



# ICLEI CITIES BIODIVERSITY CENTER

SPECIAL EDITION  
NEWSLETTER

**MARCH 2014**

THE SDGs  
BIODIVERCITY NEWS  
SCBD COP12  
UPCOMING EVENTS





## MESSAGE FROM HIS WORSHIP, MAYOR TROY PICKARD OF JOONDALUP, CHAIR OF THE ICLEI BIODIVERCITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE.



"Preparations for the largest side event at the CBD COP 12, the Biodiversity Summit: Cities and Subnational Governments for Sustainable Development are already well underway. Considering the vital role of biodiversity in the green economy, and the contribution of cities in achieving the CBD, this Biodiversity Summit looks to be the most inclusive and pertinent yet. I'd like to wish local governments a prosperous, productive and fulfilling year ahead: a year which looks set to be full of opportunities for growth, collaboration, and action on the ground. We look forward to hearing and sharing your success stories, news and latest developments throughout 2014. "



### CITIES BIODIVERSITY CENTER

SUSTAINING URBAN NATURE THROUGH A GLOBAL NETWORK OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS



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## BIODIVERSITY STARTS IN THE DISTANT PAST AND IT POINTS TOWARD THE FUTURE

-FRANS LANTING

Image: Gazelle Valley Park, Jerusalem (Amir Balaban)

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Cover image: Cape Town's Church Square, situated two streets down from the Cities Biodiversity Center's office, was recently made over for an advertisement, involving the greening of this otherwise concrete public space. It was truly inspiring to see the smiles on the faces of passers by, as they saw the transformation take place — a tangible indication that functioning, socially inclusive and bio-diverse public spaces are a bonafide recipe for happier citizens.





# LABNEWS

## AN INTERVIEW WITH LAB CITY HELSINGBORG'S WIDAR NARVELO



The Cities Biodiversity Center asked Widar Narvelo, Helsingborg's LAB City Representative and Head of Biodiversity Management, a few questions about his work and what inspires him. Helsingborg has been a LAB city since 2012 and is currently in the process of undertaking its Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (LBSAP).

### What motivates and inspires you in your day-to-day work?

*I grew up spending a lot of my leisure time in nature: picking mushrooms, berries and flowers with my parents. In Sweden we have the right of public access to nature even in private-owned land. It is written in the law. So that's when my inspiration for nature started. Later on I started studying natural sciences at the university in 1975 and that made my interest and curiosity grow even more. I am kind of obsessed with knowing more about how our planet Earth is functioning. I am also very worried about the situation for biodiversity and humanity all over the planet. It is my passion to do what I can for the coming generations.*

### What is happening in Helsingborg for biodiversity?

*Helsingborg has many activities on the go regarding biodiversity conservation and sustainable development as a whole. For example, we are waiting for our new green infrastructure plan to be adopted; a new water plan is being developed; and on the 18th of May we will inaugurate the 7th nature reserve (some 200 hectares) set aside by the Municipality. We also have 9 other nature reserves which have previously been approved by the Regional Authority of Scania.*



**Forest food:** Helsingborg's rich biodiversity provides a bounty of delicious morsels to those who know what to pick.

*We have started implementing some of the steps of the green infrastructure plan and we want the solutions to be multifunctional (recreational, climate adapted, supporting biodiversity etc.). We plant new forest areas together with approximately 1400, 11 year old school children each year in an initiative called: "the forest of the children".*

### What are your dreams and aspirations for your city and its biodiversity in the year ahead?

*This year I hope to see Helsingborg officially signing the Durban Commitment and successfully finishing our LBSAP as part of the LAB process. Our climate adaption work is also ongoing and my wish is that we will be able to take the steps needed to make Helsingborg*

*resilient to sea level rise and climatic events etc. Furthermore, I hope there will be a decision that Helsingborg will host an ICLEI event in 2016. Lastly, 2014 is election year in Sweden so I hope we will get new political guidelines that will further support our work towards a sustainable Helsingborg, and indeed a sustainable world.*

### In your experience, what is the greatest challenge facing effective biodiversity management in cities?

*I am in support of TEEB (the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity) concept but it is a real challenge to integrate and mainstream the concept in cities. There have been important steps taken by the Swedish Government for this purpose including a national investigation made last year called: "Make ecosystem services visible" with the purpose of integrating ecosystem services into the national budget by 2018. Since money is a 'language' most people recognise, we need monetary (in addition to non-monetary) methods to evaluate and save biodiversity. All over the world, people have fought to save important ecosystems for many decades, but we still see ecosystems irreversibly lost, forests cut down and the use of fossil fuels on the rise. The time necessary to change people's attitudes and to achieve the necessary goals is limited. We need immediate action and I believe the local level must take the lead!*



Pålshö Forest, Helsingborg

## JERUSALEM BIOREGION CENTER LAUNCHED



From left: Dr. Yoel Siegel, Senior Strategy Consultant; Naomi Tsur, Chair; Helene Roumani, Director; Sigalit Rachman, SPNI Jerusalem Director

The Jerusalem Bioregion Center for Ecosystem Management was launched on January 16 at a festive gathering, coinciding with Israel's annual "Tu B'Shvat" the Jewish New Year of the Trees (a festival that celebrates caring for the earth, commemorated widely with public tree-planting events and environmental education programs in schools).

Hosted in cooperation with the Municipality of Jerusalem, the Ministry of Environment and the Society for the Protection of Nature, the event marked the official completion of the LAB (Local Action for Biodiversity) Program in Jerusalem and shift from a local to a regional ecosystem management perspective, very much in line with the URBIS (Urban Biosphere Initiative) concept. Former Deputy Mayor Naomi Tsur, now Chair of the Center, presented a copy of the Jerusalem Biodiversity Report to the recently elected Council member in charge of the environmental portfolio, who confirmed the new City Administration's commitment to biodiversity protection.

Building on the accomplishments of LAB, the Jerusalem Bioregion Center's mission is to promote research-based policy, project management consultation and multi-level cooperation for biodiversity protection, nature conservation and sustainable development in the Jerusalem region. Jerusalem LAB Coordinator, Helene Roumani has been appointed Director.

Dr. Yoel Siegel, Jerusalem's URBIS Coordinator, is Senior Strategy Consultant and Dr. Eran Brockovitch is the Center's resident ecologist.

The Jerusalem URBIS Workshop, hosted in March 2012 in conjunction with ICLEI/LAB, served as a basis for conceptualizing the Bioregion Center, which has the ultimate goal of helping local governments in the Jerusalem region find ways to factor ecosystem management into their infrastructure planning efforts. To accomplish this, the Center will:

- Promote awareness and cooperation to advance sustainable biodiversity initiatives
- Establish a Scientific Forum of experts to help link knowledge to policy formation
- Facilitate access to data base information via a dedicated website
- Conduct conferences and training seminars for decision makers and planners
- Provide professional support and guidance for program development

"The establishment of the Center provides an opportunity to collate biodiversity data throughout the Jerusalem region and hopefully to create a dialogue of transboundary understanding of the ecosystems that give us all life," said Naomi Tsur, Chair of the Jerusalem Bioregion Center.

## JERUSALEM LAUNCHES THE GAZELLE VALLEY PARK CONSERVATION PROGRAM



Gazelle Valley: A biodiversity hotspot in the midst of the urban heartland (by A. Balaban)

In the context of Jerusalem's LAB Legacy project for the International Decade of Biodiversity, Jerusalem has established the Gazelle Valley Conservation Program to protect and restore one of the city's unique biodiversity areas,

and to plan the development of a park for both wildlife preservation and recreation at the site. The Gazelle Valley Park will be the first urban nature wildlife park in Israel. The flagship plan is now being implemented by the City in conjunction with the Jerusalem Foundation and the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel.

The Gazelle Valley is situated on a 60-acre undeveloped tract of land in southwest Jerusalem, between two residential neighborhoods, closed in by major roadways. After being used for agricultural purposes during the 1960s and 1970s, the land, a rich wildlife habitat, was left as open space while the surrounding urban area continued to develop. The Israel Mountain Gazelle (*Gazella gazella gazella*), an indigenous species particularly prevalent in this part of the Jerusalem hills, has been roaming the Valley and has been sustained on its natural resources since ancient times.

In the late 1990s, a residential plan was established for the Gazelle Valley, threatening to destroy the gazelle habitat and remove this vital open space in the city. Ten years of vigorous grassroots opposition led to withdrawal of the plan. A pioneering community planning initiative persuaded the City to designate the Gazelle Valley a natural heritage site.

While the Gazelle Valley has been open land for generations, its unique biodiversity is now being threatened by surrounding urban development. The initial phase of the Park Plan has begun the process of restoring the valley's natural ecosystems by rehabilitating the herd and its habitat, providing shelter for the animals, and establishing appropriate public access and viewing facilities.

The development of the Gazelle Valley Park in Jerusalem plays an important role in the City's promotion of climate change adaptation. Water is an important aspect of the park design. Until the implementation of the Park the entire Valley suffered annually from flooding and erosion during the



rainy season. Apart from the need to regulate the drainage basin, water features prominently in the Plan as a vital natural resource for sustaining the local biodiversity. In addition, regulation of existing water systems is being planned to enhance the beauty of the site and serve to attract visitors.

The Park is expected to serve local residents and visitors with a public activity core (differentiated from the animal habitat), to include pedestrian and bike paths, gazelle observation

points, a bird watching route, agricultural gardens and an educational center. The Gazelle Valley Conservation Program in Jerusalem demonstrates that through proper planning practices, conservation efforts in an urban setting can facilitate both climate change adaptation and promote efficient ecosystem management. In the case of Jerusalem, it is anticipated that this effort will also produce an effective interface between biodiversity and human activity.

The Gazelle Valley Park is scheduled to open its gates to the public in September 2014, after completion of the first two development phases. These include construction of the fence surrounding the park to facilitate herd safety and rehabilitation, and establishment of the water way which is intended to create a natural barrier to protect the gazelle.

*Jerusalem's news contributed by Helene Roumani: Director, Jerusalem Bioregion Center for Ecosystem Management*

## CONFERENCES & EVENTS

### LAB WETLANDS & COMMUNITIES WORKSHOP



Above: Expert panel in fruitful discussion at the Tshwane LAB Wetlands Workshop

The City of Tshwane and ICLEI Cities Biodiversity Center with the support of ICLEI Africa hosted the first LAB: Wetlands & Communities workshop at the Rietvlei Nature Reserve on 20 – 21 February 2014. The workshop marked the first time that the various stakeholders had come together to discuss the development of a Local Government Wetland Management Plan and a pilot project at Colbyn Valley wetland. The event was well-supported by community representatives, wetland experts and local 'Friends' groups, as well as City of Tshwane officials – including planners, engineers and environmental officials.

The workshop highlighted the importance of wetland areas for local communities and local governments, with a hands-on activity comparing the ecosystem services delivered by

different ecosystems in the area, and a presentation by the City on the Wetlands Assessment report that was compiled as part of stage 1 of the project. The second day of the workshop focussed on the participatory involvement of stakeholders in discussions on the development of the Wetland Management Plan. These discussions, initiated by a facilitated panel discussion between wetland experts, showed the high level of interest in wetlands in the municipality.

The enthusiasm and engagement of the delegates ensured that the process was very successful and hugely inspiring. Outcomes of the workshop will now be formalised by ICLEI and the City of Tshwane and fed into the development of the Local Wetland Management Plan.



### THE NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY & BUSINESS WORKSHOP, CAPE TOWN.

The Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) of South Africa hosted a strategic discussion on 'Investment in Ecological Infrastructure' and the need for effective investment. The event brought together South African



business, national government and other interested stakeholders to introduce the notion of ecological infrastructure, and to discuss the role of the private sector as investors in natural capital.

The day's discourse showed the clear need for governments to lead the way, since ecological infrastructure represents public goods, and governments could be considered as the main stakeholder and protector of ecological infrastructure. However, the public sector is ultimately tied to government through the allocation of bonds, and discussions on the long-term allocation of bonds on ecological infrastructure by municipalities was considered.

The National Biodiversity and Business Network is currently being expanded across South Africa by the EWT in coming months and we look forward to further engaging in this hot topic. Look out for further updates in future newsletters.

Further information: EWT NBBN see [HERE](#)

## THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDG): THE ROAD TO AN URBAN SDG

### What are the SDGs?

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are eight international goals that aim to accelerate development in the world's poorest countries and will expire at the end of 2015. The United Nation Member States are developing the post-2015 development agenda through a process of open, inclusive consultations, involving civil society, academic and research institutes and other stakeholders. The post-2015 agenda will reflect the development challenges linked to the outcome of "Rio+20"—the UN Conference on Sustainable Development—that took place in June 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The process to develop a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which will converge with the post 2015 development agenda was launched by the member States after the Rio+20 Conference. The outcome document, "The Future We Want" called for the creation of an intergovernmental Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG) to develop a proposal for consideration by the 68th session of the UN General Assembly.

The SDGs will provide a set of international goals that all nations will aspire

to meet, and are envisaged to be an international framework that will enable countries to better target and monitor progress across all three dimensions of sustainable development (social, environmental and economic) in a coordinated and holistic way. The goals will be applicable to all countries, regardless of their level of development. Each goal will be action-oriented, concise and easy to communicate, limited in number, aspirational, global in nature and universally applicable to all countries while taking into account different national realities, capacities

and replaces the former Commission on Sustainable Development. All the states that are members of the UN, as well as State members of specialised agencies, are part of the HLPF.

A 30-member Open Working Group (OWG) of the General Assembly, which consists of the member States, and is co-chaired by Mr. Csaba Kőrösi, Permanent Representative of Hungary, and Mr. Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya. Major Groups and other Stakeholders can contribute to the Sustainable Development Goal process through the

*Driven by the overwhelming trend of urbanisation and the concentration of global economic activity in urban areas, the Urban SDG campaign aims to harness the huge potential of cities and opportunity that they present to mobilize stakeholders, promote integrated, city-level approaches, and accelerate progress towards sustainable development...*

and levels of development, and respecting national policies and priorities. The SDGs will strive to form a single development framework with poverty reduction and sustainable development at its core.

The United Nations High Level Political Forum (HLPF) on sustainable development provides leadership and reviews progress on sustainable development,

Thematic Clusters. Each Cluster is coordinated by a Steering Committee, who is responsible for preparing joint position papers for consideration by the Open Working Group.

### ICLEI and the SDGs

There were 9 OWG sessions between March 2013 and March 2014, each one focused on specific Thematic Clusters. Of particular relevance was the 7th





OWG, which included the Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements, and Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Clusters, which was attended by Yunus Arian, Head of Global Policy and Advocacy at the ICLEI World Secretariat.

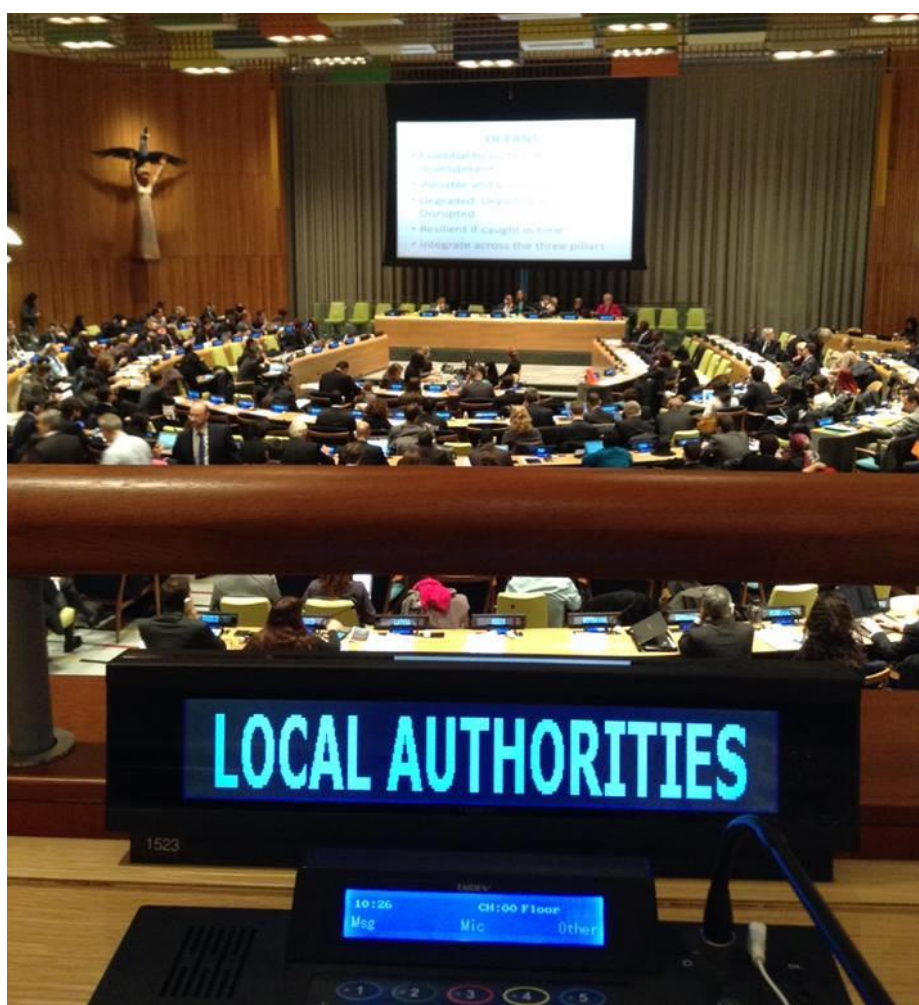
ICLEI is a core partner supporting the Urban SDG campaign, which advocates for a dedicated and stand-alone SDG for cities and local governments. Driven by the overwhelming trend of urbanisation and the concentration of global economic activity in urban areas, the Urban SDG campaign aims to harness the huge potential of cities and opportunity that they present to mobilize stakeholders, promote integrated, city-level approaches, and accelerate progress towards sustainable development, including the end of extreme poverty.

Shela Patrickson, the Manager of ICLEI Cities Biodiversity Center, attended the 8th OWG in New York last month, as the Local Authorities Major Group representative, particularly to make input into the Forests and Biodiversity thematic cluster. Shela delivered a statement as part of the biodiversity and forests session, and also delivered an intervention from the floor, both making the case for why cities should be an integral part of a biodiversity SDG. Cities need to be included both because of the ecosystem services that urban biodiversity provides and the contribution of cities towards reducing biodiversity loss, as well as because of the impact that cities have on biodiversity worldwide (click to read full statements). The Executive Secretary of the CBD, Braulio Dias, specifically mentioned urban biodiversity in his presentation as important to consider in the SDG discussion, not least for its role in reducing violence in cities and promoting health and healthy lifestyles, demonstrating the CBD's support towards recognising the importance of cities.



*"Last month, at OWG7, we have happily observed a broad and strong consensus from Member States and all Major Groups that sustainable urban development should be positioned at the core of post 2015 development agenda. Inspired with this important recognition, and considering both the fundamental reliance of cities on biodiversity, and the significant impact that cities have on biodiversity, ICLEI strongly advocates that biodiversity should be a core component of the Urban SDG, but also embedded in many of the other SDGs as a cross-cutting theme."*

*- delivered as part of ICLEI's intervention by Shela Patrickson at the SDG OWG8*



Above: View from ICLEI's seat at the SDG OWG8

## ICLEI & GANGWON PROVINCE AGREE ON MUTUAL COOPERATION FOR HOSTING CITIES BIODIVERSITY SUMMIT AT CBD COP12

On 26th of February, ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability's Secretary General, Gino van Begin met with the Governor of Gangwon Province at the Gangwon Provincial Government Building to congratulate the Province on their agreement to host the "Biodiversity Summit: Local and Subnational Governments for Sustainable Development" during the 12th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP12) and to enhance mutual cooperation between the two parties for a successful event.

The Biodiversity Summit, which will be co-hosted by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability and Gangwon Province, will take place during the CBD COP 12, from 12-14 of October and will involve the participation of international delegates covering nearly every major region of the world, biodiversity experts, scientists and NGOs alike, for what is sure to be a knowledge-packed and dynamic city and subnational summit.

"It is a great honor to host Biodiversity Summit in Gangwon Province where [our own] rich biodiversity exists..." said the Governor, Choi Moon-soon, "I will do my best to make the summit a milestone event where not only Gangwon Province, but also all other international local governments focus on the biodiversity agenda and have interactive [discussions] to solve the issues [we face]."

"[ICLEI] will cooperate with Gangwon Province to make the Biodiversity Summit a place for developing and implementing agendas to enhance biodiversity by all local governments from around the world...I also expect that this will be a great opportunity to emphasize the role of local governments in achieving the sustainable development goals," commented ICLEI Secretary General, Gino van Begin.

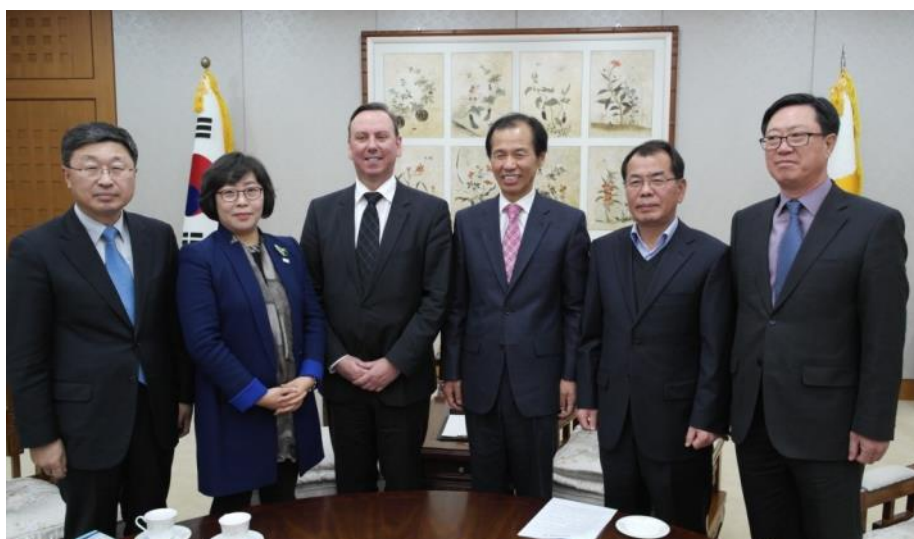
## 12TH CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

This year the theme for the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 12) is "Biodiversity for Sustainable Development". In line with that, preparations for the "Biodiversity Summit: Local and Subnational Governments for Sustainable Development", the biggest event held in parallel with the CBD COP, are well underway by the ICLEI Cities Biodiversity Center and ICLEI Korea Office. The focus at this Biodiversity Summit is on cooperation and coordination between levels of government, capitalizing on the significant breakthroughs that have been made at the last three CBD COPs. The Biodiversity Summit program includes speakers from all levels of government in an interactive dialogue, with panels combining local, subnational and national government representatives as well as international organisations.

A draft of the Gangwon Declaration, as a primary outcome of the Biodiversity Summit (traditionally named after the host subnational government), will be compiled with the input of as many local and subnational governments around the world as possible, and finalised through input at the Summit itself. This process of engagement will begin soon, so look out for upcoming invitations and opportunities to comment and contribute!

The Biodiversity Summit will take place on 12-14 October 2014, just before the High-Level Segment at the CBD COP from October 15th to 17th.

Among other things, the Summit will take stock of progress since the previous "Cities for Life Summit" at the CBD COP 11 in Hyderabad, India, outline the latest tools, initiatives and networks, illustrating throughout, the value of bringing nature back into cities; and forge further concrete action points for national, subnational and local governments, international development organisations, and the scientific community for implementing the Plan of Action.



Picture (above right): (from left) Mr. Ji Soon-sik, Chief of Event Operational Section, Support Group of Gangwon-do of CBD COP 12; Ms. Park Yeon-hee, Director of ICLEI KO; Mr. Gino Van Begin, ICLEI Secretary General; Mr. Choi Moon-soon, Governor of Gangwon Province; Mr. Kim Duk-lae, Director of Green Resource Bureau; Mr. Moon Nam-soo, Chief of Environmental Policy Section, Green Resource Bureau.



## LINKING LOCAL PROVINCIAL AND NATIONAL PARKS

On 5 March 2014 ICLEI successfully hosted the Friedrich Naumann Stiftung Foundation funded workshop titled "Linking local, provincial and national parks" which brought together key players in conserving the City of Cape Town's biodiversity. This workshop aimed to explore ways to improve links between the municipal and provincial reserves and open spaces, and the Table Mountain National Park through the creation of a tangible joint project proposal involving all relevant partners. Two potential projects were tabled for discussion at the workshop and project proposals initiated, namely: improving the Prinskaasteel/Diep River Corridor as well as the Kuils River/Driftsands Corridor, through a focus on restoration,

social benefits and job opportunities by engaging core partners as well as other local stakeholders.

The outcomes of this workshop will be presented at the 3rd BiodiverCities International Conference, which will be hosted by the Urban Protected Areas Network in Cape Town from 7-9 April 2014, in partnership with the City of Cape Town. As part of this Conference, a one-day fieldtrip will symbolically and physically link the Table Mountain National Park and the Nature Reserves of the City of Cape Town. (SEE page 12 for more information on the upcoming conference)

By bringing all relevant stakeholders and tiers of government on board, the

joint creation of these project proposals will seek to enable a holistic, integrated and coordinated approach to biodiversity management in the city, building on existing partnerships and allowing for mutual future project objectives to be met.



Friedrich Naumann STIFTUNG FÜR DIE FREIHEIT

## NEW PROJECTS AND TOOLS

### BIODIVERSITY MAINSTREAMING TOOLKIT

Announcing the pre-release of our latest toolkit for local governments, "The Nature of Mainstreaming: a local integrated planning toolkit for biodiversity and ecosystem services." This toolkit is designed to improve the ability of local governments to incorporate biodiversity protection across departments, and is the culmination of input from practitioners. It includes a quiz that helps you identify which tips are most helpful for you, a description of barriers identified by other municipalities, and six tips that are designed for simple application. Each tip is accompanied by templates to make their application easier, and a case story that describes a good example of the application of the tip. The toolkit will be presented this year at an upcoming event still to be confirmed.

### SURVEY ON INTERACTION OF DIFFERENT LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT

The Committee of the Regions of the EU (CoR) has launched a study entitled 'Multilevel governance of our natural capital' in cooperation with the European Commission's Directorate-General for Environment and the United Nations Environment Programme. The study will be carried out jointly by the Ecologic Institute and ICLEI.

The study aims to determine which efforts have been made by national governments to support and cooperate with local and regional authorities on biodiversity and to identify positive examples of actions being taken on a local or regional level. These actions must contribute to the EU's biodiversity strategy and the Aichi biodiversity targets.

The Ecologic Institute invites all stakeholders from local, regional and

national governments to take part in an online survey. Responses will inform the recommendations and best practice presentation for the study. A report will be available in July 2014. The survey is available in English, French, and German. Responses should be returned by 15 March 2014.

For more information, click [here](#).



# SECRETARIAT OF CBD NEWS

## ICLEI AND THE CBD: AN INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIP



*In June 2011 ICLEI's Cities Biodiversity Center (seconded Senior Professional Officer André Mader to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD) in Montréal, Canada. This continuing, unique, arrangement brings much-needed capacity to the sub-national implementation work of the Secretariat, while placing ICLEI at the center of the United Nations' biodiversity decision-making processes.*

### Preparing for WGRI and SBSTTA

Meetings of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the CBD are held every two years. However, besides fulfilling the various COP "requests to the Executive Secretary", there are two other key events that require (albeit somewhat lighter) preparation and servicing between COPs. These are the meetings of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) and the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on the Review of Implementation of the Convention (WGRI). It has recently become routine for both to be held in Montreal, due to the CBD Secretariat being located here. SBSTTA provides the COP and, as appropriate, its other subsidiary bodies, with scientific, technical and technological advice relating to the implementation of the Convention. WGRI aims to promote more

effective evaluation, reporting and reviewing of the implementation of the Convention. Recommendations adopted by WGRI are included in draft decisions submitted to the Conference of the Parties for their consideration and adoption. My division, Mainstreaming, Partnerships and Outreach (MPO), is more involved in WGRI than in SBSTTA and I am currently preparing a pre-session document for the upcoming WGRI (16-20 June, 2014). This document will outline key issues for consideration at the COP and report on achievements since the last COP. Watch this space for outcomes of WGRI, which will provide some idea of which aspects of subnational implementation we can expect Parties to discuss at the next COP.

ment the CBD. If other countries follow suit by moving towards coordinated biodiversity planning, the potential positive global consequences, will be profound.

Secondly, the Government of China has responded to the need, expressed in Decision X/22, for capacity building initiatives for local governments. They have offered to host and pay for a workshop on local biodiversity planning in the city of Qingdao in May this year. I will be joined by a Chinese colleague from the CBD Secretariat in facilitating this 4-day event, to which participants from countries around Asia will be invited.

*Watch this space for outcomes of WGRI, which will provide some idea of which aspects of subnational implementation we can expect Parties to discuss at the next COP.*

### Positive steps by China & Nepal

ICLEI and the CBD Secretariat have been working for many years on supporting policy improvement on subnational implementation of the Convention. Due to the far-reaching consequences of policy change at the international level, this has been a gradual process. However, along the way there are signs of positive results, and we were recently notified of two such examples.

Firstly, the Government of Nepal has indicated its intention to include, in their revised national biodiversity strategy and action plan (NBSAP), a chapter providing a framework for the compilation of local BSAPs. This is the first instance of such a progressive recognition of the role of local government in assisting countries to imple-

These are not only good signs that work is paying off - such models also have the potential to catalyze similar responses from other countries. As a new batch of NBSAPs is released and other achievements are reported upon at CBD COP 12 in October this year we hope, and expect, to have many more such examples to report on.





# WHAT EXACTLY IS...

## A Party?



**Convention on  
Biological Diversity**

*We are hopefully all familiar with the most common meaning of the word 'party.' But the word also means – “a formally constituted political group...” (www.dictionary.com) and this is more*

*relevant in the context of the CBD.*

Simply put, in the CBD context, a Party is a national government that has signed onto the Convention. There are 193 such signatories, as well as the European Union which, in addition to its constituent countries, has a distinct voice in the Convention. That total of 194 covers almost all of the countries of the world, with the exception of the USA, Holy See and Andorra. Even these three have national focal points and participate in major CBD meetings like the COP. The most recent Party to the CBD, on February 17th 2014, was South Sudan, which brought the CBD's total to one more than that of Parties to the United Nations as a whole. “Parties” is also used in the context of the UN in general and of other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), so be aware of the context to know exactly to which Parties are being referred.





# UPCOMING EVENTS

## URBAN PROTECTED AREAS NETWORK 3rd BIODIVERCITIES CONFERENCE

### Rescaling natural parks & the city

The Urban Protected Areas Network will host its 3rd BiodiverCities International Conference in Cape Town, 7-9 April 2014. This year's conference will focus on issues of scale in urban park management and policies. While the natural park itself can be seen as an obvious level of management, with a clear ecological and institutional level of organisation, its position within a metropolitan area implies a more complex size and scope for park and city management.

This event proposes an opportunity for collective reflection on relationships between city and nature, through the showcase and exchange of experience and strategies for sustainable management of protected areas in changing urban contexts, from both Northern and Southern perspectives. In an explicitly comparative undertaking, this event brings together managers both of protected areas and of the cities they intersect, contributing to a community of urban nature researchers and practitioners. In this context, it is our pleasure to invite you to the conference.

## 2014 LAB SYMPOSIUM ON BIODIVERCITIES WITHOUT BOUNDARIES, KAOSHIUNG

BiodiverCities without Boundaries: Science, Policy and Local Governance Conference ICLEI Kaohsiung Capacity Center in Taiwan is hosting a conference in partnership with ICLEI Cities Biodiversity Center and the Environmental protection Bureau of Kaohsiung City, from 23 – 25 June 2014 in the beautiful City of Kaohsiung. The Conference will be one of the key events in preparation



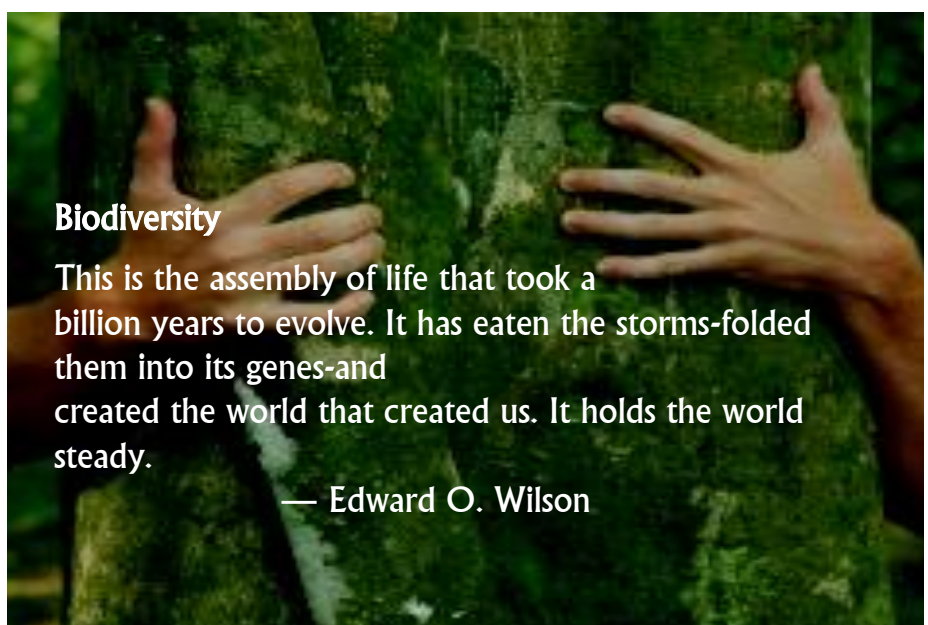
Above: Table Mountain National Park— a biodiversity wonder in the heart of the City of Cape Town (source: Wikicommons).

for the CBD COP 12 later in the year, and will focus on bringing together policy-makers, city officials, scientists and technical practitioners. A wide variety of relevant and fascinating topics will be covered, including dedicated sessions on the LAB Programme and URBIS, as well as invasive species management, eco-tourism, conservation and climate change, agro-ecology, watershed management, TEEB, and coastal and marine management. Building on the experiences and expertise of Kaohsiung City as part of the LAB Pioneer Programme, and the experiences of other international LAB Pioneers, the Conference will workshop the opportunities for establishing the Local Action for

Biodiversity – Taiwan (LAB-Taiwan) Project. Registration is now open, and the deadline for the early-bird discount is 30 April 2014 (see the website for more information see [HERE](#).)



Above: Mocaca Monkey of Taiwan



### Biodiversity

This is the assembly of life that took a billion years to evolve. It has eaten the storms-folded them into its genes-and created the world that created us. It holds the world steady.

— Edward O. Wilson



# ● ● ● ● ● BACKPAGE BIODIVERSITY : FUN FACTS & FINDINGS

## BIOMIMICRY: 3 DESIGN LESSONS FROM NATURE

Adapted from original article on [The Mother Nature Network](#).

Biomimicry looks to nature and natural systems for inspiration. After millions of years of tinkering through evolution, Mother Nature has worked out brilliant designs. Inefficiency doesn't last long in nature, and human engineers and designers are looking more and more to nature for solutions to modern problems. Here are a few intriguing examples of biomimicry.



### SHARK SKIN

Seen under an electron microscope, sharkskin is made up of countless overlapping scales called dermal denticles (or "little skin teeth"). The denticles have grooves running down their length in alignment with water flow. These grooves disrupt the formation of eddies, or turbulent swirls of slower water, making the water pass by faster. The rough shape also discourages parasitic growth such as algae and barnacles.

Scientists have been able to replicate dermal denticles in swimsuits (which are now banned in major competition) and the bottom of boats. When cargo ships can squeeze out even a single percent in efficiency, they burn less bunker oil and don't require cleaning chemicals for their hulls.

### WHALE FIN GROOVES

Whales have been swimming around the ocean for a long time, and evolution has crafted them into a super-efficient form of life while sustaining



their massive size by feeding animals smaller than the eye can see. In 2004, scientists at Duke University, West Chester University and the U.S. Naval Academy discovered that the bumps at the front edge of a whale fin greatly increase its efficiency, reducing drag by 32% and increasing lift by 8%. Companies like *Whale Power* are borrowing this concept and creating wind turbine blades that greatly boost the amount of energy created per turbine. Other companies are applying the idea to cooling fans, airplane wings and propellers.

### LOTUS LEAVES

The lotus flower is like the sharkskin of dry land. The flower's micro-rough surface naturally repels dust and dirt particles, keeping its petals sparkling clean. If you've ever looked at a lotus leaf under a microscope, you would have seen a sea of tiny nail-like protuberances that can

fend off specks of dust. When water rolls over a lotus leaf, it collects anything on the surface, leaving a clean and healthy leaf behind.

A German company spent four years researching this phenomenon and has developed a paint with similar properties. The micro-rough surface of the paint pushes away dust and dirt, diminishing the need to wash the outside of a house.



## CITY FACTS *DID YOU KNOW?*

*A recent study compiled the largest global dataset to date of two diverse taxa in cities: birds (54 cities) and plants (110 cities). It found that the majority of urban bird and plant species are native in the world's cities. Even more evidence that as urbanization continues to expand, efforts directed towards the conservation of intact vegetation within urban landscapes could support higher concentrations of both native bird and plant species!*

More [HERE](#)



Abandoned since the 1930's, the Petite Ceinture, Paris' old railway system has been gently reclaimed by nature and become a biodiversity sanctuary in the heart of this big city! It provides shelter for more than 200 species of plants and no less than 70 animal species and has recently been opened as a walking tour.

For more information see [HERE](#)

Image: Messy Nussy Chic

# KEY EVENTS IN 2014

## WORLD URBAN FORUM 7

Medellin, Colombia

5-7 April 2014

## 3RD BIODIVERCITIES CONFERENCE

Cape Town, South Africa

7-9 April 2014

## RESILIENCE 2014

Montpellier, France

4-8 May 2014

## THIRD INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE ADAPTATION CONFERENCE

Fortaleza, Brazil

12-16 May 2014

## RESILIENT CITIES

Bonn, Germany

29-31 May 2014

## 2014 LAB SYMPOSIUM ON BIODIVERCITIES WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

Kaoshiung, Taiwan

23-25 June 2014

## CBD COP 12

Pyeongchang, Korea

6-17 October 2014

## IUCN WORLD PARKS CONGRESS

12-19 November

Sydney, Australia

 Email: [biodiversity@iclei.org](mailto:biodiversity@iclei.org)

Physical address:  
71 Burg Street  
Cape Town  
South Africa

 [www.facebook.com/icleicbc](http://www.facebook.com/icleicbc)

 [www.twitter.com/icleicbc](http://www.twitter.com/icleicbc)

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