



Biophilic Cities Network Declaration of Action for Global Biodiversity Conservation

A. We, Partners in the Biophilic Cities Network (BCN), hereby acknowledge the critical role cities can and must play in biodiversity conservation now and in the future.

B. Accordingly, the BCN strongly supports the implementation of the goals and targets of the [Kunming-Montréal Global Biodiversity Framework \(GBF\)](#) adopted at the December 2022 United Nations Biodiversity Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 15).

C. Further, the BCN believes that cities are duty-bound to develop specific plans, actions, and programs to help reach GBF goals and targets, as well as obligated to take a hard look at existing urban policies, land use practices, and consumption patterns to critically assess the many ways in which they contribute to and exacerbate the global biodiversity crisis.

Urgency of the Global Biodiversity Crisis for Cities

D. Cities benefit from local and global biodiversity in many ways that include improved human health and well-being, increased resilience and climate adaptation, clean air and water, and resulting economic sustainability.

E. Despite its documented benefits, global biodiversity is being lost at a rapid and accelerating rate, and all signs point to the entering of a period of anthropogenic mass extinction. Specifically,

- a. The [Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services \(IPBES\) 2019 Global Assessment](#) concludes that around 1 million species are threatened with extinction in the next several decades,ⁱ and
- b. The [North American Bird Conservation Initiative \(NABCI\) 2022 State of the Birds](#) report concludes that nearly half the world's species of birds are in decline.ⁱⁱ

Critical Action by Cities to Conserve and Restore Biodiversity

F. The BCN believes that there are many tangible steps that cities can take to protect and restore biodiversity.

G. For cities, this represents both a local and global challenge, and cities must be prepared to act at both scales.ⁱⁱⁱ

H. Partners in the BCN are taking essential steps to conserve and restore urban biodiversity through:

- i. Better management of growth and development to reduce damaging sprawl and to ensure biodiversity and habitat are protected ([Portland Metro Urban Growth Boundary](#)).
- ii. The adoption and implementation of land use plans that emphasize ecological connectivity and biodiversity conservation ([Curridabat Ciudad Dulce](#); [Edmonton Wildlife Passages](#)).
- iii. The integration of nature and biodiversity into the design of buildings and neighborhoods in cities ([Singapore Landscaping for Urban Spaces and High-Rises \(LUSH\) Programme](#); [St. Louis Milkweeds for Monarchs](#); [Washington, DC, Green Area Ratio](#)).
- iv. The adoption of city codes and development standards that better protect nature and biodiversity ([Toronto Green Standard](#); [San Francisco Better Roofs Ordinance](#) and [Bird-Safe Design Standards](#); [Washington, DC, Canopy Protection Amendment Act](#)).
- v. The modification of urban park and land management policies to reduce the extent of pesticide use except in those circumstances where use can improve biodiversity and native habitat. ([San Francisco Precautionary Principle Resolution](#)).
- vi. The restoration and rewilding of many spaces in and around cities to better support biodiversity, including the specific planting of native trees and vegetation ([Arlington Natural Resource Conservation Areas](#); [Edmonton Naturalization Initiatives](#)).
- vii. The protection and restoration of marine habitats and ecosystems, both near to cities and farther away ([Miami-Dade Eco-Zones](#); [Wellington Blue Belt Vision](#)).
- viii. The adoption of development standards to prioritize the incorporation of nature-based infrastructure and biophilic elements to support resilience and climate adaptation ([Milwaukee Eco Design Guidelines](#); [Norfolk Resilience Quotient](#)).
- ix. The implementation of methods to assess and monitor urban biodiversity conditions to inform decision-making ([Urban Biodiversity Inventory Framework](#) (San Francisco, Pittsburgh, and St. Louis), [Singapore Index on Cities' Biodiversity](#)).
- x. The activation of community participation and eco-literacy through the collection and development of citizen science ([City Nature Challenge](#) (multiple BCN cities participating)).
- xi. The reduction of ecological footprints and the impact that consumption demands and production patterns have on global ecosystems ([Portland Sustainable Consumption and Production program](#)).

- xii. Leadership and action at the global scale and working to protect biodiversity beyond their local boundaries or jurisdictional borders ([C40 Urban Nature Accelerator](#); [Edinburgh Declaration](#); [CitiesWithNature](#)).
- xiii. Facilitation of grassroots, community-led biodiversity management that is informed by local and indigenous knowledge (Visakhapatnam [Kindness Farm](#), [Sea Turtle Conservation](#), and [Community Animal Sanctuaries](#)).

THEREFORE, IN RECOGNITION, the BCN commits to facilitate the adoption and implementation GBF goals and targets and undertake all further efforts to diligently and expeditiously conserve and restore biodiversity within the boundaries of BCN cities and beyond.

Adopted February 2023

ⁱ Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). 2019. Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services. E. S. Brondizio, J. Settele, S. Díaz, and H. T. Ngo (editors). IPBES secretariat, Bonn, Germany. 1148 pages. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3831673>.

ⁱⁱ North American Bird Conservation Initiative. 2022. The State of the Birds, United States of America, 2022. StateoftheBirds.org.

ⁱⁱⁱ Timothy Beatley and JD Brown. 2021. "[The Half-Earth City](#)." *William & Mary Environmental Law and Policy Journal*. 45(2).