**Therapy in Urban Areas: A Practice Guide for Istanbul Atatürk Urban Forest Therapy Gardens**

**Kevser Sena CEYLAN1\*, Aysel USLU1**

1 *Ankara University, Faculty of Agriculture, Department of Landscape Architecture, Ankara, Turkey*

\*E-mail: sena-ceylan@hotmail.com

Benefiting from the healing effect of nature in spiritual and physical therapy is the oldest, most effective and most practical method known for years. With the “Doğam Istanbul” Project targeted by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, it was planned to create therapy gardens within the Atatürk City Forest in order to benefit from the healing effect of nature, and this study is a summary of the guide created for the application of the therapy gardens design project. This study was carried out in cooperation with Ankara University Department of Landscape Architecture undergraduate students, graduate students and Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality within the scope of the undergraduate course "Landscape Design for the Disabled" and the graduate course "Design for All and Landscape Architecture". In line with the information gained in these courses and the literature review, design suggestions were made for 6 disability groups - including mental, visual, orthopedic and physical, speech and hearing disabilities, chronic diseases and elders - considering their physical, cognitive and social characteristics. 9 of the 21 alternatives belonging to 5 different themes presented in the original study were selected and presented as a summary of the whole study through this study.

Within the scope of alternatives, sustainable, accessible, easily orientable and reliable space and element designs have been proposed for users. While making suggestions, it has been considered to create spaces for the functions to appeal to different sensory organs of the users, for individuals of all ages and characteristics to socialize together, and to provide planned and unplanned activities. With the implementation of these proposals, it is envisaged that the unity of human and nature will be ensured and sustained within the complex urban pattern. Thus, the emotional, cognitive, behavioral and social benefits provided by this union will be achieved. In this way, the well-being of people with disabilities will be supported by nature-based activities.

**Keywords:** Urban Design; Therapy Gardens; Healing Gardens; Design for All; Nature-based Activities