

INTERACT-BIO DIALOGUE SUMMARY: ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND BIODIVERSITY

Mainstreaming strategies for integrating biodiversity in urban and rural areas

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INTERACT-Bio
Integrated action on biodiversity



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1. Framing the context

Campinas and the National Association of Municipal Environmental Agencies (ANAMMA) idealized the Brazilian Forum of Environmental Management (FBGA), in order to reunite public organizations of all three spheres of government, NGOs and business, that bring together scopes of the highest quality, relevance and urgency for issues related to environmental management.

This 2nd edition was held in Campinas, from 26th to 28th July 2019. The schedule counts over 30 simultaneous events including seminars, lectures, workshops, debates, trainings, expositions and more.

Considering all the relevant actors that attended the Forum, ICLEI, through the INTERACT-Bio project, had the opportunity to organize a session about “Integrating urban and rural biodiversity through connectivity strategies”. The objective was to allow for greater depth in the practical experiences of member cities in managing their natural assets, sharing experiences and promoting nature-based urban development.

This dialogue was extremely important since it contributed to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (Aichi Targets), which seeks to raise awareness of biodiversity values and its integration into management, development and urban and territorial planning process. It is also aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), specifically with goal 4 — to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all-, goal 11 - to make cities more inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable —, goals 14 and 15 - to protect, restore and promote sustainable use of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, and goal 17 - to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.



2. Emerging themes

2.1. Strategies for connecting and integrating biodiversity

It is known that biodiversity can help mitigate environmental problems that are related to urbanization. Likewise, in rural areas, biodiversity maintains food chains and the water cycle, which can enhance agriculture, keeping pollinators communities, controlling pests and ensuring water supply. Also, it is important not only to protect habitat fragments and green areas but also make sure that those fragments are connected, promoting gene flow and increasing the reach of the ecosystem services.

Considering this, the session promoted by ICLEI focused on debating strategies for connectivity and integration of biodiversity. To introduce the theme, members of the RECONECTA-RMC were invited to present the program and how Campinas and the Metropolitan Region cities are dealing with the challenges of implementing a regional connectivity area.

The session progressed to specify strategies for linear parks, Conservation Units (UCs) and ecological corridors by using case studies and sharing the practical experiences of other Brazilian cities. After the introduction of the experiences, there was time for debating the strategies and how they could be applied in the context of other cities and rural areas.

2.2. Challenges

While analyzing the strategies, there were a few challenges that received special attention. About the linear parks, one of the main points was how to provide genetic flow between green areas while keeping its social role. Considering the importance of the social role, another challenge discussed was the guarantee of civil participation and the engagement of citizens in decision-making and maintenance of these parks.

For the UCs, the debate was on the relationship between cities and the UC itself. With population growth, the pressure on soil use became greater and this can impact directly and indirectly the quality of this areas. Therefore, it was important to highlight the importance of these UCs for the wellbeing of people through ecosystem services, for example. Another important point was to think how the UC can help solving environmental and social issues as well as how the management was structured — and reflecting if a cooperative governance, including civil society,

could enhance that management.

As for the ecological corridors, there was the challenge to be integrated in urban areas without being seen as a barrier, both physical and economic, which could make it difficult for the area to achieve its full potential. Another challenge mentioned was about the restoration of degraded areas in private properties (both urban and rural) and what are the legal mechanisms that could be used to access those areas.

2.3. How can ICLEI help to overcome the challenges?

Despite acknowledging the importance and benefits of biodiversity, there are many challenges to overcome. By promoting environments where experiences can be shared, ICLEI enables the cities to widen their view on managing their municipalities and natural resources. This trade also creates new cooperation opportunities between local and regional actors, opening space for new and more inclusive models of governance.



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3. Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework implications

Going forward, the dialogue and the points raised can be viewed through the Post-2020 lens, specifically in point 5 of ICLEI's 10 Point Framework, which promotes the creation of an enabling environment that supports the mainstreaming of the multiple social and health benefits of nature at the local and subnational levels to improve the quality of life and resilience of communities, enhance social cohesion and lead to financial benefits and savings for both individuals and governments. In addition, Point 3 promotes the creation of an enabling environment for significantly increased private sector investment and development aid in nature-based solutions at local and subnational levels, as they are closer to the mainstreaming sectors and best positioned to build and sustain functional and resilient ecosystems and urban-rural linkages. In this regard, both points highlight the necessity for the issues raised in this dialogue to be addressed, as their resolution can prove to be hugely beneficial to Brazil and the Post-2020 agenda.

INTERACT-Bio project at a glance

Full title: Integrated subnational action for biodiversity: Supporting implementation of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans through the mainstreaming of biodiversity objectives across city-regions

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