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**Climate shelters: the green solution to weather emergencies**

***New trends in urban green spaces presented at Agrilevante. Urban planning, agronomy, and mechanical engineering are working to create and maintain green canopies that offer residents shelter, both inside and outside public buildings.***

The climate emergency is putting cities in crisis and causing a deterioration in people's quality of life. “Climate shelters” (defined as public spaces – open or closed – that can offer adequate thermal comfort during days of extreme temperatures) represent the most ecological and effective response. The topic was discussed this afternoon at the Bari fair, as part of Agrilevante, during the conference entitled "Climate shelters: green solutions for urban areas," moderated by RAI journalist Bianca Santoro. The data on global warming is harsh—as Elena Camilla Pede of the Polytechnic University of Turin explained—when we consider that 2024 was statistically the hottest year on record, and that a growing number of deaths, especially among the elderly, are now more or less directly attributable to the effects of heat. In a city like Barcelona – the researcher explained – in the past an extraordinary heat wave was recorded on average every four years, while in recent seasons the average has dropped to at least two waves per year. In light of this, new urban planning trends are focusing on creating areas where asphalt is replaced with earth, and where greenery is arranged according to criteria that promote cooling and the creation of small bio-climatic oases. But climate shelters can also be created inside buildings, for example in public libraries, by making the necessary modifications to install green roofs. The objective set by the technicians for the city of Barcelona – concluded the professor – is that by 2050 there will be shelters reachable within five minutes, in every part of the city. Many of the plant covers that make up today's street decor also serve climate mitigation purposes – explained Marco Devecchi of the University of Turin – and it is therefore worth investing in solutions such as trees, both on avenues and in parking areas, wall greening (vertical greenery), hanging gardens, and hedges of specially selected aromatic plants, which provide shade and mitigate the effects of the heat. Among the projects underway in the city of Turin, Devecchi explained, is the one in front of the Valentino Castle, where the goal is to "unseal" the asphalt surface and replace it with earth and natural materials. The creation of flowerbeds is also recommended as a climate mitigation factor. The construction of climate shelters, however, is not possible without a range of machinery and equipment capable of carrying out the work and ensuring the maintenance of green spaces. Marco Menghi, from the FederUnacoma Technical Service, focused on these aspects, describing the main gardening technologies currently being developed by the industry, with particular reference to those equipped with electric motors. In this case, mechanical vehicles offer less noise pollution, easier maintenance, lower vibration levels, and, of course, zero emissions. Digital systems applied to machinery, Menghi concluded, are also very useful in urban settings, for the scientific mapping of intervention areas and for increasingly timely and calibrated maintenance planning.

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