



COMMUNIQUÉ

Cities and the United Nations pulling together for biodiversity: Global partnership meets in Bonn

Montreal, 15 September 2011— At an international strategic meeting, held in the Old Town Hall, Bonn, on 5-6 September 2011, Bonn Mayor Jürgen Nimptsch and Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Executive Secretary Ahmed Djoghlaif invited the members of the Global Partnership on Local and Sub-National Action for Biodiversity to work on an implementation plan for cities to support decision X/22 of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, which defined a strategy for its 193 members to implement its decisions at local and sub-national levels. A roadmap of events, projects and activities was also determined towards the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in Hyderabad, India, in October 2012. Similar implementation plans will be developed for sub-national governments, the scientific community and international organizations.

The 2008 United Nations biodiversity conference in Bonn recognized, for the first time, the important role cities play in the protection and conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems. The Bonn Call for Action, adopted during an international mayors' conference held parallel to the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, was brought to the high-level segment of the meeting by four mayors from four continents. This led to the foundation of a Global Partnership for Cities and Biodiversity, under which cities and the city network ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability have sought cooperation with regions, with United Nations organizations (including UN-HABITAT, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and with scientific networks such as URBIO and IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature. In 2010, Parties to the Convention met in Nagoya, Japan, and adopted a Plan of Action for cities and sub-national levels of government. This opened up new and suitable options for cities to contribute towards the protection and sustainable use of life on Earth. A first meeting on the implementation of the Plan of Action was held January 2011 in Montpellier, France.

The 54 participants included city officials from five continents, ICLEI, representatives of the German Government, United Nations agencies and international agreements (UN-HABITAT, the United Nations Framework Convention to Combat Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Drought and Desertification, the Institute for Advance Studies of the United Nations University, and the World Tourism Organization), the Convention's focal points for Germany and Singapore, the scientific community, IUCN and NGOs. Also present were: Mayor James Nxumalo from Durban, South Africa, Commissioner M.T. Krishna Babu from Hyderabad, India, host city of the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Deputy Mayor of Paris, Fabienne Gibodeaux, and the Deputy Mayor of Montpellier, France, Jacques Touchon, as well as Axumite Gebre-Egziabher, Director, Global Division, UN-HABITAT. Outcomes included elements for the implementation plan to be further developed by ICLEI as the official United Nations representative of local governments, and an outline of the second City Biodiversity Summit, to run parallel to the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, as proposed by ICLEI

President Konrad Otto-Zimmermann. The critical role of decentralized cooperation on biodiversity (direct cooperation between cities and States) in support of the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity was emphasized, and participants shared good practices such as the cooperation between Bonn and La Paz, Bolivia, promoted via the successful LifeWeb initiative, and the experience of the 21 pioneer cities involved in the ICLEI Local Action for Biodiversity programme.

As a celebration of the 2011-2020 United Nations Decade on Biodiversity and as a sign of their commitment towards the Strategic Plan on Biodiversity 2011-2020 adopted in Nagoya, participants at the meeting, including Ahmed Djoghla, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Mayor Nimptsch, Professor Jessel, President of the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, and Professor Weigend, Director of the Bonn Botanical Gardens, planted a rowan tree in the Botanical Gardens of the University of Bonn in the evening of Monday, 5 September 2011.

For more information see: www.cbd.int/authorities/
