

THE DURBAN COMMITMENT: LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FOR BIODIVERSITY



The Durban Commitment: Local Governments for Biodiversity, was developed, founded and signed by 21 Local Action for Biodiversity Local Governments:

- Barcelona City Council (Spain)
- City of Amsterdam (Netherlands)
- City of Bonn (Germany)
- City of Cape Town (South Africa)
- City of Curitiba (Brazil)
- City of Edmonton (Canada)
- City of Johannesburg (South Africa)
- City of Joondalup (Australia)
- City of Nagoya (Japan)
- City of Tilburg (Netherlands)
- City of Zagreb (Croatia)
- eThekweni Municipality (South Africa)
- Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality (South Africa)
- Île de France (France)
- King County (U.S.A)
- Leicester City Council (England)
- Liverpool City Council (Australia)
- Municipality of Walvis Bay (Namibia)
- São Paulo City (Brazil)
- Seoul Metropolitan Government (South Korea)
- Waitakere City Council (New Zealand)

as a commitment and model by local government, for local government and the communities they serve, to protect and enhance biodiversity at the local level.

1. By signing this Commitment, joins these leading local governments from across the world as a partner and we acknowledge accountability and responsibility for the health and well-being of our communities through protecting, sustainably utilising and managing biodiversity and recognising its role as the foundation of our existence.

This Commitment recognises that biodiversity is the variety of life on earth on which human well-being is dependent and that biodiversity provides eco-system services that underpin all of our community's needs. Furthermore, it recognises that the value of biodiversity is multi-faceted - including ecological, economic, tourism, recreational, environmental, heritage, stewardship, spiritual, intrinsic, medicinal, nutritional, health, educational, scientific, cultural and social dimensions.

2. Through signing this Commitment we acknowledge that:

- 2.1 Biodiversity is increasingly under pressure with unprecedented rates of loss due to human activities including the over-consumption of natural resources;
- 2.2 Increasing global trends towards urbanisation are placing increased direct pressure on biodiversity at both the local area level and globally through increased resource consumption and ecological footprints;
- 2.3 The impacts of climate change on biodiversity pattern and process will be significant and therefore we need to build appropriate programmes to address, mitigate and adapt to these changes;
- 2.4 Future sustainable development and human well-being are dependent on our ability to meet the biodiversity challenges we face;
- 2.5 Ecosystem services can play an important role in poverty alleviation and as a result the consequences of biodiversity loss and ecosystem disruption are harsher for the poor;
- 2.6 It is our collective responsibility to reverse the current trends of biodiversity loss; and
- 2.7 Local government, which works most closely with communities and biodiversity, has a critical role and responsibility

(globally, nationally and locally) to ensure that biodiversity is conserved, protected, restored and sustainably used for the benefit of current and future generations.

3. By signing this Commitment we commit to promoting, increasing and enhancing biodiversity within our administrative area and recognise that our ecological footprint extends beyond our administrative area; we will therefore integrate biodiversity considerations into all aspects of our governance and development planning.

4. By signing this Commitment we declare our intention to:

- 4.1 Regularly publish biodiversity reports on the state of biodiversity within our administrative area and our progress in protecting biodiversity, which will stand as public record;
- 4.2 Contribute towards the formulation of globally relevant local authority biodiversity good practice guidelines;
- 4.3 Develop and implement a long-term biodiversity strategy for our administrative area and governance practices, which will address, for example:
 - 4.3.1 The consideration of biodiversity in all aspects of local planning including, amongst other things; land-use planning, mobility planning, economic development planning, and conservation planning;
 - 4.3.2 The management of natural areas and green spaces including the restoration and rehabilitation of degraded natural areas and the control of invasive species;
 - 4.3.3 The provision of municipal services, including fresh and waste water

treatment, energy generation and housing;

- 4.3.4 Public procurement strategies, including purchasing of eco certified goods and services and the ban of hazardous products;
 - 4.3.5 Social development including poverty alleviation and job creation;
 - 4.3.6 Awareness-raising of the value of biodiversity and the need for its protection in all sectors of society;
 - 4.3.7 Stakeholder participation in all relevant aspects of local biodiversity governance; and
 - 4.3.8 The inclusion of biodiversity in city partnerships and cooperation projects with public and private partners.
- 4.4 Remain committed to ongoing implementation of that long-term local biodiversity strategy through the enactment of guiding policies;
 - 4.5 Actively engage with, and ensure participation and involvement of all stakeholders; and
 - 4.6 Actively participate in the ICLEI Local Action for Biodiversity initiative as the global network of local governments for biodiversity.
- 5. As a local government, we support efforts to promote greater recognition by national governments and international bodies of the critical role local government plays in protecting biodiversity at the local and global level. We recognise our own role within the global environment and by signing this Commitment we entrench our dedication to global biodiversity. We recognise the need to contribute actively to the implementation of the objectives of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and the biodiversity targets, aimed at reducing the rate of loss of biodiversity on our planet.**

Signed by _____ in capacity as _____ of local authority _____

