



CBD



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
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Twelfth meeting
Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea, 6-17 October 2014

**EXAMPLE OF MULTI-LEVEL GOVERNANCE OF NATURAL CAPITAL: THE
CONTRIBUTION OF LOCAL AND SUBNATIONAL GOVERNMENTS TO
THE EUROPEAN UNION'S BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY 2020 AND
THE AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGETS**

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. The Biodiversity Summit for Cities and Subnational Governments was held from 12 to 14 October 2014 at the Alpensia Convention Centre in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea. It was the fourth consecutive event for cities and subnational governments held in parallel with the Conferences of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and co-organized by ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and the Secretariat of CBD, this time in collaboration with the hosts: the government of Gangwon Province and the Government of the Republic of Korea. Participants from 46 countries, including governors and mayors, as well as representatives of national, international and United Nations organizations and experts in the field, discussed various aspects of subnational implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, the United Nations sustainable development goals and multi-level cooperation on biodiversity.
2. On the occasion, the rapporteur of the Committee of the Regions of the European Union for multi-level governance, Ms. Kadri Tillemann, met with the Executive Secretary of CBD to exchange information and strengthen cooperation on this issue. Multi-level governance in this context is considered to mean coordinated action by the European Union, its Member States and local and subnational governments, based on partnership and involving operational and institutional cooperation in all phases of the policy cycle, from drafting to implementing policies.
3. The attached document has been submitted to the Secretariat of CBD by the European Union's Committee of the Regions in English, and is made available in line with paragraph 7 of decision X/22, requesting the Executive Secretary to support the dissemination of best practices for local and subnational implementation of the Convention.

EUROPEAN UNION



Committee of the Regions



Multi-level governance of our natural capital:

local and subnational governments' contribution
to the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020
and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets



The Committee of the Regions of the European Union



Created in 1994, the Committee of the Regions (CoR) is the European Union's political assembly of regional (subnational) and local government representatives.

The CoRs' 353 members ensure that regions, cities and municipalities are given a voice within the EU. Its mission is to involve subnational and local governments in the European Union's decision-making process increasing the participation and involvement of the EU's citizens.

CoR members – Governors, regional Presidents, Mayors or elected representatives of EU regions and cities - must be elected or be politically accountable to an elected assembly so those who lose office at home automatically lose their seat on the CoR. While being active in their own constituencies, members meet regularly at the European level to prepare and vote on recommendations helping shape EU policy and legislation.

The Convention on Biological Diversity: Mid-term review of progress on the Strategic Plan 2011-2020

This publication is largely based on the following two documents:

Committee of the Regions' Outlook Opinion 'Multilevel governance in promoting the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 and implementing the international Aichi Targets' (CoR 2013/8074), adopted 26 June 2014. Report available from:

enve@cor.europa.eu

or online:

<http://toad.cor.europa.eu/corwipdetail.aspx?folderpath=ENVEV/045&id=22633>

Study commissioned by the Committee of the Regions and carried out by Ecologic/ICLEI 'Multilevel-governance of our natural capital: the contribution of regional and local authorities to the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets', June 2014. Report available online:

<http://cor.europa.eu/en/documentation/studies/>

In 2010 the 10th Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity adopted its Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011- 2020 which included the global "Aichi Biodiversity Targets". To reach these objectives and deliver on its international commitments in 2011 the EU agreed its Biodiversity Strategy to 2020.



Convention on
Biological Diversity

Held every two years, the CBD COP 12 on 6-17 October 2014 in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea is a key milestone: it includes a mid-term review of the progress made in meeting the CBD's Strategic Plan and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. As part of this review, during the COP 12 the adoption of the "Pyeongchang roadmap" sets out the necessary steps to enhance and mobilise resources to achieve the CBD Strategic Plan. This roadmap will also subsequently influence the EU's midterm review of its Biodiversity Strategy to be taken in 2015.

At CBD COP 12, the "Biodiversity Summit for Cities and Subnational Governments" will make the voice of the local and subnational levels heard.

Foreword

The Convention on Biological Diversity launched during the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 set out a new course of global action to halt the devastation of our natural environment. Since then the debate has progressed and it is increasingly acknowledged that protecting biodiversity must involve local and subnational governments. What was also striking during the Rio Earth Summit in 2012 (Rio+20) - which I attended on behalf of the Committee of the Regions - was the level of ambition, motivation and commitment being shown by our world's cities and regions in delivering the global environmental agreements.

The 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 12) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) held in the Republic of Korea includes a review of how far we have come in meeting the current global biodiversity targets until 2020. To achieve these goals the EU agreed its Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 committing to halt biodiversity loss and restoring degraded ecosystems by at least 15%. We at the Committee of the Regions continue to argue that if we are to make headway we need to go far further in involving all levels of governments – from the EU down to local government – in the design and implementation of the international and the EU's biodiversity plans.

This multi-level governance approach has already been integrated by the Conference of the Parties in 2010 by Decision X/22 with the “Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity”. Multi-level governance was also the basis of a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation signed by the Committee and the UNEP at Rio+20.

More recently the European Commission called on the Committee to produce an opinion on “Multi-level governance in promoting the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 and implementing the international Aichi Targets”. This brochure offers a summary of the Committee's key recommendations of its opinion adopted in June 2014. The content is also based on findings and best practices identified by a supporting study that we carried out in cooperation with the European Commission, UNEP and the CBD Secretariat.

The Committee of the Regions is committed to promoting the application of Decision X/22 and the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020. We hope our opinion will contribute to the debate and be shared with local and subnational governments from across the globe.



Michel Lebrun

President of the Committee of the Regions





Janez Potočnik
EU Commissioner for the Environment

Biodiversity is our life insurance, giving us food, fresh water and clean air; recreation, shelter and medicine, preventing natural disasters and contributing to combatting climate change. Put in a simple way, we have to protect biodiversity because it is the right and ethical thing to do, but also because it is in our own self-interest.

'We are all in this together' was the slogan of the biodiversity campaign launching the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy, and it is particularly relevant to the theme of governance of our natural capital and the role of local and subnational authorities in ensuring the conservation of biodiversity.

I am therefore pleased to welcome the Committee of the Regions' work on natural capital, showing the local and subnational authorities' commitment to the implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy and the international Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Local and subnational authorities are indeed crucial actors in protecting our natural capital, for example through their role in planning permissions, management and funding of protected areas, awareness raising, stakeholder involvement and education.

To protect our natural capital we need to change our behaviour. We have to acknowledge, value and account for nature and the benefits it gives us. As I see it, 'multilevel-governance of natural capital' means we do this at all political and economic levels in society – since we are all in this together!



Jan Dusik
Director of the United Nations
Environment Programme (UNEP)
Regional Office to Europe

The Rio+20 conference on sustainable development, which took place in Brazil in June 2012, was a major step forward towards achieving a sustainable future – *The Future We Want*. The Rio+20 Summit outcome document calls for broader measures of progress to complement conventional indices, such as the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

UNEP's Inclusive Wealth Report, which looks beyond the traditional economic and development yardsticks of GDP and the Human Development Index (HDI) with the aim to include a full range of assets such as manufactured, human and natural capital, gives governments the account of the true state of their nation's wealth and the sustainability of its growth.

Economic activity and human well-being depend on the Earth's ecosystems and the services these ecosystems provide; it is therefore essential to use the right tools to measure growth and progress. I am pleased to welcome the Committee of the Regions' work on natural capital, highlighting the role of local and subnational authorities in this regard.

The transition to a sustainable future requires a multi-level governance approach; since resources and industries vary significantly from one region to the next, subnational and local governments are often best positioned to create tailored and efficient policies. The Committee of the Regions, as a key European institution that fosters cooperation at the subnational and local level, has a large role to play in promoting a common strategy towards *The Future We Want*.

Multi-level governance: key to delivering the EU's Biodiversity Strategy and the CBD Strategic Plan

The Committee of the Regions understands **multi-level governance** as to mean coordinated action by the EU, its Member States and local and subnational governments, based on partnership and involving operational and institutional cooperation in all phases of the policy cycle, from drafting to implementing policies.

This principle should apply to the governance of biodiversity and ecosystem services. In many Member States, **local and subnational governments have substantial legislative, administrative and funding responsibilities for biodiversity**. They have a critical role to play in ultimately implementing the EU Biodiversity Strategy and the CBD Strategic Plan on the ground and thereby assisting national governments in achieving their EU and international commitments. As a result of ongoing decentralisation in many Member States, local and subnational governments have increasing responsibility for the implementation of biodiversity-related policies.

The Committee of the Regions welcomes the **recognition by parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**, including the EU and its 28 Member States, of the need to cooperate across all government levels, by adopting CBD Decision X/22 with the "Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity".

The Committee also acknowledges that the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 states that the shared EU and international Aichi Biodiversity Targets "need to be pursued through a mix of sub-national, national, and EU-level action" and encourages "collaboration between stakeholders involved in spatial planning and land use management in implementing biodiversity strategies at all levels".

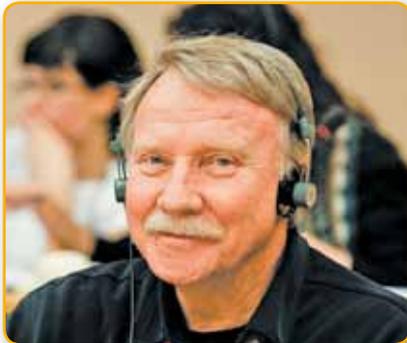
"The Committee of the Regions considers Decision CBD X/22 unique in the sense that it presents the most advanced 'multi-level governance' decision of a Multilateral Environment Agreement.

It calls for a clear commitment from the UNFCCC parties to follow the example of Decision X/22."

Committee of the Regions Outlook
Opinion of 26 June 2014 & Resolution
on COP 19 UNFCCC



CBD Plan of Action on Sub-national Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity – Decision X/22



Ilmar Reepalu

Member of the Committee of the Regions, former Chair of the Committee of the Regions' ENVE Commission, and former Mayor of the City of Malmö, Sweden.

He represented the Committee of the Regions within the EU delegation in 2010 to CBD COP 10 and its Cities Biodiversity Summit in Nagoya. His first engagements with UNEP provided the basis for the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Committee of the Regions and UNEP at Rio+20.

Decision X/22 was adopted by the COP 10 of the CBD in 2010 and reinforced by Decision XI/8a. All parties to the CBD, including the EU and its individual 28 Member States, in this Decision have indicated ways in which to engage with and support local and subnational governments in implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

The Plan of Action in Decision X/22 sets a comprehensive framework to foster multi-level governance processes and highlights the importance of local and subnational governments in the implementation of the CBD. It aims to guide national governments in putting in place policy tools, governance arrangements, guidelines and programmes, technical assistance and alike, that create coordination with and support for their local and subnational levels of governments.



Photo: © Eugene Sergeev / Shutterstock

The EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020

The EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 was adopted in 2011 and outlines the EU's political focus up to 2020, while stepping up the Union's contribution to fulfil the international biodiversity commitments. In addition, a number of relevant policy areas and EU directives are directly targeted in the strategy namely: agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

The strategy includes six major targets addressing the main pressures on nature and ecosystem services in the EU and beyond:

- Target 1: Fully implement the Birds and Habitats Directives
- Target 2: Maintain and restore ecosystems and their services
- Target 3: Increase the contribution of agriculture and forestry to maintaining and enhancing biodiversity
- Target 4: Ensure the sustainable use of fisheries resources
- Target 5: Combat Invasive Alien Species
- Target 6: Help avert global biodiversity loss

These targets are supported by 20 key actions for implementation. Most of these are of direct relevance to the subnational/local levels, like:

- the completion and management of the Natura 2000 network;
- green infrastructure deployment;
- the link between rural development and biodiversity policies;
- actions envisaged on no net loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Multi-level governance and biodiversity: the work of the Committee of the Regions

In collaboration with the European Commission, the Committee of the Regions is committed to delivering the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020.

The Committee's delegation to the COP 10 of the CBD in 2010 strongly backed the adoption of the CBD Decision X/22 with the "Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity".

Moreover, at Rio+20 in June 2012 the Committee of the Regions and UNEP signed a Memorandum of Understanding in which both institutions committed to cooperate in implementing the CBD Decision X/22.

In this context, the European Commission asked the Committee of the Regions to issue an **Outlook Opinion on "Multilevel governance in promoting the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020 and implementing the international Aichi Targets"**. To support the opinion, the Committee commissioned a research study, carried out by Ecologic/ICLEI. The study included an online-survey and a collection of case studies.

Through the opinion and an accompanying research study, both completed in June 2014, the Committee of the Regions:

- cooperates with the European Commission, UNEP and the CBD Secretariat to achieve delivery of EU and CBD biodiversity targets;
- provides recommendations for advancing the implementation of CBD Decision X/22 within the EU and share this with local and subnational governments from other world regions at the CBD COP 12;
- presents recommendations to the European Commission for the mid-term review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020.



Kadri Tillemann

rapporteur for the Committee of the Regions' Outlook Opinion on the subject.

She represents the Committee of the Regions within the EU delegation to CBD COP 12 and its Biodiversity Summit for Cities and Subnational Governments.



Council of Ministers of the EU recognises local & subnational governments in its conclusions on CBD COP 12

On 12 June 2014 EU Member States' Environment Ministers explicitly referred to CBD Decision X/22 and concluded that the Council "recognises the role of local and regional authorities in advancing progress in implementing the Strategic Plan and achieving the Aichi Targets".

In its Outlook Opinion the Committee of the Regions Opinion welcomes this reference made by the Council and "calls on the Council, in its future conclusions on COPs of the CBD to reflect the multilevel governance approach by increasing its recognition of local and regional authorities as governmental stakeholders in distinction to other non-governmental stakeholders within the CBD process."

Fifth Report of the EU to the Convention on Biological Diversity refers to Committee of the Regions

In the 5th Report of the European Union to the Convention on Biological Diversity of June 2014 the European Commission included elements of the Committee of the Regions' Opinion stating:

"The EU welcomes the involvement of the Committee of the Regions in the implementation framework. The EU recognises the key role played by local and regional authorities, together with Member States, in the delivery of a multilevel, cooperative and integrated approach towards the Aichi targets and the related targets of the EU 2020 Biodiversity Strategy. Several local and regional authorities are actively involved in the programmes for capacity building and sharing good practice supported by the LIFE and cohesion policy, in particular INTERREG, programmes. Their involvement is also reflected in the latest opportunities, such as the new 'Biogeographical process' and its Natura 2000 communication platform, and the new Natura 2000 Award scheme."



Delivering the CBD Strategic Plan and EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020 through multi-level governance: The Committee of the Regions' recommendations

The following recommendations are taken from the Committee's Outlook Opinion on "Multilevel governance in promoting the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2020 and implementing the international Aichi Targets".

In several EU Member States substantial legislative and implementing powers on biodiversity, as well as the operational programming under EU Funds, are devolved to subnational governments. Therefore, the following recommendations partially consider subnational governments together with the national levels as possible actors, but also consider them together with local governments as possible cooperation partners by the Member States.

A. Involving local & subnational governments in national strategies and governance

- EU Member States should enable, maintain and enhance the **regular participation of local & subnational governments in setting up, reviewing and evaluating National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)**.
- Member States should draw up jointly **compatible indicators and targets** in agreement with local & subnational governments that allow for comparison of trends in the areas covered by biodiversity strategies at the different levels.
- Member States need to better **coordinate with their local & subnational governments** when preparing positions and follow-up pertaining to the Common Implementation Framework of the EU Biodiversity Strategy and to the CBD negotiations and reporting.

Project in Focus: National Biodiversity Commission Austria

Led by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, the Commission brings together representatives from national ministries, subnational governments, research organisations, various interest groups and NGOs.

This creates a coherent implementation process that takes into account different governmental levels and societal perspectives.

The Commission is responsible for coordination and strategic development of Austria's position towards the CBD and functions as a platform for steering the biodiversity protection process within Austria.

It serves as an example of many similar coordination mechanisms existing in other EU Member States.

<http://www.biologischevielfalt.at/>



**Project in Focus:
Government-recognised
Local Nature Partnerships,
United Kingdom**

The concept of Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) has been designed by the UK's Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra). The main objective is to enable the various actors in local areas to build self-sustaining strategic partnerships for the effective management of the natural environment to produce multiple benefits. LNPs are supposed to work collaboratively with Local Planning Authorities on strategic planning matters within their area. Local areas can apply to establish a LNP, with today 48 LNPs in England. They receive targeted support by national-level public bodies.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/role-of-local-nature-partnerships-an-overview>



Annabelle Jaeger, from the French region of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, was the Committee of the Regions rapporteur on green infrastructure.

Project in Focus: Regional plans for ecological coherence according to national law on ecological corridors

Her region is one of the first regions in France that sets up a 'Schéma Régional de Cohérence Ecologique (SRCE)'. France with its 'Loi Grenelle Environnement' has established a legislative framework for the development of a national network of green and blue corridors ('Trame Verte et Bleue'), with the obligation to concretise this at subnational levels by SRCEs. SRCEs are to be developed by the regions together with the state, in close cooperation with the local authorities and the public.

<http://www.paca.developpement-durable.gouv.fr/>

B. National and subnational enabling legislative frameworks, planning and support

- Member States and subnational governments should provide with **legislative and planning frameworks** that establish **coherent mandates, roles and responsibilities across all governmental levels** and the mainstreaming of biodiversity into various sectorial policies at national, subnational and local level, e.g. in view of managing Natura 2000, restoring ecosystems and green infrastructure deployment.
- Member States and subnational governments are encouraged to develop, in cooperation with their local & subnational governments' national associations, **guidance material and administrative capacity-building, including peer-driven quality management**, for local and subnational biodiversity strategies, action plans and measures.
- Member States and subnational governments should, in cooperation with associations of local & subnational governments, establish, enhance and maintain **national/subnational recognition mechanisms to reward local & subnational governments' efforts to sustainably manage biodiversity**.
- Member States and subnational governments should launch or improve their **portals for online and up-to-date biodiversity and ecosystem services information**, to facilitate data exchange, serve as a key reference point and to improve the state of knowledge for local & subnational governments and the interested public.



C. Funding and financing

- Member States and subnational governments should **establish, advance and maintain their own financial support programmes and incentives for local & subnational governments** to sustain and enhance their biodiversity action. This includes the provision of national/subnational co-funding schemes for local & subnational governments to match EU grants.
- Member States and local & subnational governments are encouraged to take effective action at all levels of financial support to **stop subsidies and tax relief that harm biodiversity**.
- Local & subnational governments are encouraged, with support from Member States, to **identify, pilot and apply innovative financing schemes**, including partnerships with businesses, funding from private/public foundations and lotteries, payments for ecosystem service (PES), tax incentives or crowd-funding.
- Local & subnational governments are encouraged to **better and more creatively use existing and new funding**, such as environment, agriculture, fisheries, regional and urban development, energy, and resource efficiency.
- Local & subnational governments are encouraged to **set up and maintain appropriate programme management procedures to qualify for existing EU and national funding programmes**, in particular also for EU funding streams like LIFE, INTERREG, but also the research-oriented HORIZON 2020 to support local biodiversity action.

Project is Focus: LONA – Local Nature conservation, Sweden

Through the LONA (Lokala NATurvårds satsningen) funding instrument, the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) distributes national funds to Sweden's County administrative boards which decide on the allocation of grants to nature-related projects at the local level.

Municipalities as potential applicants must show how their project supports national nature protection goals identified by EPA. Once accepted, the municipalities coordinate and administrate the projects locally. For a successful implementation they are guided by the county administrative boards and are also obliged to report back to them.

<http://www.naturvardsverket.se/>

Project in Focus: MoorFutures, Germany

MoorFutures have been created by the German regions of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and Brandenburg, as voluntary emission certificates that enable companies to improve their greenhouse gas emission balance by investing in concrete peatland restoration projects of the two regions.

It showcases an innovative funding tool for supporting subnational governments' efforts in protecting their biodiversity.

<http://www.moorfutures.de/>

Project in Focus: Barcelona City's Green Infrastructure plan and the cooperation with the Province

The City of Barcelona, Spain, has developed an ambitious Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Plan 2020, which it embeds in its future city planning.

The plan was enriched by a broad stakeholder consultation. To reach the goals of the plan and to guarantee a coherent development within the surrounding area of the city, a collaborative partnership has been created with the Diputació, the surrounding Province of Barcelona.

<http://w110.bcn.cat/portal/site/MediAmbient/>

Project in Focus: Sectorial charters with key stakeholders, Belgium

The Subnational Government of Wallonia, Belgium, through its Wallonia Nature Network, plans that by 2018, 10 sectorial charters will be established and implemented with interested partners, such as the quarry sectors, sports associations, tourism administration, industrial areas.

These charters aim to develop biodiversity-friendly practices and allow concerned sectors to communicate about these actions.

The first charter was signed between the Subnational Government of Wallonia with the Belgian federation of extractive industries (FEDIEX) in 2012.

<http://biodiversite.wallonie.be>

D. Local & subnational governments' key actions

- Lead by example and establish or further **develop local and subnational biodiversity strategies and action plans (RBSAPs, LBSAPs)**, which should be aligned with the NBSAPs and the European and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. In particular, RBSAPs should be targeted.
- Advance biodiversity conservation efforts by **piloting and integrating innovative local/subnational approaches and concepts** such as green infrastructure and nature-based solutions, and incorporating the value of ecosystem services and the principle of no-net loss of biodiversity into territorial and spatial planning, and building codes and sectorial policies.
- Sustain and further increase efforts in **communicating, educating and raising awareness amongst all stakeholders** and the public on biodiversity objectives (CEPA activities), by targeted awareness-raising programmes and the **promotion of citizen science** as an important method of involving and educating people and using local knowledge.
- Take a comprehensive approach to biodiversity across their administrative departments and carry out **capacity building within their administrations**, whilst making best use of administrative capacity building projects provided for at national, European, or international level.
- Establish, coordinate and maintain **effective and appropriate multi-stakeholder partnerships and stakeholder participation processes** for creating shared ownership and responsibility in developing and implementing RBSAPs and LBSAPs and related actions, for jointly applying for national/EU funding, and for promoting voluntary commitments of key sectors such as agriculture, business, tourism or outdoor sports.
- **Participate in research initiatives** to identify and fill knowledge gaps with regards to biodiversity/ecosystem services valuation and management.



E. Local & subnational governments' cooperation

- Local & subnational governments are encouraged to strengthen their **collaboration on biodiversity in associations, networks or platforms at national, EU and international levels**. These provide important means to pool together resources and experiences to tackle common challenges and to provide joint policy advice to a Member State, the EU and the CBD.
- Member States, local and subnational governments should especially take care to **establish cooperation schemes for local & subnational governments for cross-border cooperation** at the macro-regional scales, **and for decentralised development cooperation** with local & subnational governments from development countries, to strengthen and capitalise on joint biodiversity protection and management efforts.

The European Learning Network for Regions and Biodiversity



The European Learning Network for Regions and Biodiversity emerged in 2011 from the observation that subnational governments play an increasing role in the implementation of nature and related policies. It aims to collect and share experience and good practice to assist subnational governments throughout Europe in their pursuit to solve the new challenges associated with the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The network, membership of which is open to all European subnational governments, is jointly managed by ECNC-European Centre for Nature Conservation and UNEP with financial support from the European Commission and several European regions. It has successfully organised two European conferences, the last of which was hosted by and organised in close collaboration with the Committee of the Regions. The role of subnational governments in the implementation of the Natura 2000 network will be the subject of the conference to be held in Barcelona on 10 and 11 December 2014.

<http://www.regionsandbiodiversity.eu/>

MediverCities



MediverCities is a network of Mediterranean local governments, their associations and partners that seeks to support the implementation of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and the objectives of the CBD. It aims to mobilise local authorities in the Mediterranean basin and to improve the efficiency of local actions (provision of expertise, best practices and implementation capacity). The secretariat is run by the city of Montpellier, France, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the CBD.

<http://www.medivercities.org>

Project in Focus: GIFT-T! – Green Infrastructure for Tomorrow – Together!

This project links local/subnational initiatives from across three EU Member States by using the EU INTERREG funding.

In five live case studies the project partners, including local & subnational public authorities, test and improve innovative methods based on linking functions of the landscape system to the economic and social benefits, aiming at transforming 'stakeholders' into 'shareholders'.

GIFT-T! will develop a method for robust, informed planning of green infrastructure and innovative implementation.

www.gift-t.eu

Project in Focus: Bouches de Bonifacio international marine park

This park represents an example of a European Grouping for Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) set up for cross-border implementation of EU biodiversity legislation by local authorities from Corsica (France) and Sardinia (Italy).

The EGTC creates a legal personality under EU law, without requiring a prior international agreement to be signed.

<http://www.rnbb.fr/>

Global Partnership on Local and Subnational Action for Biodiversity



Convention on
Biological Diversity



Biodiversity Summit
for Cities & Subnational
Governments 2014

In 2006 at the ICLEI World Congress in Cape Town, South Africa, more than 300 local governments called for ICLEI to include, in its work, the theme of biodiversity. Shortly thereafter the “Cities Biodiversity Center” was established in Cape Town and a hands-on pilot project called Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB) began to enroll local governments in an intensive step-wise process to improve biodiversity management and to profile efforts. In parallel, in early 2007, Curitiba’s then-Mayor and now Governor of the State of Paraná, Beto Richa, and the Secretariat of the CBD gathered more than 30 mayors and their representatives in Curitiba to discuss local governments’ potential contribution to the Convention. These events demonstrated the need for coalition, and thus the Global Partnership on Cities and Biodiversity, an affiliation of cities, subnational governments, research institutions and other organisations committed to the success of the Convention, was established.

An **Advisory Committee of Cities** and an **Advisory Committee of Subnational Governments** are especially active within the Global Partnership, and have demonstrated leadership by starting projects for other cities and subnational governments to follow. Both Committees’ membership consists of recent hosts of meetings of the COP and of the Secretariat of the CBD, as well as other leading cities and subnational governments. The Advisory Committees ensure continuity in the Global Partnership and provide leadership within the growing collective.

At COP 12, ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability, Gangwon Province as hosts, and the Secretariat of the CBD will convene the "**Biodiversity Summit for Cities and Subnational Governments**", a platform for the Global Partnership, and for local and subnational governments in general, to showcase their contributions to the implementation of the Strategic Plan, and to engage with each other and the Parties.



Mid-term review of the EU Biodiversity Strategy: The Committee of the Regions' recommendations

- The mid-term review should recommend **further actions that contribute to enhancing the effectiveness of the second stage of the strategy's implementation** in order to ensure that the strategy's headline target is achieved by 2020. This means verifying the assumptions made in the EU Biodiversity Strategy on the **contribution of the new EU 2014-2020 financial framework** and new EU funds, which were yet only adopted after EU Biodiversity Strategy was launched. This needs sound methodology for tracking biodiversity-related expenditure across the EU budget.
- The European Commission is invited to set up an **EU commitment/award scheme for biodiversity achievements by cities and subnational governments** and a platform for exchange to recognise European local & **subnational governments** for their contribution to the achievement of the EU Biodiversity Strategy.
- The Committee of the Regions believes in the great potential of green infrastructure as an effective tool to halt biodiversity loss and avoid habitat fragmentation. It therefore expects the review of the strategy to foresee EU legislation in 2018 on TEN-G, a **Trans-European Green Infrastructure**, as part of the EU budget post 2020. The European Commission should also introduce EU legislation that **prevents any net loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services**, with obligatory compensation of unavoidable impacts.
- The **Biodiversity Information System for Europe (BISE)** should increase the availability of more localised, high resolution data of ecosystem services and other monitoring data by including data collected by subnational biodiversity observatories and city-based aggregated data (based on for, example, the City Biodiversity Index/Singapore Index).
- The Committee of the Regions invites the European Commission to jointly **explore additional ways to support the mobilisation of resources under the CBD by promoting decentralised cooperation** between European local & subnational governments and local & subnational governments in developing countries and EU neighbourhood countries on the sustainable management of biodiversity and ecosystems, also in relation with the EU Biodiversity for Life (B4Life) facility.



EUROPEAN UNION



Committee of the Regions

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