

## Cities and biodiversity: 10-point action plan

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### Basic facts:

- Urban population has increased from 750 million in 1950 to 4 billion in 2014
- Cities are 3-4% of the world's terrestrial area, but are 70-80% of the ecological footprint
- 55% of humanity lives in cities; by 2030 the percentage will be 65 – 70%
- More than 60% of the area projected to be urban by 2030 has not yet been built
- More than 4.2 trillion USD of infrastructure is projected to be built by 2020
- By 2030, we are facing a projected increase in food demand of 35%, water by 40%, and energy by 50%, having a profound impact on the natural world:

### A ten-point action plan to promote cities in harmony with biodiversity:

- 1) **Design well:** With our new urban, sub-urban and peri-urban infrastructure, we need to make fewer islands and more bridges and corridors. We need to keep productive areas productive (such as low-lying productive bread basket/rice basket areas) – in other words, fragment less, connect more.
- 2) **Trade well:** Nearly all invasive alien species and many illegally traded wildlife goes through cities and ports – effective prevention, detection and enforcement would solve most problems with both of these drivers of loss.
- 3) **Drink well:** A third of the world's largest cities depend entirely on forest protected areas for their municipal drinking water, and 3200 of the world's cities could improve their water security by protecting forested watersheds and wetlands; we should not wait until the well goes dry to protect our water sources.
- 4) **Eat well:** Reducing food waste, much of which occurs within cities, could solve entirely the existing hunger gap. We must encourage farm to table systems, urban gardening, the adoption of low-carbon diets, and deforestation-free food.
- 5) **Buy well:** Procurement processes can send strong market signals. Cities can ensure that they build will sustainable products, such as FSC-certified forest products in building procurement.
- 6) **Dispose well:** 95% of ocean plastics come from 10 rivers (8 in Asia, 2 in Africa); cities can avoid pollution, including chemicals, nutrients, solid waste), most particularly in coasts, rivers and wetlands.
- 7) **Breathe well:** Green infrastructure, in the form of urban parks and green spaces, provide direct benefits in purifying air, regulating city temperatures, promoting psychological wellbeing, while serving as urban refuge for many species.
- 8) **Rest well:** Targeted green infrastructure that provides protection from natural disasters, including wetlands, forests, coastal ecosystems
- 9) **Express well:** Create a city culture that celebrates biodiversity (e.g., cities in Mexico that celebrate return of Monarch butterflies); encourage public drinking water to avoid plastic, create invasive species cooking challenges; establish nature awareness campaigns, centers, etc.
- 10) **Be well:** Promote appreciation of biodiversity as a foundation of health, connecting urban areas to peri-urban areas with rural areas; promote not only 'business-friendly' practices but also 'biodiversity-friendly' practices