



“At the other end of the scale, we could do a great deal locally to rebuild our relationship. Those of us who live in cities are already benefiting from the many urban forestry initiatives that have sprung up around the world, and which are regreening these most artificial environments. Trees have been grown in cities from as long ago as 1840, when the first urban park, Derby Arboretum, was established by Joseph Strutt, the industrialist and brother of the pioneer of iron-framed buildings; by 1858 the best-known urban park, New York's Central Park, was being laid out in Manhattan. Pleached lime trees were a key feature of Georges-Eugene Haussmann's Parisian boulevards, while pollarded plane trees planted in Victorian times still grace the streets of London. More recently city planners have sought to add to these historic legacies. The Million Tree Initiatives

have been greening the streets of Los Angeles and New York for the last fifteen years and have stimulated the launch of similar schemes in cities around the world. And for the last thirty years, scientists, economists, and psychologists have sought to quantify the benefits of urban trees, led by the Chicago Urban Forest Project, which was set up by the US Department of Agriculture Forest Service. The research is showing that the benefits of urban trees are considerable. They provide shade, reducing people's effective temperature by 18°F-27°F, and the urban heat island by 2°F-4°F, and can lower air-conditioning costs by 15-30 percent in hot weather. They capture soot particles, lower particulate pollution by around 15 percent, reduce storm runoff by on average 20 percent, and block urban noise. They raise property prices and reduce vandalism. They even make people living on tree-lined streets feel happier and more connected to their neighborhoods, even if they don't actually like trees!"