

United Nations Programme for Human Settlements (UN-HABITAT)
(Sustainable Cities Programme / Localizing Agenda 21 Programme)

and

United Nations Environment Programme

SCP/LA21 Global Meeting, Havana, Cuba, 26 June – 1 July 2005

Thematic session, Wednesday, 29 June:
Global issues, local actors

“Biodiversity”

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OUTLINE

(A) CONTEXT:

- IUCN interest in cities, urban people, and conservation areas
- Neglect of cities by the international conservation movement
- Cities depend on conservation areas
- Conservation areas depend on cities
- Large subject, many facets

(B) SPECIFIC QUESTION: How can actions by local authorities influence biodiversity conservation beyond their cities' immediate areas (i.e., in their countries, world regions, globally)?

1. Most important, protect and restore natural areas within and near your own city and get kids out into nature with their families. Why? Because people relate to the natural world through immediate and repeated experience of nature.

-- Examples from large cities illustrating various approaches: Nairobi, Rio, Hong Kong, Mumbai, Paris.

-- Example from a small city: La Paz, Baja California Sur, Mexico.

-- This is especially important in cities that are centers of power and media. Example (illustrates problem of invasive alien species): Kapiti Island Nature Reserve near Wellington.

-- Connect biodiversity protection with socioeconomic issues. Examples from Cape Town, Los Angeles, Melbourne.

2. Think of how your city can be a hotbed of innovation and an exemplar of best practice, and thus an example for other local, state/provincial, and national authorities, as well as international action. Example: San Francisco's bold new (17 June) municipal procurement policy.

3. Include global conservation issues in formal and informal education:
 - In schools, relate to similar natural environments elsewhere.
 - Use the Internet. Example: Global Dimension Trust partnerships (India-Kenya-UK).
 - Include a global conservation dimension in interpretation of natural parks.
 - Include a global conservation dimension in natural history and science museums, zoos, aquariums, botanical gardens.
 - Reach foreign visitors with the conservation message.
4. Adopt and carry out an explicit city policy on global biodiversity conservation: Example: London Biodiversity Strategy.
5. Lobby national and state/provincial governments and international bodies, including through associations of local officials and authorities.
6. Look at different models of local partnerships that could be used to work on global perspectives. Examples from Cape Town, Chicago.

(C) WHAT CAN BE DONE INTERNATIONALLY:

- Bring urban and conservation actors together. Example: ICLEI and IUCN 2006.
- Training leaders: Course planning in progress.
- Exchanges, study tours, technical assistance: Example: Brazil-Kenya.
- Reach key political leaders.
- IUCN is prepared to listen and to help.