

**Biodiverse and Resilient Cities - Mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services into urban-territorial planning.  
Draft zero Colombia+Costa Rica resolution proposal**

*The UN-Habitat Assembly,*

*Underlining* the importance of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development<sup>1</sup> and the mandate of UN-Habitat as the focal point in the UN system for sustainable urbanization and human settlements, and the custodian agency for the implementation of SDG 11 of making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable,

*Stressing* the relevance of the transformative commitments of the New Urban Agenda<sup>2</sup>, especially those related to the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, environmental sustainability and resilient urban development, biodiversity and ecosystem protection, restoration and sustainable use, resilience and adaptation to climate change and climate change mitigation,

Welcoming UN Secretary General Quadrennial Report on Progress in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda which states that by managing land conversion, combating urban sprawl, restoring urban ecosystems and greening food systems, countries are making progress in reversing biodiversity loss locally,

Welcoming UN-Habitat World Cities Report 2022 entitled *Envisaging the Future of Cities*, which highlights that future economic growth and resilience cannot be sustained without bridging the infrastructure gaps across the urban-rural continuum through adequate territorial planning and enhanced capacities in the human settlements for strengthening the pivotal role they play in realizing sustainable futures,

*Welcoming* the latest IPCC report which integrates knowledge on the interdependence of climate, ecosystems, biodiversity and human societies and documents the impacts of climate change on urban areas, which will suffer extreme events such as heatwaves, sea-level rise, storm surge from tropical cyclones and intense rainfall, and acknowledges the complex interactions that influence the expression of climate impacts in urban environments, and highlights the compounded risks that are also likely to affect cities, such as the intensification of warming and mean precipitation, while proposing a wide range of effective climate responses that help urban communities adapt to climate impacts while simultaneously protecting biodiversity, improving health and food security, delivering economic benefits and enhancing carbon sequestration,

*Recognizing* that nature-based solutions as defined in the UNEA 5/5 Resolution “*Nature-based solutions for supporting sustainable development*” offer the opportunity to develop a wide range of responses to environmental, economic and societal challenges in urban planning. In urban areas, nature-based solutions, including green, blue and natural infrastructure, have been associated with delivering multiple benefits including positive effects on climate adaptation and mitigation, urban biodiversity, human health, and wellbeing. Nature-based solutions need to be implemented with comprehensive social and environmental safeguards, consider local and indigenous knowledge, and provide benefits to local communities,

Recognizing that the multilateral system has laid out a framework for achieving urban resilience in the form of the SDGs, the New Urban Agenda, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the Global Biological Framework. Together these documents provide a coherent framework for integrated, multi-level action that recognizes the importance of subnational entities, particularly local governments, in building resilience,

*Recalling* Human Settlements Commission resolution 16/16 on Management of natural resources in the context of sustainable human settlements,

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<sup>1</sup> General Assembly resolution 70/1.

<sup>2</sup> General Assembly resolution 71/256, annex

*Recalling further* Decision and resolutions adopted by the Governing Council of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme 19/10 on urban-rural linkages and sustainable urbanization and Resolution 23/4 on Sustainable urban development through access to quality urban public spaces,

*Recalling* Resolution UNEP/EA.5/Res.9 on Sustainable and resilient infrastructure, particularly, to promote investment in infrastructure that is environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable, climate resilient, resource efficient, that prevents ecosystem fragmentation and contributes to sustainable production and consumption patterns, thus contributing to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the objectives of relevant multilateral environmental agreements;

*Recalling* Resolution 23/17 on sustainable urban development through expanding equitable access to land, housing, basic services and infrastructure, which encourages Governments to promote urban development patterns that reduce urban sprawl and ecological footprint and undertake coordinated action to promote cities and biodiversity as part of their sustainable urban development strategies,

*Taking note* of the publication *Urban Patterns for a Green Economy: Working with Nature*, which illustrates how built environments can be planned to operate in collaboration with nature, including on allowing sufficient space for natural systems to continue providing crucial goods and services,

*Recalling* Governing Council resolution 25/1 of 23 April 2015, in which the Executive Director of UN-Habitat was requested to develop tools and disseminate good practices to promote urban-rural linkages through integrated regional and territorial planning, working closely with other intergovernmental organizations and stakeholders, and *Taking note* of the publication *Urban-Rural Linkages: Guiding Principles: Framework for Action to Advance Integrated Territorial Development*,<sup>4</sup>

*Recalling also* the eleventh session of the World Urban Forum, under the theme Transforming Our Cities for a Better Urban Future,

*Taking note* of the Sustainable Urban Resilience for the next Generation (SURGe) Initiative, which seeks to achieve sustainable and resilient urban systems through strengthen the implementation of the climate agenda in and with cities; unlocking urban climate finance; capacity-building and ensuring equity,

*Taking note* of the publication *Cities and Nature: Planning for the Future*, which recognizes the importance of nature in and around cities, promotes improving the quality of urbanization and the preventative role of spatial planning, and offers a methodology for cities to decide where and how to develop with minimal impact on nature and people,

*Noting also* the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration 2021–2030 and the United Nations Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals,

*Acknowledging* that cities that enable human settlements to recognize, value, prioritize and mainstream biodiversity and ecosystem services guidelines into urban-territorial planning maximize human well-being and foster positive dynamics between nature and people to improve the quality of life,

*Welcoming* the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted in 2022 that enshrines a target (#12) dedicated to improving the quantity and quality, connectivity of, access to, and benefits from green and blue spaces in urban areas by mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and as an instrument that will contribute to objectives that it shares with UN-Habitat and in such areas that fall within the mandate of UN-Habitat as well as the Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities, and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity, which provides a critical roadmap for achieving multilevel governance for nature,

1. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, to support Member States, within the scope of existing resources, by:
  - a) Promoting mainstream biodiversity and ecosystem services guidelines into urban-territorial planning;
  - b) Embedding biodiversity in the urban fabric;
  - c) Making nature a competitive advantage within the cities;
  - d) Promoting better governance agreements and contribute to the SDGs' localization in cities;
  - e) Encouraging a shift in the urban planning model to a new mindset through nature.

2. *Requests* the Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, subject to the availability of resources and to further support the implementation of Biodiverse and Resilient Cities, to initiate the elaboration of international guidelines and principles through consultations with Member States and multiple stakeholders in a transparent, inclusive, regionally balanced manner, striving for gender balance, in order to undertake the following:
    - a) Compile examples of best practices on Biodiverse and Resilient Cities, based on the best available evidence and science;
    - b) Assess existing and discuss potential new proposals, criteria, standards and guidelines, with a view to raise awareness among Member States for the implementation of Biodiverse and Resilient Cities, including to support Member States in designing, implementing and evaluating Biodiverse and Resilient Cities;
    - c) Demonstrate innovative methodologies for the spatial planning and management of cities along a preserve- conserve-restore-create spectrum that responds to varying states of natural habitat within and around cities;
    - d) Capacity building through technical assistance and guidance to improve the development and strengthening of skills and abilities in biodiversity management in urban planning, so that countries can improve the processes that enable the transformation of cities into biodiverse and resilient cities.
    - e) Identify options for supporting sustainable investment in Biodiverse and Resilient Cities and share information on bilateral and multilateral sources of finance to enable developing countries to develop and deploy actions on Biodiverse and Resilient Cities;
    - f) Establish an international expert advisory group on Biodiverse and Resilient Cities, on the basis of regional balance and including the institutions and experts already engaged with the concept of Biodiverse and Resilient Cities,
  3. *Further requests* the Executive Director, in consultation with appropriate partners and within the scope of available resources, to assist Member States, upon request, in developing pilot projects and programmes to address actions on Biodiverse and Resilient Cities, including both preventative and restorative measures;
  4. *Requests* the Executive Director to articulate the links between Biodiverse and Resilient Cities and the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, including reporting on the same;
  5. *Requests* the Executive Director to submit for the endorsement of the Executive Board of UN-Habitat, during its second session of 2024, the Global Guidelines on Biodiverse and Resilient Cities, and present to the Third Session of the United Session Assembly the status of the implementation of this resolution;
  6. *Requests* the Executive Director to mobilize a group of financing institutions to support regional packages of implementation of Biodiverse and Resilient Cities through contextualized capacity building and aligned solutions.
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