

What if every city corner was edible?
Advocacy and Lobby Work towards integrating Edible City Solutions (ECS) for socially resilient and sustainably productive cities

An Abstract of the Human Rights Project by Sebastiano Moltreri

The purpose of this praxis project was to identify tools, actions, strategies, steps, goals of advocacy and lobby work at city level which support the enhancement, implementation and institutional integration of Edible City Solutions (ECS) -also understood in the literature as nature-based alternative urban food solutions and systems-. ECS are meant as all forms of urban food production, distribution and consumption that result in an overall increase of social well-being via improvements of climate and biodiversity conditions, enhancement of social cohesion in cities, support of the local economy, and sustainable maintenance of local raw material cycles by closed system techniques. The research was conducted through a mixed methods approach; it included review of literature and further relevant sources, focus groups with relevant actors and field research. Results showed the possibilities to develop advocacy and lobby work initiatives within the city context on different levels and areas through multiple and diverse strategies. Furthermore, the research also showed the many challenges and countervailing factors that often hinder the enhancement of ECS, and the importance of cities and local scale as the best contexts where processes of production, distribution and consumption of food that pay equal attention to ecological regeneration, producer livelihoods, community well-being, and food justice, can take place. In conclusion, this study suggests that the development of new and the strengthening of existing ECS can be strongly supported by advocacy and lobby approaches aimed at influencing decision processes on the political level, on key community decision-makers, on legislators and on officials of cities, thus enabling the enhancement of ECS in the short, middle-term period and the integration of ECS in the long-term urban planning of cities.