



**STREET ART  
FOR MANKIND**

## PRESS RELEASE

### Brussels hosts first of 50 UN Ecosystem Restoration Murals worldwide

**September 21, 2021, Brussels** — The first of fifty murals to be displayed in major cities around the world to raise awareness and trigger action for the protection of the environment is being officially unveiled on September 29 in Brussels.

Street Art for Mankind (SAM) is joining the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, a global effort led by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to halt climate change and restore ecosystems by 2030, by creating a series of #RestorationMurals around the world over the next ten years. Culture and art can play a vital role in inspiring a #GenerationRestoration that calls for the protection and revival of ecosystems across the planet.

This initiative kicks off on September 29 in Brussels, where a large 40 meter high “Ecosystem Restoration” mural has been created by artist Lula Goce on Avenue Louise, 375. The mural raises awareness and invites people to join the rally for the future of our planet. It was originally inspired by UN75, the global conversation initiated by the United Nations in 2020 for their 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, where 1.5 million people spoke out about issues that mattered most to them. The protection of the environment came out as the number one long-term priority.

A free mobile app called “Behind the Wall®”, published by SAM, enables the public to scan the mural to hear the story, learn about the artist and take action from anywhere.

This mural has been created with the support of the UN Regional Information Centre in Brussels (UNRIC), the City of Brussels and Parcours Street Art. It was made possible by Solvay, a UN Global Compact member.

#### QUOTES

**Quote from the artist, Lula Goce**

“The Alchemist mural is a metaphor for Mother Nature. She is trying to protect biodiversity and life from climate change and the degradation of natural spaces by humans. We are part of Nature, and it is up to us to be responsible with the planet. It is our duty as human beings to preserve and take care of the environment.”

***Quote from UNEP***

***Veronika Hunt Safrankova, Head of the Brussels Office of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP):*** “Scientists tell us we only have ten more years to switch from exploiting ecosystems to reviving them instead. This can be achieved – but #GenerationRestoration needs support from across society. Artists play a central role in spreading the message. This is why we at UNEP are proud to launch a ten-year collaboration for restoration murals with street artists from across the globe, and we thank the City of Brussels for hosting this very first mural of its kind.”

***Quote from UNRIC***

***Caroline Petit, Deputy Director of the United Nations Regional Information Centre:*** “The contemporary urban artist Lula Goce is bringing the theme of the protection of nature and ecosystems to the heart of Brussels and close to the homes of its citizens. Her superb street mural will fascinate and challenge audiences and bring hope that every individual action can make a difference if we start acting and caring for our planet. Thank you Lula, the City of Brussels, SAM and its sponsor Solvay for making this project possible.”

***Quote from FAO Brussels Office***

***Raschad Al-Khafaji, Director of the FAO Liaison Office with the European Union and Belgium*** “Degraded ecosystems affect the well-being of nearly half of the world’s population - increasing poverty and food insecurity. As we are rallying to reverse the impact of the climate crisis and move to recovery, FAO is delighted to support initiatives like this one in the heart of our vibrant host city. I hope that this work of art will become yet another landmark of Brussels; touching the hearts and minds of the public, particularly the young people, and calling them to join in restoring our planet’s ecosystems. It is my deep belief that each individual has a role to play, and together we can make a real change.”

***Quote from Street Art for Mankind***

***Audrey and Thibault Decker, co-founders:***

“We are truly honoured to partner with the United Nations Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization to raise awareness and unite a new generation of environment

activists with our murals. We have been tasked by UNEP to create 50 spectacular and inspiring murals across the world to reflect on where we are, create a conversation locally and globally and to ensure we are on track to restore our ecosystems. We sincerely hope that this first mural painted with the artist Lula Goce, on the iconic Avenue Louise in Brussels, will move people and create new vocations to engage in the restoration of our ecosystems. The City of Brussels holds a central part in the European Union and its actions. It made a lot of sense for us to start our mural series here, in the heart of Brussels. Next stop, Houston, the energy capital of the world!”

### ***Quote from the City of Brussels/Parcours Street Art***

#### ***Delphine Houba, Alderwoman of culture:***

“The "Parcours Street Art" in Brussels was designed to reveal the beauty of the European capital. It was also designed as a space for symbolic expression, carrying strong and engaged messages for society. These murals highlight the current challenges we have to face together. I am happy to say that Brussels is a great place for urban art to be expressed and that our city will continue to fully support this kind of initiative.”

### ***Quote from Solvay***

#### ***Ilham Kadri, Chief Executive Officer***

“Our world is facing environmental challenges like never before. In the new world, more doesn't always mean better, and better does not necessarily mean better for all. The quest for sustainability shared by all starts with each of us as individuals, supported by private and public partnerships and bolder ambitions - that is the story behind this artist's work. I see street art as a powerful and unique vehicle, helping us to get closer to each citizen, to persuade each heart and mind to embrace change and to convey the message that we need to bond people, ideas and elements to reinvent progress for a bigger impact on the world.”

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<https://streetartmankind.org/restorationmurals/>

## **VISUAL ASSETS:**

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/crx05tvh7729meg/AADtX5FwE-v21RH3sR4dG2Aaa?dl=0>

Please include systematically Photo Credit: @superkant for @StreetArtMankind

#StreetArtMankind #RestorationMurals #UN75Murals #GenerationRestoration #ForNature #UN75  
#ClimateAction

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **About the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration**

The UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021-2030 is a rallying call for the protection and revival of ecosystems across the world, for the benefit of people and nature. It aims to halt the degradation of ecosystems and restore them to achieve global goals. The United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the UN Decade, which is led by the United Nations Environment Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The UN Decade is building a strong, broad-based global movement to ramp up restoration and put the world on track for a sustainable future.

<https://www.decadeonrestoration.org/>

### **About Lula Goce:**

Lula Goce is a Spanish contemporary urban artist who lives by the sea in Galicia. Lula brings powerfully evocative and huge photorealistic scenes characterized by bright colors and a strong expressiveness. She merges people with nature adding fresh inspirations and “poetry” to her creations. Lula lived a long time in Barcelona where she studied a PhD as well as a Master in artistic creation at The Fine Art University of Barcelona. Her spectacular work can be seen all around the world on walls, in art festivals and in prominent art centers.

<https://www.lulagoce.com/about>

### **About Street Art for Mankind (SAM):**

SAM is a 501(c)(3), non-profit organization working with prominent street artists from all over the world to raise awareness on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and child trafficking through the power of art. The Brussels Ecosystem Restoration Mural is the first of this new #RestorationMurals series.

<https://streetartmankind.org/>

### **About Parcours Street Art**

Initiated in 2013 by the Alderman for Culture, the Street Art PARCOURS of the City of Brussels aims to be an open-air museum, accessible to all. Belgian and international artists are invited to paint the walls of the city and express themselves freely on various themes or create participatory projects in collaboration with residents and owners. Street Art is one of the most concrete applications of freedom of expression

in which artists, citizens or tourists, can find themselves in one of the murals. The PARCOURS is not just about putting paint on a wall: it is about conveying a message, uniting, commemorating, celebrating!

### **About Solvay**

Solvay is a science company whose technologies bring benefits to many aspects of daily life. With more than 23,000 employees in 64 countries, Solvay bonds people, ideas and elements to reinvent progress. The Group seeks to create sustainable shared value for all, notably through its Solvay One Planet roadmap crafted around three pillars: protecting the climate, preserving resources and fostering a better life. The Group's innovative solutions contribute to safer, cleaner, and more sustainable products found in homes, food and consumer goods, planes, cars, batteries, smart devices, health care applications, water and air purification systems. Founded in 1863, Solvay today ranks among the world's top three companies for the vast majority of its activities and delivered net sales of €9 billion in 2020. Solvay is listed on Euronext Brussels and Paris (SOLB). Learn more at [www.solvay.com](http://www.solvay.com).