

LOCAL ACTION FOR BIODIVERSITY

A SERIES OF LOCAL CASES



City of Barcelona, Spain

Barcelona to initiate 5 biodiversity initiatives

SUMMARY: Barcelona's biodiversity efforts are rooted in the results of a comprehensive Local Agenda 21 process of several years ago which indicated the population's interest in strong biodiversity protection. The City of Barcelona, which is known for innovative environmental policies, has transformed this interest into a series of concrete on-the-ground projects. The city is already working on the implementation of the 5 new biodiversity initiatives, forming step 5 of the ICLEI's Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB) Project.

Biodiversity & biodiversity management in Barcelona

Barcelona's 5 biodiversity initiatives

As part of the LAB Project, participant LAB cities will implement 5 new local biodiversity initiatives. Barcelona has already identified the following projects which it is working to implement:



Ringling of Peregrine falcons in Barcelona

1. Green urban corridor Ciutadella-Collserola development;
2. Montjuïc cliff protection;
3. Protection of urban bird populations;
4. Biodiversity dissemination actions;
5. Barcelona's international commitment to biodiversity conservation.

Planning for the Green Urban Corridor

This project will connect natural spaces throughout the city which are currently isolated. This will be accomplished by means of a network of ecological corridors with a continuous cover of vegetation crossing urban areas and facilitating the movement of wildlife. The City of Barcelona has identified the most viable green corridor to be that which would connect Collserola Hill Range with Ciutadella Park. The corridor will be established by making use of existing parks, gardens and street trees. Wide streets will be changed into narrower tree-lined streets for pedestrians, with fewer private vehicles. The parks will then be linked to these tree-lined streets reaching Collserola.

Legal protection for the Montjuïc cliff

Montjuïc is a 173 meter high hill on the Barcelona seafront and has been characterized as "the green lung of the city." The protection of the cliff on Montjuïc is included as one of the five key projects. Barcelona is in the process of establishing legal protection of the cliff, based on its natural value in the urban context.

Species under threat: protection of urban bird populations

These projects are mostly concerned with the protection of breeding sites (usually in buildings) for birds. Species such as Common Swallows, House Martins and Alpine swifts are very sensitive to the restoration of old buildings and the general public has become sometimes intolerant of breeding colonies. A census involving the public was conducted to locate breeding colonies and to promote acceptance and conservation of the colonies. Through the installation of artificial nests, dialogue with residents and financial aid to committed owners, breeding colonies have been saved or even increased in various neighbourhoods. In relation to this project, work is being done at the same time with other species such as kestrels and jackdaws.

Biodiversity dissemination: School Agenda 21

School Agenda 21 involves many educational centres in the city in building a more sustainable world. Each centre involved in the project must draft an action plan within the framework of the objectives established by the Barcelona Agenda 21. Each school selects a sustainability topic which it wishes to work with. It receives assistance and guidance from the project team in charge of advising the schools. Educational centres provide materials and study ideas, and regularly communicate by means of an electronic bulletin. The 184 current centres involved in the programme focus on issues such as school allotments, birdlife, farms and plant identification.

Sea Reef Park

Sea Reef Park aims to strengthen marine biodiversity by restoring natural habitats by eliminating coastal pollution, and sinking concrete structures in the sea to act as shelter areas for marine species. The park covers 10 km² and since its installation over 30 species have colonised the structures.

For more info on this project, contact:

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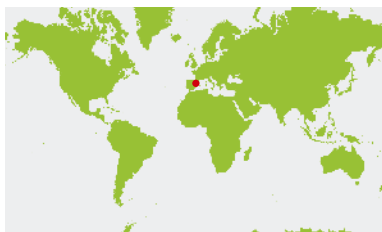


Summer on one of Barcelona's beaches

Involvement in international initiatives

Barcelona will be the location of the 4th IUCN World Congress in 2008 and the municipality will play a key role in hosting the event. The municipality of Barcelona is a member of ICLEI and Eurocities. Barcelona is also committed to several city networks working in climate protection such as ICLEI's Cities for Climate Protection Campaign, Energycities and Klimabundis. Barcelona's Agenda 21, which is for the period 2002 – 2012, commits the city to moving toward sustainable development. One of its 10 key goals is the protection of open spaces and biological diversity and increasing urban green spaces.

City contacts & profile



Local Agenda 21 results encourages biodiversity action

BARCELONA is a Mediterranean city, located in the northeast of Catalonia. The city covers 100 km² and is inhabited by 1.6 million people. The flagships of Barcelona's natural environment are the forests and other typically Mediterranean formations, but there are also other, lesser-known habitats which are crucial to maintaining the biodiversity in the city. These include: the built city, parks and gardens, vegetable plots and farmland, the River Besòs as well as the sea.

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LOCAL ACTION FOR BIODIVERSITY is a global urban biodiversity initiative of ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability in cooperation with IUCN. This pilot project of 21 cities around the globe focuses on the key roles that local governments play in conserving the world's biodiversity and retaining the relationship between people and nature. See: www.iclei.org/lab; lab@iclei.org

COUNTDOWN 2010 is a powerful network of more than 600 partners working together towards the 2010 biodiversity target. Each partner commits additional efforts to tackle the causes of biodiversity loss. The secretariat – hosted by the World Conservation Union (IUCN) – facilitates and encourages action, promotes the importance of the 2010 biodiversity target and assesses progress towards 2010. See: www.countdown2010.org

CITIES & BIODIVERSITY is an initiative of local governments and UN agencies to increase awareness on the relevant role of cities and towns for conserving and managing biodiversity. See: www.iclei.org/biodiversity

THE "CITIES & BIODIVERSITY CASE SERIES" is started in 2008 on the occasion of the UN CBD Conference of the Parties (COP) 9 in Bonn/Germany in May 2008. Funding is provided by UNEP, with co-funding from ICLEI, IUCN and the City of Bonn. The case descriptions are compiled by the "Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB)" project team in the ICLEI Africa Secretariat and ICLEI's International Training Centre.

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