



# Cities supporting global biodiversity – recognition and responsibilities.

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## Introduction

**Cities are now widely recognised as being unique and complex ecosystems.**

International news in November and December 2022 focussed on the Conference of the Parties (COPs) to the UNFCCC in **Sharm el Sheik (COP27)** and to the CBD **Montreal (COP15)** where global leaders made **commitments to address climate change and biodiversity**. Recognising that cities are at the forefront of climate change and that biodiversity is **a highly significant economic and political issue**, political leaders were challenged to reach agreement on a **Global Biodiversity Framework for an all of society approach** to halt biodiversity loss and restore nature.

## Reasons for biodiversity loss

The main reasons for biodiversity loss in cities:

- Habitat destruction
- Extreme urban climatic conditions
- Air, water, soil and light pollution
- Introduction of invasive species
- Fragmentation and connectivity loss
- High natural resource use in cities
- Limited green space in urban landscapes
- Loss of connection with nature leading to disinterest

## Leading cities support biodiversity

Biodiversity enables provision of the ecosystem services that sustain healthy urban environments.

**Living Green for Biodiversity** is one of the categories in the **AIPH World Green City Awards**.

[Entries are now open for 2024 edition](#)



## Case study: Victoria Park, Australia

**Act Local, Contribute Global to World Biodiversity Conservation**

**Finalist: Living Green for Biodiversity AIPH World Green City Awards 2022..**

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### Key themes

- The South western region Western Australia is one of 36 global biodiversity hotspots
- Biodiversity hotspots represent only 2.4% of the earth's surface, yet are home to 60% of plant species
- Significant population growth anticipated in the region

### City challenges

- City canopy cover is only 10%, goal is 20%
- Urban heat island effect is significant
- Urban infill is preferential to urban sprawl

### Actions and outcomes

- Introduction of a tree policy for provision, planting and retention of trees on private land and street verges
- Cross-agency collaboration enables establishment of ecological corridors
- Storytelling as a means to engage hearts and minds of residents

## Case study: Bogotá, Colombia

### Reverdecer Bogotá

**Winner: Living Green for Biodiversity AIPH World Green City Awards 2022.**

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Photo Botanic Garden of Bogotá image bank

### Key themes

- Enhancing conditions for existing plants and nature
- Transformation of habitats and spaces
- Creating awareness about consumption of resources
- Promoting appreciation of all forms of life

### City challenges

- Food insecurity leading to health problems in vulnerable sectors
- Poor air quality due to pollution
- Water quality deteriorating
- Increased crimes in derelict landscapes

### Actions and outcomes

- Creation of 5 agro-ecological routes linking self-sustaining gardens
- Urban and peri-urban agriculture supported with funding and skills
- Community gardens promote improved social conditions
- Local food production reduces waste
- Resurgence of traditional methods for pest and disease control
- 144 plant species investigated for medicinal, food and industrial use

## Case study: Paris, France

**Getting everyone involved in Greening the City**

**Finalist: Living Green for Biodiversity AIPH World Green City Awards 2022.**

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### Key themes

- Reliance on key entities with an interest in addressing urban habitats
- Developed multiple Action Plans to make the city greener, more favourable to biodiversity, and promote urban agriculture

### City challenges

- Paris is the most dense city in Europe
- Are around Paris is highly urbanised
- Less intensive management of public spaces to accommodate nature is unpopular and perceived as failure

### Actions and outcomes

- Motivation for citizen involvement: 49.5% to increase nature in cities and 40.2% for pleasure of gardening
- Area under urban agriculture tripled from 2014-2020
- Success has inspired other cities

## Contact information

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