



## Press Brief

# Cities, Local Authorities and Biodiversity

### Why is this important?

More than half of the world's population lives in cities, and it is estimated that this will rise to 70% by 2030. For biodiversity, this trend can bring both threats and solutions, and this means local authorities have a vital role to play. Urbanization can have major impacts on biodiversity, as when natural habitats are cleared to make way for housing and infrastructure or are polluted by urban industry or households. At the same time, cities are the source of many policies, processes and technologies that can serve as solutions to biodiversity-related problems in urban settings.

Sustainable urbanization, through the creation of compact and ecologically-friendly cities, could promote the more efficient use of natural resources, and reduce consumption of water, energy and — ultimately — impacts on biodiversity.

To help achieve this, Parties to the CBD can facilitate collaboration between all levels of government and support local authorities in implementing the Convention locally.

Indeed, local authorities can play a crucial – and growing – role in bringing biodiversity back into the urban agenda. Their awareness raising activities are generally most effective since they are the closest public authority to citizens and interact with them daily.



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## What news to expect in Nagoya?

At COP10 Parties will discuss and negotiate a new Plan of Action on Cities, Local Authorities and Biodiversity. If adopted, it would significantly enable different levels of government to collaborate in the successful implementation of the CBD.

Supportive CBD Parties are collaborating with the Global Partnership on Cities and Biodiversity to submit and adopt the Plan.

The City Biodiversity Summit 2010, to be held as an associated event to COP10, will contribute to this plan, as it brings together hundreds of local and international authorities and organizations worldwide.

Encouragingly, some CBD Parties have already started mobilizing their local authorities. For example, a local government network in Spain (La Red de Gobiernos Locales + Biodiversidad 2010), in cooperation with the Spanish Federation of Municipalities, promotes local policies aimed at the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Meanwhile, the European Union has financed the European Capitals of Biodiversity award, whose winners will be announced at COP10.

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