



# BRANCHING OUT

New routes to valuing urban treescapes

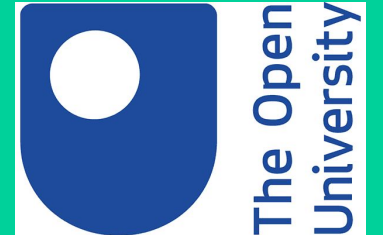
**The LIFE Framework for relational values of urban trees**



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# The Branching Out Values Framework

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Introduced in [O'Connor & Kenter 2019](#), it builds on O'Neill et al's Life Framework (O'Neill et al 2018) and is more than Nature's Contribution to People framework which is still dominated by an anthropogenic worldview. It is congruent with the framework that will be introduced by the IPBES Values Assessment (to be published July 2022).

Sees 4 ways to view nature, which influence **why** people value nature (or trees in our case) in the way that they do – definitions quoted from [O'Connor & Kenter 2019](#) :

- Living *from* the world - the environment matters as a resource, a means to our sustenance
- Living *in* the world – points to the world as a place that is the source or main stage of our life events, from where social and cultural values are born and recreation takes place
- Living *with* the world - points to nature or non-humans as important others, who co-exist alongside us, acknowledging that we are one species alongside the larger biotic community living on this planet
- Living *as* the world - points to the more-than-human as self, individually and collectively

Intrinsic, relational and instrumental values overlap, not directly aligned with the four frames

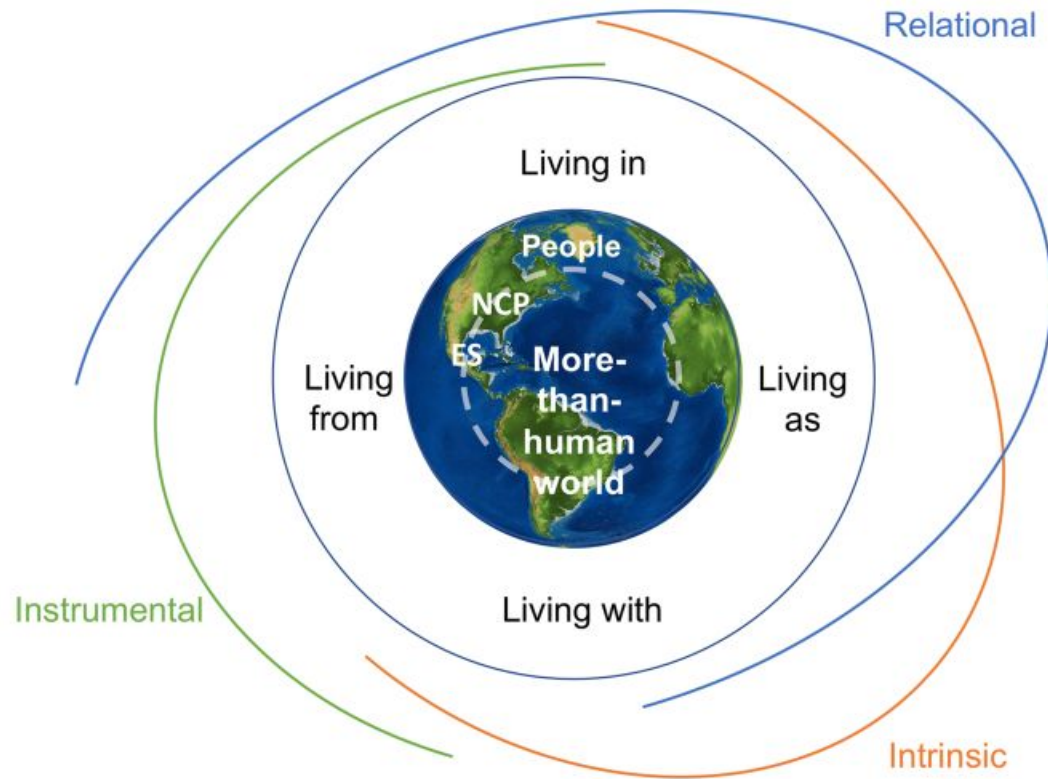


Figure 1 The four Life Frames of Values and their relation to the IPBES (2016) categories of intrinsic, instrumental and relational values. ES ecosystem services, NCP nature's contributions to people (O'Connor & Kenter 2019)

The frames also overlap in any context – the framework allows us to understand the nuanced basis for valuations of nature, and how that has influenced decisions and actions affecting nature

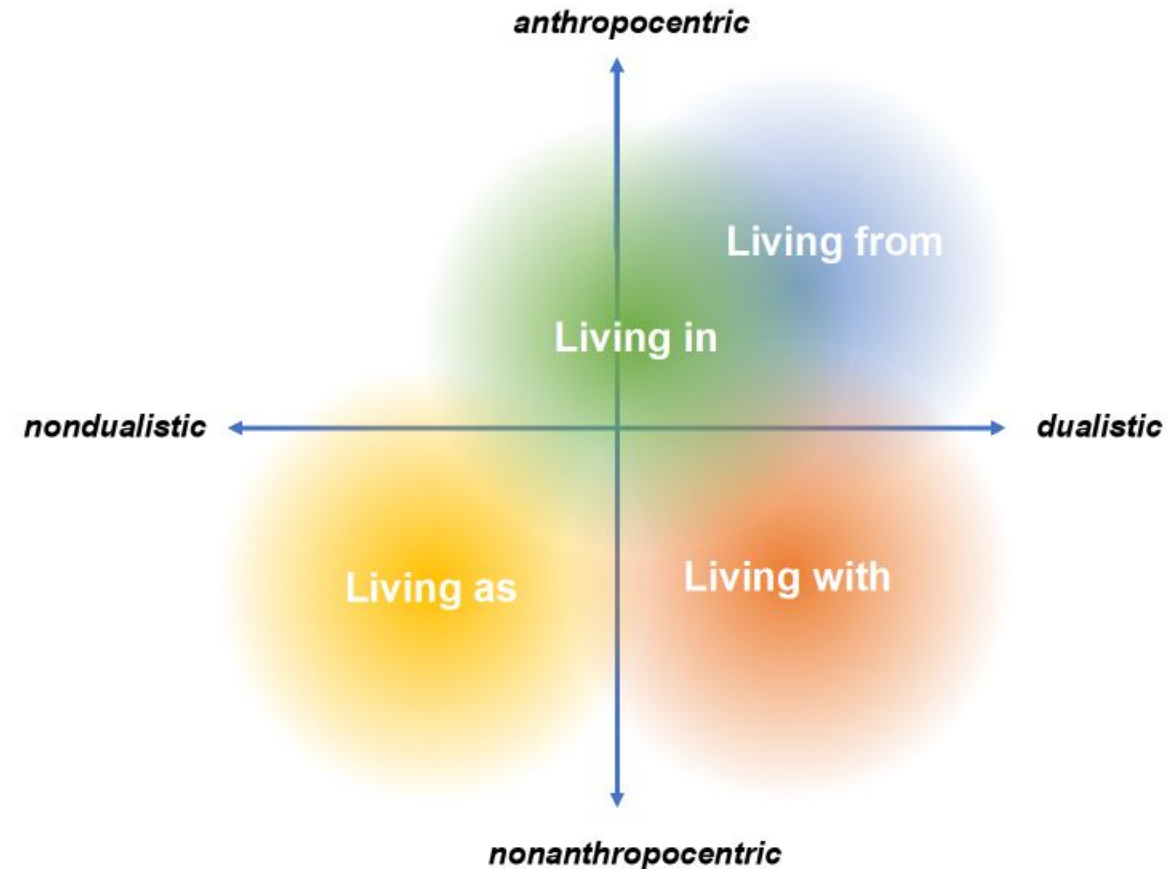


Figure 1 The Life Frames in terms of their ontology (horizontal axis) and ethical orientation (vertical axis). Note that it is also possible to view the living from, in and with frames through the holistic, nonanthropocentric lens of the living as frame. (Kenter and O'Connor in press?)



# As interpreted for urban trees, this gives four different frames and goals

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- ***Living from trees***: goal is **prosperity and efficiency**, for trees to benefit us. E.g., damage cost avoided by using trees for floodwater management, economic value (productivity, NHS savings) of green gym, fair distribution of benefits.
- ***Living with trees***: goal is a **healthy ecosystem**, for nature in its own right and to protect and regulate our environment. E.g., managing to protect rare species, improve biodiversity and achieve good environmental status.
- ***Living in treescapes***: goal is **desirable places** in terms of recreation, landscape, culture, heritage etc. E.g., improving access for different social groups, attractive and therapeutic environment, protecting iconic and meaningful trees and species, inclusive participation in management.
- ***Living as trees***: goal is **harmonious relationships**, in terms of personal and immersive engagement, trees being part of the community, a sense of oneness and ownership, feeling part of something larger than ourselves, and recognizing 'agency' of trees (that trees have their own life and story and could be considered as persons).



# Living in treescapes: Urban trees and treescapes shape the places where we live, work and recreate

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## **Make the urban space feel good**

- ... In the winter, there is yellow foliage on the ground which makes people feel very warm and happy
- They also give the city a different feel ..They add colour and make the city feel more alive

## **Trees as pleasant places for activity**

- I enjoy being among the green, [...] walking in the woods or forests always brings calmness ...
- We enjoy walking in local woods as a family - feel safe and free away from roads
- They provide shade (I can't cope with too much heat) they cut out some of the surrounding noise

## **Trees are beautiful and soften the landscape**

- I appreciate trees in the city centre too, ... They soften the landscape and frame the buildings. ...
- They're also beautiful for pictures, particularly if you have an event in the city (wedding etc)

## **Connection to nature**

- I not only enjoy interacting with the trees themselves but also the species living with them
- .. I enjoy seeing the trees in my village and on routes around the city that I travel regularly changing throughout the year.

## **Facilitate social relations | Grounding | History ...**

...and more!

# Living from trees:

## Urban trees and treescapes as a resource

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### **Fruit**

- I have tried growing a small plum tree in my back yard for the fruit but I have not been very successful

### **Heating or cooking**

- I don't need wood, until summer when I use my chiminea in the garden

### **Shelter/shade**

- ... provide shelter, so in the summer ... good for a relief from the heat, especially for those .. living on the streets

### **Oxygen**

- I see the resource as oxygen rather than anything else

### **Crafts and play**

- I enjoy collecting everything .. So seeds from trees are also something I will ... just collect .. label .. and keep them

### **Community**

- People leave surplus [fruit] in baskets for neighbours to take

### **Just trees themselves/ not a relevant frame**

- I just enjoy trees and do not take a lot from them
- We don't take any resource from trees

# Living with trees:

## Urban trees and treescapes as a space for nature

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### **Habitat for urban wildlife**

- There are small areas of woodland around the city which are microhabitats for various creatures.
- Trees are very important as a shelter and as a source of shelter and food for birds and animals

### **Trees help regulate climate and floods**

- Me and my community are aware which trees have a main role of shelter and food supply of urban wildlife, ornamental urban landscape, and a main role of reverse climate change.
- in York, in river Ouse, River Foss and local becks, the Riverside trees has an important role of urban and rural flooding mitigation.

### **Connection to nature**

- They bring animals and nature into the city. They give people who might not have a garden green spaces to enjoy.
- Very much so in parks we love to see the squirrels climbing the trees.

### **Focus for educating ourselves about nature**

- Seeing bees on their flowers and fungi on their surfaces reminds me how important they are as part of a complex system. Observing how their fallen leaves turn in to soil if left undisturbed emphasises that "dead" matter is not always waste.

# Living as trees: Urban trees and treescapes as a part of you or your community and us as part of trees/treescapes

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## Personal connection/relationships with trees and each other

- We have a tree planted as part of a larger plantation to commemorate the birth of our son

## Intrinsic connection

- ...the strength of feeling that was felt when a willow on our village green was cut down.

## Historical record

- .. represent history as they have been around through various time periods as the city has developed

## Connection to nature

- Many people put bird feeders on trees which make it a pleasure for the house bound to watch

## Marking time/grounding

- I regularly visit several local woods throughout the year... there are ancient trees and it gives me pleasure to visit
- I feel they give grounding, knowing they've outlived you. A reassuring presence.

## This frame is not for everyone

- Never hugged a tree in my life. Never seen anyone else hug a tree.