If you would like to volunteer to become involved in a Standing Committee just contact ceo@worldurbanparks.org to get connected. Further information can be found on the World Urban Parks website www.worldurbanparks.org under the menu item 'Programs'.

Parks of the World: Silesia Park, Poland

Silesia Park (Park Śląski) in Chorzów, Poland was created in the 1950s as an initiative to restore an industrially devastated piece of land in the middle of three cities — Siemianowice Śląskie, Chorzów and Katowice.

It is spread over an area of 620 hectares, making it one of the biggest parks in Europe, with forested areas covering 250 hectares and 100 hectares of tended green space and parklands.



Park Śląski includes ponds, streams, numerous species of trees and shrubs as well as extensive gardens forming a refuge for wild animals living in the area in the vicinity of the Silesian Zoological Gardens, which include a walk with full-scale model dinosaurs. The park has diverse attractions, including an amusement park, a water park, a rose garden, an outdoor ethnographic park, planetarium, high ropes course, sports courts and cycling paths.

The Silesian Ethnographic Park was opened in 1975 and is set on 20-hectares of Silesia Park ground. This open-air rural architecture museum is made up of mostly 19th and 20th century cottages and other wooden constructions transferred from Silesian and highland villages.

The museum is also known as a historic research centre and offers various educational programs. The rural school building hosts lessons and the interiors of many other buildings hold thematic exhibitions of tools, accessories, home fittings and furniture dating from the past two centuries.

For more information, visit the Park Śląski homepage>>

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Introducing National Associations: VVOG

Over the next few months we will introduce many of the national association members of World Urban Parks. National associations advance the industry through, knowledge exchange and professional development and a key role of World Urban Parks is to act as an umbrella association that unites and supports them.



Vereniging voor Openbaar Groen (VVOG) is an association of cities and municipalities in Flanders (autonomous Dutch speaking region in Belgium) with a focus on public green areas. It is sometimes described as the Flemish Federation of Park Administrators. VVOG was founded in 1974 on the initiative of seven cities (Antwerp, Bruges, Ghent, Mechelen, Ostend, Sint-Niklaas and Vilvoorde).

Secretariat

Predikherenrei 1c | 8000 Brugge

T. 050 33 21 33 | 33 20 62 050 F.

info @ VVOG .info | www.vvog.info

Mission

VVOG aims to promote sustainable urban greenery.

Services

VVOG offers its members a wide range of services to support their work including a library, technical advice (by email, telephone, visit on site), and networking opportunities.

VVOG offers a forum to colleagues and experts in the field of 'public green areas' to meet each other and to discuss actual themes and problems.

Publications

The VVOG provides services to support its various publications and has a dynamic and up-to-date website.

Bimonthly magazine *Groencontact* (since 1978)

E-news letter

Website | www.vvog.info

Groene Lente

Every year in spring time (Lente) VVOG launches a call for local authorities to participate in a competition for the best practice green area, flowering project and pesticide free management.

Education and training

Courses: VVOG organizes specialized courses for people working in the municipalities.

Seminars: VVOG organizes annually one or more workshops (symposia, conferences) on a current theme in the field of public green areas.

Study visits: Every year VVOG organizes visits to projects of colleagues.

Introducing our national associations: HORTIS

HORTIS is a French association that has been operating since 1938. Its members aim to be “the managers of natural spaces in the city”.

Role:

- To exchange and share: Hortis is a network of passionate professionals that allows its members to meet and share their knowledge and experiences
- To preserve and to develop: to meet the social and societal demand of public space users, Hortis aims to preserve, develop and re-introduce nature in the city to improve citizen’s quality of life, with a sustainably managing green and natural spaces
- To represent and to advocate: recognised as a benchmark of our profession, Hortis participates actively to national institutions (National Council of Parks and Gardens, Ecophyto 2018) and to the inter-profession (Cities and Villages Flowered, Landscape Wins, Otherwise Gardening, Qualipaysage, Plant & City) to represent and express the objectives of the horticultural and landscape, in the public sector.

Size

548 members in 400 territorial authorities, engineers (278), technicians (171), foremen.

Governance

A board of directors (18 members), an executive board (7 persons), a local organisation in 17 territorial regions with, in each, a delegate who organizes technical meetings with its members and institutional partners.



Media and other communications

Website: www.hortis.fr, magazine "city by city" (*de Ville en Ville*), four issues per year, 1,000 copies each, off-series, monthly communication from president, annual congress, conferences, region technical tours, leaflets.

Hortis Congress

The next conference will be held in Marseille, France on 1 - 2 October 2015. The theme is: "environmental transition and territorial reform". Two introductory lectures and a dozen presentations will shed light on the dynamics of inter-ecological transition.

Partnerships

Hortis provides its expertise for research and for the government for establishing the national strategic directions in environment and landscape, and with all the professional partners.

Contacts

President: Jean-Pierre Gueneau, jean-pierre.gueneau@valdemarne.fr , +33 1 43 99 82 86, mobile phone +33 6 81 16 10 69

General secretary: Elisabeth Fournier, fournierelisabeth1@gmail.com , +33 6 22 22 72 34, Skype : fournierelisabeth1_1



Image provided by HORTIS
Image provided by HORTIS

Article: WUP remplace l'IFPRA!

This article reproduces an item from the September edition of the HORTIS publication *de Ville en Ville*. The article includes the background, structure and goals of World Urban Parks, as well as interviews with CEO Dr Digby Whyte and Europe Secretary Dr Christy Boylan.

[This article](#) is available in its original language to ensure it retains its original meaning. If you would like to read a translated version, you may wish to use an online translation tool such as [Google Translate](#).



WUP remplace l'IFPRA!

Par Elisabeth Fournier, France

Hortis est membre de l'association WUP : mais qu'est-ce que WUP et pour quoi faire? Elisabeth Fournier, votre Secrétaire générale, s'est rendue en Mai dernier, au 1er Congrès international de WUP à Ponte de Lima (Portugal), qui était couplé

avec le Congrès international des pays hispanophones ibéroaméricains. Elle vous en fait un compte-rendu synthétique, au travers de ses différentes rencontres :

WUP : World Urban Parks

IFPRA : International Federation of Parks and Recreation Administration

WUP est né en 2014 de la fusion de deux associations internationales :

l'IFPRA (dont Hortis était membre depuis de nombreuses années) qui encourageait la coopération nationale et internationale entre professionnels et organisations en charge des parcs, espaces verts et de loisirs des villes, de l'écologie et autres

Parks for Life, association de professionnels et de spécialistes des parcs ainsi que d'associations de loisirs récréatifs (USA, Canada, Australie et Nouvelle Zélande) qui défendaient les parcs, espaces naturels et de loisirs comme vecteurs de santé lors de l'organisation de nombreuses manifestations nationales et internationales, de sport de plein air notamment.

WUP est un regroupement large, non seulement d'associations nationales comme Hortis, mais également d'agences gouvernementales, d'universités et d'institutions de recherche, d'organisations non gouvernementales, d'entreprises...et de professionnels à titre individuel.

Sa mission : promouvoir et développer la création, la gestion adaptée et l'usage des parcs urbains, des espaces de plein air et de loisirs dans le monde entier, en tant que contribution intégrée à la santé humaine, en connexion avec le monde naturel.

CPP et CIPP

Le Certified Park Professional et le Certified International Park Professional sont les deux certifications professionnelles proposées par WUP depuis 2013. Sur la base d'un référentiel ad hoc, ces certifications permettent d'attester de la qualification, de l'expérience, de la compétence et de l'engagement professionnel d'une personne. La démarche est donc personnelle mais pourrait être facilitée par Hortis, qui ainsi pourrait valoriser son rôle de mise en réseau.

RENCONTRE AVEC LE DR DIGBY WHYTE, DIRECTEUR GENERAL DE WUP

Elisabeth Fournier : Digby, vous êtes Directeur Général de WUP. Quel message voudriez-vous faire passer aux 550 membres d'Hortis ?

Digby Whyte : nous souhaiterions que les associations nationales considèrent WUP comme leur maison internationale, qu'elles y trouvent le moyen d'entrer en contact les unes avec les autres. Mais aussi, nous serions heureux d'aider leurs membres à tisser des liens entre eux. Nous pensons que les associations nationales constituent le meilleur endroit pour favoriser l'investissement dans un travail en réseau.

E.F. : quels sont les moyens de WUP pour intégrer les associations et leurs membres ?

D.W. : nous avons de nombreux moyens pour aider à cela. Notamment, nous avons organisé la possibilité pour chaque association de disposer de sièges au Conseil. Ainsi, nous pourrions mieux les entendre, les comprendre. Puis nous avons un système de cotisation attractif qui permet aux membres des associations, elles-mêmes membres de WUP, d'avoir une cotisation à demi-tarif.

E.F. : quels moyens WUP peut-elle mettre à disposition d'Hortis ?

D.W. : par exemple, si Hortis souhaite développer sa dimension, nous pouvons l'assister dans l'organisation d'une

conférence internationale, proposer des intervenants, faire venir des membres de notre Conseil d'administration ou d'autres conseils en fonction de la conférence. Il y a une autre possibilité, mais elle dépend d'Hortis, si elle se sent prête : WUP a mis en place un système de reconnaissance professionnelle, une certification nationale et internationale. Ce système peut s'adapter à chaque pays, car chaque pays est différent. Si vous le souhaitez, nous vous proposons de travailler ensemble à ce sujet.

E.F. : l'association espagnole des parcs et jardins publics a organisé ce congrès international avec WUP, au Portugal. Que penseriez-vous d'un congrès WUP en France ?

D.W. : la France fait beaucoup de choses merveilleuses, ce serait une opportunité intéressante pour beaucoup de personnes de venir à un congrès dans votre pays, qu'il soit Européen ou mondial.

E.F. : comment Hortis, qui a déjà de nombreux outils à sa disposition, une revue, un site internet, peut-elle valoriser son action grâce au WUP ?

D.W. : Hortis pourrait publier dans un magazine international dont l'objectif est de mettre en valeur les actions dans les différents pays. Cela permettrait à Hortis de s'ouvrir sur l'international. En fait, notre rôle est de fournir des services Ponte de Lima-festival international des jardins aux associations nationales, qui peuvent en profiter sans coût supplémentaire. Nous pouvons aider nos membres, de manière très efficace, à se constituer un réseau en les mettant en contact avec n'importe quel autre membre et à tout moment.

Et lors des congrès et des conférences internationaux, la rencontre en face à face permet de lier des liens amicaux entre collègues. Et avoir de bons amis, ça aide toujours. Ponte de Lima-festival international des jardins Vie de l'association

Rencontre avec le Dr Christy Boylan

Elisabeth Fournier : Christy, vous êtes quelqu'un de très engagé et depuis longtemps, d'abord à l'IFPRA et maintenant à WUP, où vous êtes aussi Président de la World Parks Academy (en charge de l'attribution des certifications). En tant que Secrétaire de la Région Europe dans laquelle Hortis souhaiterait s'investir davantage, comment voyez-vous les premiers pas d'Hortis dans la toute nouvelle organisation?

Christy Boylan : un des rôles fondamentaux de notre toute nouvelle organisation est en effet de développer les liens entre les professionnels, qu'ils soient en associations, en cabinets de consultants ou dans les universités notamment.

Je propose donc à Hortis de s'intéresser tout d'abord aux outils que WUP met à sa disposition, comme les certifications. Je m'engage aussi à profiter des réseaux de relations de WUP pour accueillir des manifestations internationales, conférences ou congrès. D'autre part, pour développer nos actions communes, nous avons besoin de toutes les énergies et notamment de celles de la France, qui, par sa situation au coeur de l'Europe, a indéniablement un rôle majeur à jouer.

E.F. : l'ensemble de votre engagement a été distingué, lors du congrès mondial de Ponte de Lima par l'attribution de la première distinction individuelle de WUP. Je me permets de vous adresser, au nom d'Hortis, nos plus chaleureuses félicitations!

Gil Penalosa les parcs représentent beaucoup plus que du loisir. Ils sont aussi un moyen direct de faire changer les choses. Je vous invite à partager vos idées et suggestions afin qu'ensemble, nous écrivions le prochain plaidoyer pour les parcs urbains pour aider à façonner l'avenir de nos villes et contribuer à une société plus égalitaire et plus démocratique.

Parmi les structures : le Conseil d'administration de 26 membres dont Daniel Boulens fait partie au nom d'Hortis, la Task Force (groupe de travail) de 14 membres où Hortis est représentée par Daniel Boulens et Laure Guillemette, une commission pour la région Europe où Hortis est représentée par Elisabeth Fournier.

La gouvernance de WUP, quelques éléments

Gil Penalosa (Canada): Président

Dr Christy Boylan (Irlande): Secrétaire de la Région Europe

Dr Digby Whyte (Australie): Directeur général

Dr Anna Steidle (Allemagne): Présidente de la Région Europe

Rencontre avec Francisco Bergua

Président de l'Association espagnole des parcs et jardins publics (et Chef du service environnement de la ville de Huesca)

Elisabeth Fournier : Francisco, votre association est maintenant représentative de toutes les villes espagnoles. Vous accueillez cette année le congrès mondial du WUP, en lien avec le 9e congrès biennuel ibéro-américain. Les invités viennent du monde entier. Et c'est aussi l'occasion, pour nos deux associations, dont les pays partagent une frontière, de se rencontrer et d'envisager des échanges.

Francisco Bergua : Nous souhaitons effectivement développer nos liens à l'international comme auprès de nos voisins. Il nous faut effectivement profiter de cette opportunité et je suis très favorable à développer des échanges au niveau national comme au niveau régional avec Hortis en France.

E.F. : Hortis vous invitera à son congrès d'Octobre à Marseille. Si vous avez la possibilité de venir, ce sera une belle occasion pour commencer à échanger entre nos pays.

Le 1er congrès mondial de WUP à Ponte de Lima :

Le thème général du congrès portait sur la notion de « parcs intelligents » ou « smart parks ». Un résumé des 45 interventions n'est, bien entendu, pas envisageable. Ainsi, vous pourrez trouver les principales interventions sur le site internet d'Hortis.

En deux mots :

- les parcs intelligents s'inscrivent dans une démarche globale de « ville intelligente » dans tous ses aspects : gouvernance, mobilité, environnement, économie, modes de vie, participation citoyenne... Cette notion se décline de la conception à la gestion puis à la communication
- La notion de parcs intelligents va advenir. Soit nous laissons faire et ce seront des intérêts commerciaux qui vont s'en saisir, soit nous prenons de l'avance en adoptant et diffusant nos valeurs.

Article: [VVOG is lid van WUP](#)

This article reproduces an item from the July-August edition of the Vereniging voor Openbaar Groen publication *Groencontact*. The article



includes information on World Urban Parks and the importance of parks in creating more livable cities.

[This article](#) is available in its original language to ensure it retains its original meaning. If you would like to read a translated version, you may wish to use an online translation tool such as [Google Translate](#).

VVOG is lid van WUP

From *Groencontact* July-August edition

Eind mei werd in Portugal het eerste wereldcongres georganiseerd van de nieuwe wereldorganisatie inzake openbaar groen, *World Urban Parks* (WUP). WUP is in feite de opvolger van IFPRA, de *International Federation of Parks and Recreation Administration*. VVOG, dat sinds begin de jaren '80 lid was van IFPRA is sinds dit jaar als enige Belgische vakorganisatie lid van WUP.

Wereldorganisatie

World Urban Parks is dé professionele organisatie die wereldwijd de sectoren groenvoorziening en openluchtrecreatie omvat. Wetende dat in 2050 ongeveer 70 procent van de wereldbevolking in steden zal wonen is het belangrijk dat vakmensen en organisaties, die betrokken zijn bij het ontwerp en het beheer van stedelijk groen, een forum hebben waar vakkennis en ervaring gedeeld kan worden, en dit op een mondiale schaal.

Professioneel forum

Om onze steden in de toekomst leefbaar te houden is de aanwezigheid van openbaar groen onmisbaar. WUP wil aan groenbeheerders een professioneel forum bieden om ideeën uit te wisselen inzake gemeenschappelijke uitdagingen op het vlak van openbaar groen (parken, leefmilieu, klimaatsverandering, sociale rol, ...).

Lidmaatschap

Zowel individuen als organisaties kunnen lid zijn van WUP. Via het lidmaatschap van de VVOG zijn de secretaris van de VVOG en de voorzitter van de Technische Werkgroep automatisch ook individueel lid van WUP. Groenambtenaren die willen aansluiten bij WUP kunnen te rade op de website of bij de VVOG.

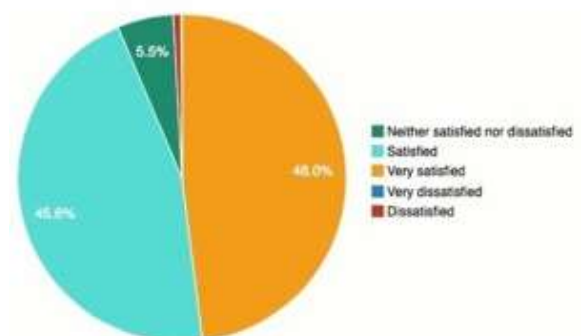
Benchmarking and park user satisfaction

Many park agencies survey their park users periodically. Usually this includes good practice measures, including gauging customer satisfaction with the park or facilities.

As well as highlighting areas where improvements could be made, these surveys can be one of the few measures of illustrating whether outcomes have been delivered and if citizen and customer expectations have been met.

Customer satisfaction can be used to identify issues and justify expenditure, yet even among the park and recreation organisations worldwide that regularly benchmark through Yardstick, 40 percent don't survey their communities to determine their satisfaction.

Organisations can devise their own customer surveys or utilise the Yardstick Measures with the advantage of a tried and tested system and ability to compare their user satisfaction with that of other similar organisations.




Currently a number of agencies from Copenhagen in Denmark to Sunshine Coast in Australia are surveying park users through Yardstick. In countries such as New Zealand that have utilised Yardstick user surveys for some time, overall dissatisfaction is down to one percent of users across all participating agencies. If you have an interest in surveying or benchmarking park and facility users, contact chris@yardstickglobal.org .

The Yardstick Benchmarking program also offers management, planning and asset benchmarking with a substantial pool of organisation data from Australasia, Europe, Canada and South Africa.

Agencies can have surprisingly different standards, even within adjacent countries, for example Helsinki, Finland has seven park seats per hectare, fourteen times as many per hectare as Bergen, Norway. In some cases national associations also offer excellent benchmarking services to members (such as NRPA's PRORAGIS).

The good news for organisations in countries where Yardstick or national association benchmarking is not offered is that the new online World Urban Parks Agency Indicators is now available.

This service covers a 27 benchmarks linked to Yardstick data worldwide.. It is administered by Yardstick and priced at \$380 USD. To participate, or for more information or contact chris@yardstickglobal.org .

Recognition of your professional credentials

Many park professionals become professionally certified and qualified in their own countries, however this does not always equate to international recognition of the valuable skills they have gained.

The World Urban Parks Academy offers a solution to this issue for those in the early- or mid-stages of their careers through the Certified Park Professional accreditation, and for senior professionals under the Certified International Park Professional accreditation.



If you reside in the USA, Japan or New Zealand you will find national certification offered by the NRPA, QPAS, and NZRA respectively. If you are in a country without national certification available, or wish for the additional status conferred by an internationally recognised accreditation, you can achieve this through an online World Parks Academy application and assessment as a Certified Parks Professional. The assessment suits professionals from a wide range of parks and recreation related disciplines.

To date 36 World Urban Parks senior professional members have become Certified International Park Professionals.

Until the end of December 2015 this can be achieved through assessment of senior-level competencies and activities based on your experience. From 2016 applicants will first need to be certified by their national association or be Certified Park Professionals through the Academy before they can be eligible for the Certified International Park Professional accreditation.

The World Parks Academy is a partnership between World Urban Parks and Indiana University's Eppley Institute for Parks and Public Lands. Its certification has been internationally vetted and considered relevant by a large international panel of professionals.

Fees are \$275 US for CPP and \$375 US for CIPP until 30 December 2015. Discounts are provided to applicants from countries with an annual GDP per capita of less than \$25,000.

You can find out more at <http://worldurbanparks.org/programs/wup-academy> or through the Academy's website at www.worldparksacademy.org.

Event: Best of Both Worlds, Malaysia 2015

The *Best of Both Worlds* environmental education conference is returning to Malaysia with a focus on “Ensuring Effective Delivery for a Sustainable Future”.

The conference will be held from 6-12 September at the Rainforest Discovery Centre, Sepilok, Sandakan, Sabah, Malaysia.

[See the conference document to find out more>>](#)



Best of Both Worlds 2015
“Ensuring Effective Delivery for a Sustainable Future”

Event: NRPA Congress 2015, USA

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) in the United States will hold their annual Congress and 50th anniversary at Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas from 15-17 September, including World Urban Parks Chair Gil Penalosa as keynote speaker.



NRPA Congress brings together the park and recreation community in the United States, and typically hosts more than 7,000 park and recreation professionals, citizen advocates, and industry suppliers.

[Visit the Congress website for more information>>](#)

Event: IERM Convention, South Africa

South Africa's Institute of Environment and Recreation Management (IERM) convention will be co-hosted by UNISA and Johannesburg City Parks & Zoo from 28–30 September at Glenburn Lodge, Muldersdrift, Johannesburg.



IERM Convention 2015

[Visit the convention website to find out more>>](#)

Event: Hortis Congress, France

Registrations are now open for the annual Hortis Congress, to take place at the Palais Du Pharo in Marseille from 1-3 October. Although this event will be in French, international participants are welcome.



The congress theme is environmental transition and territorial reform. Two introductory lectures and a dozen presentations will shed light on the dynamics of inter-ecological transition.

To find out more, view the [programme](#) or visit the [Congress website>>](#)

Event: PLA National Conference

The Parks and Leisure Australia National Conference will take place in Sydney from 25-28 October.

The conference theme is 'INSPIRE and create the future together', and the programme includes World Urban Parks Vice-Chair Neil McCarthy as well as young professionals' board representative and Chair of the Generate Network Jenn Halliday.



[To register or find out more, visit the conference website>>](#)

Event: NZRA National Conference

The New Zealand Recreation Association National Conference speakers are booked, the programme is out, and award nominations have started. This event will set the course for the industry and help you navigate through recreation's sometimes turbulent waters.



The theme of this year's event is Navigating Recreation, and key concepts wellbeing, spaces and places, risk and people will be explored by leading recreation researchers and industry professionals from New Zealand and around the world.

[To register or find out more, visit the conference website>>](#)

Upcoming events

We have an exciting schedule of events planned in fascinating locations all over the world. For information about all upcoming World Urban Parks conferences and events, visit our website.

[Visit the Congresses & Events section of our website>>](#)

Call for contributions

We welcome your contributions to keep the World Park News interesting, vibrant and relevant. Contributed articles of up to 1,000 words in length are preferred, and each should ideally be accompanied by at least one photo or image.

If you have a news article, research summary, event report or photo to share with the Ifpra community, please email CEO Digby Whyte at ceo@worldurbanparks.org or James Heffield, Communications, at office@worldurbanparks.org.

Please note: Member associations are welcome to forward selected articles from their e-newsletters and e-magazines for publication.