



Press Brief

Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity

Why is this important?

Cities and other subnational governments are responsible for much of the implementation required to ensure that decisions made by the Conference of the Parties (COP) are implemented. To harness their critical contribution, coordination between different levels of governments is required, as well as forums in which each level is able to share best practice with the others.

Cities have a unique role to play. Urbanization is a driver of biodiversity loss; nevertheless, cities have enormous potential for increased efficiency in resource use. Furthermore they can put in place policies, processes and technologies that can serve as solutions to biodiversity-related problems within and beyond the urban context.

The potential of cities and other subnational governments to contribute to the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets has been recognized since decision IX/28, adopted at COP 9. Since COP 9, initiatives to harness this contribution have proliferated, but an acceleration of that process is required if the Strategic Plan is to be realized by 2020.



Convention on
Biological Diversity

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What news to expect in Pyeongchang?

The fifth Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on the Review of Implementation of the Convention (WGRI-5), in June 2014, proposed a draft recommendation that the Conference of the Parties, at its twelfth meeting, adopt another decision on engagement with subnational and local governments. Its focus is on the challenges and solutions associated with current patterns of urbanization; collaboration between levels of government for the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets; biodiversity in urban and peri-urban planning; support of relevant initiatives on sustainable urbanization; and encouragement of subnational and local governments to contribute to the attainment of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

It also requests the Executive Secretary to increase efforts to mainstream biodiversity into the work of other agencies and key partners involved in work at the subnational and local levels; to assist in the integration of the contribution of subnational and local governments into the implementation of the Strategic Plan; and to collaborate with other United Nations agencies and international organizations on issues related to subnational and local implementation.

While this decision and others are being considered, the Biodiversity Summit for Cities and Subnational Governments will be convened in parallel with the COP, for the fourth time, from 12 to 14 October. It is expected to attract about 500 participants, including mayors and governors, from around the world. The Summit's focus is on cooperative governance for biodiversity, and the various panels featured over the two days of the meeting will also include representatives of national government, organizations and academia.

A number of side events will also be convened by cities and other subnational governments, and the Korean Office of ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability will launch a Korean version of ICLEI's successful Local Action for Biodiversity Programme.

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