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Editorial

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The growth of cities and the transformation of natural spaces pose challenges for biodiversity conservation and the maintenance of ecosystem services. In this context, urban ecosystems take on particular significance due to their contribution to environmental regulation and human well-being. Urban trees, associated vegetation, and the fauna linked to them are fundamental components; studying them requires comprehensive approaches that allow for an understanding of their structure, composition, and functioning. Consequently, it is essential to strengthen scientific research and foster collaboration among specialists from several disciplines and institutions.

In response to this need, the Urban Ecosystems Research Network (*RIEU*, for its acronym in Spanish) was established in 2025. It is an interdisciplinary and interinstitutional academic initiative composed of researchers and university students interested in the study, conservation, and management of urban ecosystems. Its aim is to promote the generation and application of scientific knowledge, enhance human resource development, and foster institutional ties. Under the motto "Research to understand and manage urban ecosystems," the network aims to contribute to the development of more sustainable, resilient, and biodiverse cities.

RIEU's activities encompass research on the structure, composition, and functioning of urban ecosystems, with an emphasis on trees, plant diversity, associated fauna, ecological monitoring, and conservation and restoration strategies. Furthermore, it promotes the development of tools for the assessment and management of urban green spaces. Its collaborative nature facilitates the exchange of knowledge, the

training of students, and the development of joint projects, while also fostering engagement with government institutions and civil society organizations to facilitate the practical application of scientific knowledge.

Within this framework, the publication of a special issue of the *Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Forestales* (Mexican Journal of Forest Sciences)—featuring scientific contributions from *RIEU* members—serves as an opportunity to disseminate research advancements concerning urban ecosystems. The articles collected here reflect the academic work of the network's members and their shared interest in expanding knowledge regarding the ecological components and processes present in cities. This initiative also seeks to strengthen scientific collaboration and promote new research focused on the conservation and management of these ecosystems.

The consolidation of the *RIEU* will help strengthen research on urban ecosystems in Mexico and expand its international reach. Key objectives include the development of interinstitutional projects, the training of students, the joint publication of research findings, and the creation of proposals that contribute to public policy based on scientific evidence. With this special issue, the *RIEU* reaffirms its commitment to research and academic collaboration. Finally, we would like to thank the *Revista Mexicana de Ciencias Forestales*, as well as the authors, reviewers, and editors, for making this publication possible and for contributing to the advancement of scientific knowledge regarding urban ecosystems.

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