UNEP

CBD

CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Distr.
GENERAL

UNEP/CBD/Cities/1/2Rev.1
30 January 2007

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

CITIES AND BIODIVERSITY: ACHIEVING THE 2010 TARGET
Mayors' Meeting on the Contribution of Cities to the Achievement of the 2010 Biodiversity Target
Curitiba, Brazil, 26-28 March, 2007

CITIES AND BIODIVERSITY: ENGAGING LOCAL AUTHORITIES DURING THE ENHANCED PHASE OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Note by the Executive Secretary

CONTENTS

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEPA	Communication, Education and Public Awareness
COP	Conference of the Parties
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ICLEI	International Council for Local Environment Initiatives
IUCN	World Conservation Union
KWS	Kenya Wildlife Service
LAB	Local Action for Biodiversity
MA	Millennium Ecosystem Assessment
MOP	Meeting of the Parties
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	non governmental organization
SANBI	South African National Biodiversity Institute
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Opened for signature during the Earth Summit in 1992, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) entered into force in 1993 and since has provided a framework for State Parties in their efforts towards achieving the three following objectives: the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources. At the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, World Leaders endorsed the "2010 biodiversity target", adopted by the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-6) to the CBD, which aims to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on Earth. In 2006, the CBD entered a new enhanced phase of implementation, which requires the active participation of all stakeholders.

Recent findings indicate that in 2007, the majority of the world's population will live in cities. This shift from rural to urban life will occur mainly in developing countries. While the number of slum dwellers is likely to keep growing, the involvement of local authorities becomes essential to the achievement of the objectives of the Convention and the 2010 biodiversity target. Against this background, a meeting on "Cities and Biodiversity: Achieving the 2010 Biodiversity Target" will be held from 26 to 28 March 2007 in Curitiba (Brazil), at the initiative of the Mayor of Curitiba, marking the first anniversary of the historic high-level segment of the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. The mayors of cities that have hosted or will host meetings of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the CBD as well as mayors of cities hosting a United Nations chapter have been invited to share experiences regarding the protection of biodiversity and discuss the various possibilities for cities to enhance their engagement towards the achievement of the three objectives of the Convention and the 2010 biodiversity target.

Healthy ecosystems provide social, economic and ecological benefits as well as goods and services that underpin various industries and, thereby, human well-being. However, during the last decades, we have witnessed ecosystems changing more rapidly and intensely than ever before. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA), completed in 2005, concluded that 15 out of the 24 services provided by ecosystems are in decline. The consequences of biodiversity loss and ecosystem disruption are harshest for the poor who often can not access or afford substitutes when faced with degraded ecosystems. Moreover, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment states that biodiversity loss poses a significant barrier to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, adopted in 2000.

However, urbanization can contribute positively to human development as cities offer many social and economic opportunities. As land-use planners, policy makers, developers and managers of local infrastructure, local authorities have a critical role to play in the achievement of the 2010 target. Many local initiatives demonstrate that the integration of biodiversity concerns into urban planning can have direct positive impacts on the surrounding ecosystems and the quality of life of populations. Furthermore, as local authorities represent the level of government closest to the people, they are in a preeminent position to raise awareness among citizens and inspire action. While biodiversity loss is a global concern, it is through local actions, in particular, that the situation can be addressed.

In addition, urban experiences in ecosystem conservation and biodiversity protection can contribute to strengthening national policies and to elaborating global agendas that respond to urban needs. Future actions taken by cities to preserve biodiversity, benefiting from the support of all partners, will constitute an essential part of global efforts to conserve life on Earth and to improve the lives of all its inhabitants.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The year 2007 makes a paradigm shift in the history of humanity. Indeed, in 2007, for the first time, the world's urban population will exceed its rural population. Most of this growth is occurring in developing countries, which host the largest part of the planet's biodiversity. The number of slum dwellers in the world is also expected to pass the one billion mark in 2007. Moreover, developing countries will be home to most of the biggest cities in the world.

2. The scale of impact of these cities on biodiversity could become a major concern in the near future. However, urbanization has the potential to contribute positively to human development in many ways and cities can contribute to the implementation of the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) through conservation and sustainable use of ecosystem goods and services. The quality of life of urban citizens depends heavily on how the surrounding ecosystems are managed to provide for essential services such as clean water and air, food and soil fertility, medicines, energy and building materials. On the other hand, the consumption habits of urban citizens affect surrounding ecosystems. Furthermore, green areas in and around cities provide substantial benefits such as microclimate regulation, recreation, pollution control and livelihoods (especially in developing countries).

3. In March 2006, the world community agreed, on the occasion of the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, on an enhanced phase of implementation of the Convention to significantly reduce, by 2010, the rate of biodiversity loss for the benefit of all life on Earth and as a contribution to poverty alleviation. This is referred to as the 2010 Biodiversity Target, also endorsed by the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002.

4. Building on the unique environmental experience of his city, the Mayor of Curitiba, host of the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, took the initiative of inviting the mayors of other cities that hosted or will host a meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, as well the mayors of host cities of United Nations headquarters, to share their experiences on issues related to biodiversity. Accordingly, at the initiative of the Mayor of Curitiba, the meeting on "Cities and Biodiversity: Achieving the 2010 Biodiversity Target" will be held in Curitiba from 26 to 28 March 2007 to mark the first anniversary of the high-level segment of the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, which was attended by 130 ministers and other heads of delegation.

5. The growth of cities presents great opportunities for changing the ways cities manage biodiversity, which could be beneficial to people and ecosystems on a local, national, regional and international scale. With this in mind, the Curitiba meeting aims at highlighting the initiatives of committed local governments in planning and implementing processes, and developing and using tools to address the challenges posed by cities on biodiversity. The meeting will then offer a unique opportunity to exchange innovative experiences and raise national and international awareness of the need for local action for the most appropriate management of biodiversity in and outside the cities.

6. The present note has been prepared as a background document for this meeting. Section II briefly reviews the main biodiversity challenges. Section III describes the status of urbanization at the global level. In that context, sections IV and V present successively the role that cities play and examples of initiatives undertaken by cities, which contribute to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Some background on the Convention on Biological Diversity

At the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, in 1992, world leaders signed the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), acknowledging that the sustainable management of the world's living resources is one of the most urgent issues of our times. The Convention's main objectives are the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources.

The Convention entered into force on 29 December 1993. Since then, the Conference of the Parties (COP) met successively in: Nassau, Bahamas, in November/December 1994 (COP-1); Jakarta, Indonesia, in November 1995 (COP-2); Buenos Aires, Argentina, in November 1996 (COP-3); Bratislava, Slovakia, in May 1998 (COP-4); Nairobi, Kenya, in May 2000 (COP-5); The Hague, Netherlands, in April 2002 (COP-6); Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in February 2004 (COP-7), and Curitiba, Brazil, in March 2006 (COP-8).

At the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg in 2002, world leaders endorsed the 2010 biodiversity target of achieving a significant reduction of the rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on Earth. In March 2006, at the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Curitiba, Brazil, the 188 Parties to the Convention agreed to accelerate their efforts in order to achieve this target.

II. BIODIVERSITY CHALLENGES

7. During the last 50 years, we have seen ecosystems changing at a more rapid and intense rate than ever before in the history of humanity. Species are becoming extinct at a rate 1,000 times higher than rates that characterized earlier periods of history. The human-induced extinction rate of animal and plant species is 30% higher than the natural rate. Furthermore, the global demand for resources now exceeds the biological capacity of the Earth to renew these resources by some 20%. In addition, the direct causes of biodiversity loss, which are habitat modification, overexploitation, higher nutriment loading, and climate change, show no signs of abating.

8. The recently completed Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA), a global scientific study involving over 1,300 experts from 95 countries, concluded that out of the 24 services provided by healthy ecosystems, 15 are in decline, including the provision of fresh water, marine fishery production, natural hazard regulation, and the ability of the atmosphere to cleanse itself of pollutants.

9. The consequences of biodiversity loss and ecosystem disruption are harshest for the poor who are often the least able to access or afford substitutes when ecosystems are degraded. The MA confirmed that biodiversity loss poses a significant barrier to meeting the needs of the world's poorest, as set out in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). There is no longer an excuse for inaction.

10. Several biodiversity challenges that are specific to cities (and, to a large extent, within their jurisdiction), such as the provision of green spaces and urban protected areas, appropriate urban infrastructure, sustainable transportation, better air quality, adequate waste management, and minimized industrial pollution, are becoming some of the most urgent issues on a local, national, regional and international scale, as the ecological footprint of cities is growing, along with the number of citizens whose health is affected by unsound urban management. In addition to these issues related to sustainable management of urban biodiversity, cities also have to consider the impacts of their activities beyond their

territory, on the surrounding natural and agricultural ecosystems. Local actions can and should directly address these situations.

11. The activities of cities not only affect local biodiversity, but can also have serious consequences at the regional and international level. The pollution of large rivers and marine ecosystems, and the importation of alien invasive species from one city to another illustrate the global character of environmental issues. Furthermore, during the last decades, we have seen the emergence of a worrying global-scale phenomenon. Climate change is a natural phenomenon that has occurred at various periods of time in the history of our planet. However, this time, human activities seem to have accelerated and intensified natural climate change. According to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, climate change is likely to become the dominant direct driver of biodiversity loss by the end of the century. The phenomenon is already forcing biodiversity to adapt either through shifting habitat, changing life cycles or developing new physical traits.

12. Yet, biodiversity can also contribute to reducing the impacts of climate change on populations and ecosystems. For example, conserving certain species such as mangroves and drought resistant crops can help lower the disastrous consequences of climate change such as flooding and famine. The conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity can also strengthen ecosystem resilience and improve the ability of ecosystems to provide critical services in the face of increasing climatic pressures. In light of these global concerns, it is crucial that the world's cities work together in order to promote conservation and sustainable use of biological resources.

III. A NEW URBAN ERA

13. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme, UN-HABITAT, has issued a report State of the World's Cities 2006/7, which states that in the year 2007, for the first time in history, the majority of the world's people will live in cities. The number of slum dwellers in the world is also expected to pass the one billion mark in 2007, where one in three city residents will live in inadequate housing with no or few basic services. Developing countries will be home to most of the biggest cities in the world. The scale of impact of these cities on biodiversity could become a major concern in the near future. The majority of urban migrants will be moving to small towns and cities of less than one million inhabitants, and these "intermediate cities" are expected to grow more rapidly than any other type of city. Natural population increase and reclassification of rural areas into urban zones will also contribute to urban growth in several regions in a significant manner. Cities of the developing world will contribute 95% of urban growth in the next two decades. By 2030, these cities will be home to 80% of the world's urban population. After 2015, the world will see a significant reduction of its rural population as urban growth becomes more intense in Asia and Africa, which are set to host the world's largest urban populations in 2030.

14. However, urbanization has the potential to contribute positively to human development in many ways. Highly urbanized countries often enjoy higher incomes, more stable economies, and stronger institutions. Moreover, they are better able to withstand the volatility of the global economy. Cities generate a disproportionate share of gross domestic product and provide extensive opportunities for employment and investment, in developed as well as developing countries. Furthermore, cities often provide more access to services and generally perform well on several human development indicators, such as literacy and life expectancy. However, despite the enormous potential of cities to bring prosperity, this wealth does not necessarily lead to poverty reduction. Inequalities between the rich and the poor have increased, along with the sizes and proportions of slum populations. Large sections of the population in urban areas are suffering from extreme levels of deprivation, which can be even more debilitating than those experienced by the rural poor.

15. The document also reports on the trends related to goal 7 of the MDGs. It states that, on the one hand, urbanization can lead to irreversible changes in production and consumption of energy, land and

water. Cities are witnessing rapid urban sprawl causing direct impacts on the surrounding hinterland. Industrial emissions and increased motorized transport in cities is severely affecting both the health of ecosystems and of urban populations. Furthermore, health costs from pollution reduce gross domestic product by an estimated 2 per cent in developing countries. Slums are growing faster than they are being improved. Not only do many slum dwellers lack access to water and sanitation, but too often, the urban poor live in hazardous or toxics locations, which are more prone to natural disasters and pose severe health risks. .

16. On the positive side, sustainable urbanization policies have been incorporated in many city and national plans and are indeed contributing to reversing the impact of environmental degradation. Sound and sustainable land, air and water management policies have contributed to the reduction of soil erosion, improvement of air and water quality and protection of biodiversity within cities and their hinterlands. The fact that cities concentrate population and production gives them great advantages over rural settlements or dispersed populations, such as reduced unit cost of piped water, sewers, drains and roads. The use of environmentally friendly energy sources and transport can also contribute to reducing infrastructure costs.

17. Following the adoption of the Millennium Declaration in 2000, urban poverty was brought to the centre stage of the global development agenda. According to the UN-HABITAT report, the improvement of the living conditions of slum dwellers will automatically have a positive impact on the attainment of most of the Millennium Development Goals and their related targets. Involving the urban poor in the fabric of urban society appears as the only sustainable solution to the growing urbanization of poverty.

IV. ROLE OF CITIES

18. Urban areas include both natural and semi-natural habitats and artificial or created habitats. Some parts of cities (paved surfaces and manicured lawns) are biological deserts, but others, such as urban wetlands, ravines, stream valleys, rail lines, and abandoned industrial lands can be rich in wild species. These habitats and their biodiversity play an important role in maintaining the overall quality of life in the city. Biodiversity and its maintenance are important in urban areas. Urban biodiversity will have impacts on local, regional and global ecosystems and societal health. For example, wetland in urban areas can provide sites for water filtration. Ecosystem services, especially purification of water and air, oxygen supply, absorption and detoxification of human and industrial wastes, create economic benefits for taxpayers by absorbing costs that would otherwise be borne by the city. However, the values of these services are not factored into urban planning and development decisions.

19. Local authorities represent the level of government closest to people. Thus, their involvement in the implementation of the Convention and the achievement of the 2010 target is of crucial importance. As land-use planners, policy-makers, and developers and managers of local infrastructure, they have a critical role to play in promoting sustainable development and its biodiversity components. As community leaders, they have a responsibility to raise public awareness about the importance of biodiversity. In addition, actions at the local level can have direct and obvious results that can convince others of the need to get involved, while sending a message to higher levels of governments. Indeed, urban experiences in ecosystem conservation and biodiversity protection can also be useful at the national level as they help to strengthen national policies and to elaborate global agendas that respond to urban needs.

Tilburg, first city in the world to join Count Down 2010

The municipality of Tilburg situated in the Noord-Brant region of the Netherlands has an active policy to combine urban development and biodiversity conservation through the planning concepts such as the green structure. Tilburg integrated urban development and nature restoration in its projects such as Dongezone in the suburb Reeshof. During the European conference "Mainstreaming Sustainability in the Face of Challenge", in May 2005, the Mayor of Tilburg, announced the joining of Tilburg in the Countdown 2010 initiative and pledged to work towards the international and pan-European commitments to halt the decline of biodiversity by 2010

Source: ECNC/Brabant –European Partnerships for sustainability in Tilburg.

20. Integration of biodiversity concerns into development planning can be cost efficient while ensuring that urban centers grow in a sustainable manner. For example, around one third of the world's largest cities obtain a significant percentage of their drinking water from protected areas. Adequate planning allows cities to reduce consumption of natural resources and production of waste, and can also provide incentives for investing in renewable energy. Furthermore, building regulations can promote technologies such as green roofs that have the potential to reduce energy costs and storm-water run-off. With the creation of urban parks and green median strips, residents can enjoy beautiful surroundings that are more suitable for wildlife.

Biodiversity in the City of Zagreb, Croatia

Zagreb is the capital of the Republic of Croatia, which consists of 70 rural and suburban settlements. It has a high diversity in ecosystems. Roughly one third of the surface is occupied by forest, one-third by agricultural areas and one-third by built-up areas. Within this area, 18,931 hectares (30% of the city area) are protected under [the] Habitats Directive through legislation and regulations and plans.

In Zagreb the European Centre for Nature Conservation (ECNC) has developed a project Community Involvement in Biodiversity Assessment. The project commenced in December 2005 and runs until December 2007. It aims to develop more awareness of citizens and decision makers on biodiversity [and thus] to contribute to [achieving the] 2010 Biodiversity Target.

Source: www.biodiversitybrabant.nl

21. More specifically, cities have the power to establish local environmental policies and regulations, such as landscaping guidelines and pollution/emissions standards. They can also integrate biodiversity considerations into other local policies and regulations and land-use planning, while aiming to reconcile economic and social considerations with biodiversity objectives through the ecosystem approach, environmental impact assessments, and appropriate zoning (limiting development in biodiversity rich areas). Local authorities also have the possibility to integrate biodiversity considerations into the development and operation of infrastructure, such as transportation and water management systems. In addition, they can work with other local authorities in surrounding areas to establish common environmental priorities, ensure effective landscape-level planning, implement national or regional policies, and share information and experience. One obstacle to the achievement of the 2010 target is the lack of capacity within city administrations, especially in some developing countries. Cities need to possess the necessary financial and human resources in order to address these complex questions. In both developed and developing countries, there is a strong need for adequate training on biodiversity-related

issues for city administrators and managers. The issue of sustainable funding for integrating environmental concerns into urban planning also needs to be addressed.

22. Building sustainable cities requires engagement with citizens. Policies should be developed with an active and engaged citizenry. These plans must also be understood if they are to be implemented. Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) campaigns and programmes are central elements in strategies to build engagement with citizens. The first objective of CEPA is to create an awareness of biodiversity and its importance for human well-being. Given the nature of the urban environment, urban dwellers are less likely than rural dwellers to understand biodiversity and its role in providing the ecosystem services upon which all life on Earth relies. Cities have an opportunity to raise awareness through the creation of infrastructure, which supports both *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation. By integrating outreach, education and communication strategies into the plans and budgets for parks, natural history museums and zoos, cities can help raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity. These programmes should help explain the notion of ecosystems to people, and should provide examples of the ecosystems, which sustain the activities and livelihoods of the urban setting itself (e.g. systems of city parks and educational activities; system of natural history museums; educational components for zoos). The second objective is to create an awareness of impacts on biodiversity of individual consumption patterns and other behaviors, notably by providing guidance on less harmful activities. As citizens of the urban environment do not immediately perceive ecosystems that surround them, they may be unaware of the impacts that their activities and consumption patterns may have on the ability of these ecosystems to provide goods and services.

23. Cities have tremendous opportunities to educate and suggest alternatives to their citizens. As the level of government responsible for a large number of basic services, cities can inform citizens through projects related to, among others, waste disposal and recycling, pest management and chemicals, water usage, and organic food and decorative gardening. To accomplish these goals, cities do not only have to rely on direct forms of intervention. They can provide support and guidance for a variety of intermediate organizations and civic spaces, to communicate and facilitate the message of sustainable development. Cities have the ability to bring together stakeholders such as business, education, citizens, and non-governmental organizations to participate in the efforts to preserve and use biodiversity in a sustainable manner.

24. The role of local authorities was acknowledged during the 1992 Earth Summit. In adopting chapter 28 of Agenda 21, 101 heads of State and Government recognized local authorities as key actors in sustainable development and called for the establishment of Local Agenda 21 campaigns. Since then, thousands of campaigns have been developed, thereby providing local authorities with the opportunity to integrate biodiversity into local planning processes. For example, through the City of Geneva's Agenda 21 programme, the City of Geneva aims to become a sustainable development "model administration". This will be achieved by implementing an environmental management system, raising environmental awareness within the administration through training and an internal participatory process, raising public awareness of sustainable development through a participatory process, and creating sets of sustainable development indicators to assist with decision making. Public workshops, festivals and forums were put in place as means to raise awareness and involve various members of the community. The City of Geneva also plans to develop and implement three categories of sustainability indicators (decision-making tools for politicians and civil servants to help orient projects and policies towards sustainability; general indicators measuring the overall state of the environment from social, economic, and environmental perspectives; and specific indicators to assess the progress of projects undertaken by the Agenda 21 Unit). The indicators will be developed by a diverse group including members of the executive council, civil servants, and parliamentarians.

25. Several initiatives have been developed regarding the involvement of local authorities in the global efforts to achieve sustainable development and to reduce the loss of biodiversity. The International Council for Local Environment Initiatives (ICLEI), already engaged in many activities, notably in regard

to the Local 21 campaigns, is also engaged in a new project called Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB), which recognizes the importance of local authorities in halting the loss of biodiversity in urban areas and of integrating such strategies into overall city planning. This exciting new initiative has been conceived as an ICLEI partnership project, also involving the World Conservation Union (IUCN), Countdown 2010, South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), Roma Natura and twenty cities from around the world. The project focuses on enhancing the profile of, and planning and management for, biodiversity at the local level.

ICLEI European Membership Convention 2005

The ICLEI European Membership Convention was held in Tilburg, the Netherlands, in May 2005. The objective of the Convention was to understand the impacts of current global changes and trends that are occurring in the economy, environment and society, on local government policy making.

The Convention was successful in developing common consensus on the relevance of the impact of climate change locally, and the need for developing mitigation and adaptation strategies locally in addition to CO_2 abating strategies.

During the Convention, ICLEI and the Italian Coordinamento Agenda 21 Locali - the National LA21 association, signed an MOU aiming at the promotion of Environmental Management Systems for Local and Regional Governments in Italy as a means to improve environmental accountability.

Source: ICLEI European membership Convention 2005 report

26. In addition, on 21 September 2006, during the AfriCities Summit, participants were invited to attend a workshop that looked at the interaction between cities, the ecosystems that support them, and biodiversity. Held at the headquarters of the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) at Nairobi National Park, this was the first time that biodiversity had been addressed at an AfriCities meeting. The Workshop on Cities, Ecosystems and Biodiversity, which was organized by UNEP, the IUCN Task Force on Cities and Protected Areas and KWS, gave examples of how cities and especially poor urban dwellers can benefit from protected areas, biodiversity conservation and services from ecosystems such as wetlands, watersheds, and forests. The participants recommended actions related to, among others, integrated planning approaches, involvement of all stakeholders, monitoring systems in regard to the status of ecosystems, development of partnerships, dissemination of information, capacity building, establishment and enforcement of regulations and instalment of financial incentives, preparation of impact assessments, and organization of activities such as tree-planting.

Dublin City Biodiversity Action Plan 2007-2010

Under the aegis of the Dublin City Heritage Plan, preparation of Dublin City's Biodiversity Action Plan is under way. The aim of the action plan is to facilitate the sustainable management of biodiversity in the city, which will protect and enhance wildlife, maximizing the activities of all sectors and communities, and leading to greater appreciation of our natural heritage. Types of activities, which could be included in the plan, include:

- Identification and assessment of the city's biodiversity resource
- Measures to protect and enhance biodiversity, and integrate spatial planning
- Development of a targeted education and awareness campaign.
- Establishment of [a] stakeholders' forum.

Source: www. dublincity.ie

V. INITIATIVES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

27. At the third World Urban Forum, which took place in Vancouver, Canada, in June 2006, the participants agreed that risk-taking and the pursuit of innovation had to characterize municipal leadership if cities are to achieve sustainable development. The example of the City of Curitiba is striking in this regard. The city's massive investments in mass transportation, its waste collection program allowing low-income families to exchange garbage for bus tickets and food, and the creation of an impressive number of green spaces in the city constitute efficient and innovative ways to integrate environmental concerns into urban planning.

28. Since the beginning of its urban planning process, the City of Curitiba has attached a particular importance to making its "natural spaces" and "built spaces" compatible in order to preserve the environment and maintain the quality of life of its population. The actions that have been put in place by the City Administration for more than five decades have conferred a special "ecological design" on Curitiba, one that mixes city functions and environmental components that have been preserved to ensure a healthy environment where nature holds an important meaning for all citizens. The conservation of biodiversity is more than a commitment established in government plans, it is one taken on by the city as a whole, as we are all part of the web of life that constitutes biodiversity and on which we depend. The city follows the path of urban sustainability, seeking, in its programs and projects, to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, Agenda 21, and to follow the recommendations of the Green Cities Declaration, a commitment taken on by Mayor Richa in San Francisco on June 2005.

29. Other cities have undertaken activities with regard to the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity. In 2004, the City of Paris signed a regional charter on biodiversity and natural areas prepared by Région Île-de-France, which recognizes the importance of natural patrimony and biodiversity while committing to ensure a sustainable and balanced development of the territory. By signing this charter, Paris is showing its dedication to the preservation of the local diversity of species and habitats. The city and its partners have established a network for monitoring and research, which will be responsible for making inventories of species and following their evolution as well as the dynamics of their environment. In addition, new spaces for flora and fauna have been created, such as ecological corridors, wetlands, vegetation covers, and bird sanctuaries. Recommendations regarding biodiversity are also included in urban planning projects, and education activities are undertaken through school programmes.

The City of Cape Town's Biodiversity Strategy

Cape Town is rich in biological and cultural diversity. The city government aims to ensure that these qualities are enhanced for present and future generations, and that residents live in a safe, healthy, and caring environment. The city government has committed itself to developing, implementing, and actively promoting a city-wide biodiversity strategy, as one of the six priority strategies of its Integrated Metropolitan Environment Policy, adopted in October 2001

The strategic objectives include:

- Primary biodiversity (conservation areas and biodiversity needs),
- Secondary biodiversity (conservation through corridors, links, and mixed use areas),
- Conservation of biodiversity in freshwater aquatic systems,
- Invasive alien species management,
- Biodiversity information and monitoring systems,
- Biodiversity education and awareness.

Source:Tania Katzschner et al 2005. In The Urban Imperative. California Institute of Public affairs. California.

30. New York City has decided to protect its drinking water at the source, through the New York City Watershed Agreement. Nine million residents of New York City and surrounding suburbs rely on a series of reservoirs located in the Catskill and Delaware watersheds in upstate New York. The potential for microbial contamination had become an increasing concern, as wastewater discharges from treatment plants and runoff from urban and agricultural sources emerged as sources of pollution. In 1993, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued New York City a waiver of the filtration requirement on the condition that the City would take several steps to maintain and protect the quality of Catskill/Delaware's drinking water. EPA strongly suggested that the Governor convene a group comprised of representatives of New York City, New York State, watershed communities, EPA and environmental groups to negotiate an effective and equitable watershed program. The agreement, signed in January 1997, represents historic progress by moving New York City and the Catskill/Delaware watershed past years of controversy towards a commitment to complementary, mutually beneficial goals and solutions. New York City has an opportunity to significantly reduce costs by avoiding filtration while protecting drinking water quality through targeted land acquisition and other water quality investments and regulations. This agreement allowed watershed residents to enjoy better water quality, a better-protected, amenity-rich landscape, and compatible economic development.

31. The City of Montreal (Canada) has implemented a number of activities and initiatives related to biological diversity. In the last few years, the City has adopted several policies aiming to reduce the loss of urban biodiversity and raise public awareness of issues that are linked to the loss of this priceless resource. In this regard, the City's strategic plan on sustainable development, which aims, notably, at prioritizing issues related to greenhouse gases, should be mentioned. Following a reduction of corporate greenhouse gases of over 80% between 1990 and 2002, Montreal has committed itself to reduce its emissions by an additional 20% between 2002 and 2010. The City's "Tree Policy", its "Policy to Protect and Enhance Natural Habitats", as well as its future Center on Biodiversity, born out of a partnership between the Montreal Botanical Garden and the University of Montreal, constitute just a few of the

achievements that will be presented in Curitiba. There will be a particular focus on the various actions taken by the Montreal Botanical Garden, such as the programme on the conservation of rare and threatened plants, and the "Biodiversity Path", which allows visitors to appreciate the richness of local flora and to better understand the issues related to biodiversity loss.

32. In their national biodiversity strategies and action plans, some countries have emphasized the need to work in partnership with local authorities. The United Kingdom, for example, has established several local action plans in collaboration with the corresponding city councils and other local partners. Each local biodiversity action plan works on the basis of partnership to identify local priorities and to determine the contribution they can make to the delivery of the national species and habitat action plan targets.

Biodiversity strategy of Christchurch, New Zealand

Christchurch is home to 15 000 species of plants and animals mostly endemic to New Zealand. Christchurch city council is required to look after Christchurch's indigenous biodiversity under the Resource Management Amendment Act 2003. The city council in partnership with indigenous people and other stakeholders developed a biodiversity strategy for Christchurch. The goals of the strategy include:

- Conservation of Christchurch's existing biodiversity,
- Restoration of its ecosystems,
- Raised awareness and understanding of its biodiversity,
- Participation of people supporting biodiversity,
- Ongoing research and monitoring.

Source: http://www.ccc.govt.nz/parks/TheEnvironment/biodiversity.asp

33. These initiatives and others demonstrate that local actions aimed at achieving sustainable development can have direct positive impacts. With the active participation of partners at all levels, future actions by cities to preserve ecosystems and biodiversity will constitute an essential part of global efforts to conserve life on Earth and to better the lives of its inhabitants.

VI. EXPECTED OUTCOME AND WAY FORWARD

34. The meeting on "Cities and Biodiversity: Achieving the 2010 Biodiversity Target" will provide a unique opportunity to review the implementation of the Convention and the possibilities for enhancement of the commitment by local authorities to achieve the 2010 biodiversity target. The meeting will result in a declaration, which will confirm the active engagement of local authorities to achieve the 2010 target, raise the profile of biodiversity issues at the local government level, and attain tangible results. This declaration will state the priorities as well as the means of implementation identified by the participants attending this meeting.

35. The outcomes of this meeting will be submitted to a panel discussion at the ministerial segment of the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, with a view to establishing a forum for cities in regard to biodiversity issues as a mechanism for exchanging experiences and best practices. In addition, possible synergies with other existing initiatives with respect to cities and biodiversity, such as the Local Biodiversity for Action project, should be further explored.
