

LOCAL ACTION FOR BIODIVERSITY

LAB 2010 LEGACY PROJECTS



LAB LEGACY PROJECTS: ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability and IUCN's (International Union for Conservation of Nature)

LAB LEGACY PROJECTS: ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability and IUCN's (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Local Action for Biodiversity Programme is a five-step process culminating in the implementation of three projects to protect and manage biodiversity on the ground. The LAB Pioneers are global leaders in biodiversity management, and have played a significant role in making the LAB Programme the success that is today. In 2006, local governments signed up with LAB and followed the 5-step process, completing the process in 2009 and paving the way for more local governments to join. The initial 2010 Legacy Project that they initiated during the International Year of Biodiversity aimed to establish a legacy and commitment to local biodiversity for many years to come. These projects took on a dazzling array of innovative and exciting ideas. This information document highlights some of the success stories from a few of our Pioneer cities.





CAPE WINELANDS DISTRICT, SOUTH AFRICA

The restoration of Fynbos riparian zones and establishment of biodiversity corridors

Being among the most scenic winelands in the world, the District Municipality of the Cape Winelands hosts significant biodiversity and a unique heritage. The local authority is home to an internationally recognised biodiversity hotspot including the unique vegetation of the Fynbos and Succulent Karoo. The Cape Winelands District Municipality is one amongst a number of international leading local authorities making great strides in urban biodiversity management. This legacy project takes place in the context of the planning domain of the Cape Winelands District Municipality (CWDM). Various programmes and projects have been developed to help improve land use management, promote environmentally sound spatial planning, facilitate climate change adaptation, and to ensure the conservation of endangered biodiversity. Therefore, this project addresses several overlapping biodiversity-centred or related projects at once.

Aim:

To support efforts towards: i) improved management of the landscape underpinned by sustainable livelihoods; ii) spatial planning underpinned by sound environmental informants; iii) and conservation of critically threatened biodiversity and ecosystems. The above would serve to enhance adaptation towards climate change risks such as water scarcity and disaster-related incidences of floods and fire. In addition it will simultaneously enhance the conservation partnership between different sectors to ensure long-term environmental planning and programme implementation.

Ultimate project legacy:

Mainstreaming of biodiversity priorities in relevant local government operations and planning domains to ensure the restoration of Fynbos riparian zones and establishment of crucial biodiversity corridors

Deliverables:

Eradication of invasive alien plants, wetland rehabilitation, restoration of degraded land, reduction of soil erosion, re-use of biomass to enhance local economic development spin-offs, establishment and management of fire breaks and conservation of habitat especially linked to mapped biodiversity priority areas.

Links of legacy project to socio-economic development:

The overall programme will be underpinned by South Africa's Legacy National Poverty Relief Programme i.e. the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) as a contribution towards the Environmental Sector, thereby ensuring that project design will encompass community-based contracts incorporating work opportunities for woman (40%), youth (60%) and disabled persons (2%) as well as relevant skills transfers to encourage viable exit opportunities for project beneficiaries. This project is also aimed at increasing ecosystem based adaptation to climate change thereby increasing the resilience of local communities to climate change impacts



CITY OF JERUSALEM, ISRAEL

Gazelle Valley Conservation and Restoration Programme

Bordered by busy roads, housing developments and a modern super-highway, a rich wildlife habitat known as Gazelle Valley flourishes right in the midst of the urban heartland of Jerusalem. With orchards planted on ancient terraces that still bear fruit, this 50 acre tract of undeveloped land in southern Jerusalem is home to a small population of gazelles that survive on local natural resources. Threatened in the past by massive development plans, grassroots opposition initiated by residents of adjoining neighborhoods stopped plans to build in the valley. The city is committed to the conservation of urban biodiversity and is actively contributing to the International Decade of Biodiversity through its LAB legacy project.

Aim:

- To restore the Gazelle Valley urban ecosystem.
- For the Gazelle Valley to serve as a model of sustainable development at a local scale, in order to enhance the surrounding urban development.
- To advance the detailed planning of the Gazelle Valley Park as a nature park, as well as the development of a visitor's centre at the site for recreation, tourism, education and scientific research.

Ultimate project legacy:

To ensure and enhance the conservation of the Valley's biodiversity and to preserve the area as a local model of sustainable development, serving to benefit the people of Jerusalem and the surrounding urban development.

Deliverables:

Proclamation of the site as a nature park had been achieved at an early stage in this project. Sustainable planning guidelines were recently established for the valley in order to begin the restoration process of this unique urban ecosystem and assure the protection of its ancient

biodiversity assets. An overarching city scale master plan was also developed for the comprehensive management of local urban nature sites. Both these planning guidelines were developed in cooperation with the Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel (SPNI), the Ministry of Environmental Protection and other local stakeholders. The plan for the Gazelle Valley Urban Nature Park was presented to the Jerusalem District Planning Committee, and approved in 2009. Notably, this represented the first time that a group of residents together with civic organisations, rather than the city or private developers, submitted a statutory plan that was then approved. The District Planning Committee's decision was supported by Jerusalem's mayor-elect. The city also started a process of regaining ownership of the land, and the Gazelle Valley Consortium was established. This consortium is composed of a residents' committee, SPNI and the Jerusalem foundation.

Links of legacy project to socio-economic development:

This project will create a positive boost in nature tourism in and increase in tourism-associated employment.





CITY OF JOONDALUP, AUSTRALIA

Yellagonga Interpretive Signage Project

The Yellagonga Interpretive Signage Project was a 2010 LAB Legacy Project designed to make a lasting contribution to biodiversity. The project aimed to introduce interpretive signage in Neil Hawkins Park, part of the Yellagonga Regional Park. A preceding project on the useful plants of the area, entitled "Plants and People in Mooro Country: Nyungar Plant Use in Yellagonga Regional Park", and a resulting publication, provided the information necessary to guide the signage project and tourism development.

Aim:

To protect biodiversity through effective planning and to inform environmental awareness campaigns. The Yellagonga Interpretive Signage Project is consistent with the City's Biodiversity Action Plan, which supports the Yellagonga Integrated Catchment Management Plan and the Access and Inclusion Plan.

Ultimate project legacy:

The activities in the catchment will support the long-term conservation and rehabilitation of endemic biodiversity, and sustainable management of the Park with the necessary infrastructure to ensure enjoyment and education for the surrounding community.

Deliverables:

The Yellagonga Interpretive Signage Project was completed in February 2011. Utilising information within the existing publication, "The Plants and People in Mooro Country: Nyungar Plant Use in Yellagonga Regional Park", signage on plant use by Nyungar people was designed, constructed and installed. The signage, consisting of six signs, is located within Neil Hawkins Park and provides visitors with information regarding native flora and fauna of the area and how Nyungar People utilise them for food, medicine and shelter. The signage has been designed and constructed to be accessible and

user friendly in order to encourage the Park's educative use. An existing information shelter was also upgraded and used to advertise the new interpretive signs. A brochure including details of the signage and a map has also been developed and has been distributed to all customer services centres, libraries and leisure centres. The Yellagonga Interpretive Signage Project has also been promoted through the Community Newspaper and a virtual tour of the Project will be included on the City's website. The City received a AUSS\$20,000 grant from the Western Australian Department of Environment and Conservation to assist with the implementation of the project.

Links of legacy project to socio-economic development:

This legacy project will bolster tourism which may have economic and employment opportunities for the community, as well as provide a more efficient and user-friendly facility in order to promote environmental education.



CITY OF DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA

The Buffelsdraai Community Reforestation Project

The Buffelsdraai Community Reforestation Project forms part of the Greening Durban 2010 programme, which aimed to put measures in place to offset the carbon emissions associated with hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ events in Durban. The project is located in the buffer zone at the Buffelsdraai Regional Landfill Site, which is run by Durban Solid Waste and currently involves two local communities at Buffelsdraai and Osindisweni.

Aim:

This project is aimed at restoring the city's local biodiversity to sequester carbon emissions associated with hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ cup as well as increasing the resilience of ecosystems to provide goods and services.

Ultimate project legacy:

To restore a forest ecosystem which will contribute significantly to local ecosystem processes and services in the city.

Deliverables:

This project will see existing sugar cane fields restored to their previous forested state and will result in important biodiversity gains as well as the restoration of important ecosystem services that will improve catchment management e.g. through the protection of water quality and quantity. This is particularly important given that decreased water availability and increased flooding are both likely consequences of climate change in the Durban area. In future phases of the project, which are likely to span at least the next ten years, it is hoped that a further approximately 590ha of land in the landfill buffer zone will be reforested. It is also hoped that this project will serve as a pilot for the rollout of similar projects within the Municipality aimed at restoring the biodiversity of the city. Currently,

the Municipality's Environmental Planning and Climate Protection Department is investigating a possible extension of the project into the Inanda area. To date, the project has planted over 82 000 trees on 64ha of sugarcane farmland. This will result in the offsetting of several thousand tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) over a 20 year period.

Links of legacy project to socio-economic development:

The project provides training in plant propagation, plant maintenance and employment for a significant population of local community members. Plants produced by local residents are traded at 'tree-stores' for food, construction materials, school fees etc.

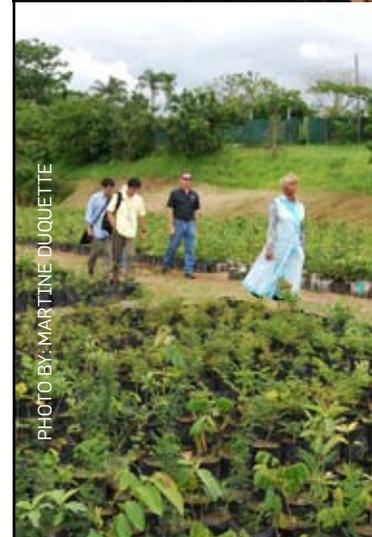
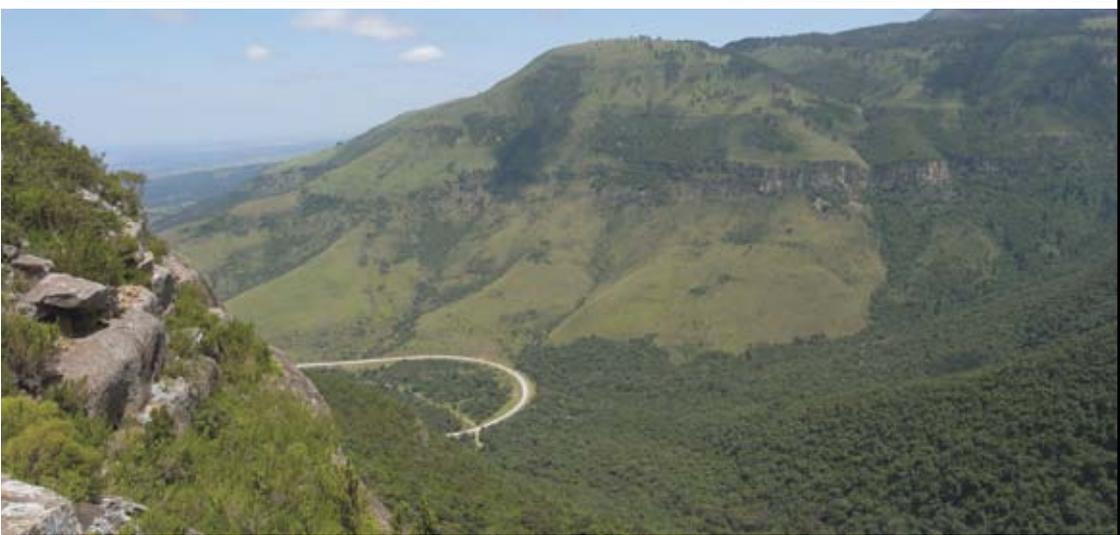


PHOTO BY: MARTINE DUQUETTE



PHOTO BY:
SANDY AUSTIN



CITY OF AUCKLAND, WAITAKERE, NEW ZEALAND

Encouraging biodiversity in private gardens

Waitakere's (now part of Auckland) 2010 LAB Legacy Project was based on the principle that every resident has the opportunity to conserve biodiversity. One way in which citizens can contribute and be involved, is by creating favourable habitats for small native animals in their private gardens. Collectively, gardens constitute significant portions of land in many city administrations and are therefore important contributors to biodiversity conservation.

Aim:

To promote urban biodiversity by means of raising public awareness about the role of private gardens in biodiversity conservation.

Ultimate project legacy:

To aid in creating favorable habitats thereby increasing biodiversity and ultimately ecosystem functioning in private gardens through raising public awareness about the presence and aesthetic, intrinsic and ecological benefits of having small native species in their gardens. More public buy-in to conservation efforts could be achieved by creating a sense of local stewardship amongst garden owners. This would further aid in decreasing habitat fragmentation across the city's matrix.

Deliverables:

Two educational pamphlets were produced, published and also made available online. One focuses on native lizards, and the other mainly on birds and invertebrates. In the case of the lizard information pamphlet, entitled Lizards Alive in Your Garden, some interesting native species are described and pictured, and the threats to lizards are discussed. It is explained that lizards are protected by law, and advice is given relating to how lizards may be encouraged in a private garden. For example, the names are given of plant species that are beneficial to lizards, and tips are given on how to create shelters and generally favourable lizard habitats in

a garden. In the case of the pamphlet entitled Wildlife in Your Back Yard, the term "wildlife" is defined, and reasons for encouraging wildlife in one's garden are cited. This is followed by information on how to ensure a food supply for wildlife, and how to create shelter and nesting sites. Guidelines are also given on what to do if one finds an injured bird, along with the contact details of bird rehabilitation centres. Furthermore, links are supplied to sites that provide further information on inter alia: streamside planting, bird nest boxes, encouraging lizards in gardens, and indigenous plants that attract wildlife.

Links of legacy project to socio-economic development:

Improvement of the conservation of important reptile and bird species as well as their habitats bolstering overall ecosystem dynamics and ecological functioning in the City resulting in improved ecosystem services.



CITY OF CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA

The Biodiversity Showcase Garden (BSG), Green Point Urban Park, Cape Town

Cape Town is located within the Cape Floristic Region – an area of unique diversity, with one of the highest proportions of endemic species in the world. This Region has been officially identified as a “global biodiversity hotspot”, making it one of the planet’s 25 most threatened ecosystems, and placing the responsibility on Cape Town to ensure its adequate conservation.

Aim:

To promote urban biodiversity by means of raising public awareness about the importance and value of biodiversity.

Ultimate Project Legacy:

- › To increase biodiversity and ecologically functioning green space within the city;
- › To connect people with nature
- › To facilitate the transference of biodiversity knowledge into sound decision making.

Deliverables:

The Biodiversity Showcase Garden is a legacy project both of the 2010 FIFA World Cup™ Host City of Cape Town Green Goal initiative, and the City’s ICLEI Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB) programme. Designed in line with international environmental and ecological principles, the space includes indigenous landscaping and multipurpose spaces which showcase the amazing diversity of plants and animals in the Cape and demonstrate indigenous horticultural and gardening practices.

The garden is integrated into a series of wetlands and water ponds. Interpretive signage enables users to appreciate that Cape Town is one of only three cities in the world that ranks as an urban biodiversity hotspot and invites exploration and discovery. The BSG raises awareness of the unique plant species in the city, using different themes relevant to biodiversity conservation in the urban context, such as:

- › ‘people and plants’ – using the lifestyles of

Khoikhoi herders and early settlers to illustrate the important relationship between people and biodiversity;

- › ‘discover biodiversity’ – highlighting why the Cape is unique, what the major threats to biodiversity are and ways of conserving the Cape’s biodiversity;
- › ‘wetland walk’ – reminiscent of the days when Green Point Common was a seasonal wetland, this theme builds appreciation for the important goods and services that ecosystems provide.

Links of legacy project to socio-economic development:

Since its opening in 2010, the BSG has attracted a significant number and diversity of persons to explore and discover the wonder of nature in the city. The combination of creative landscaping and design, thoughtfully-worded signage and the alluring integration of artistic sculptures of fauna (and other habitat forms) with floral beauty have given rise to an extraordinary urban green space.

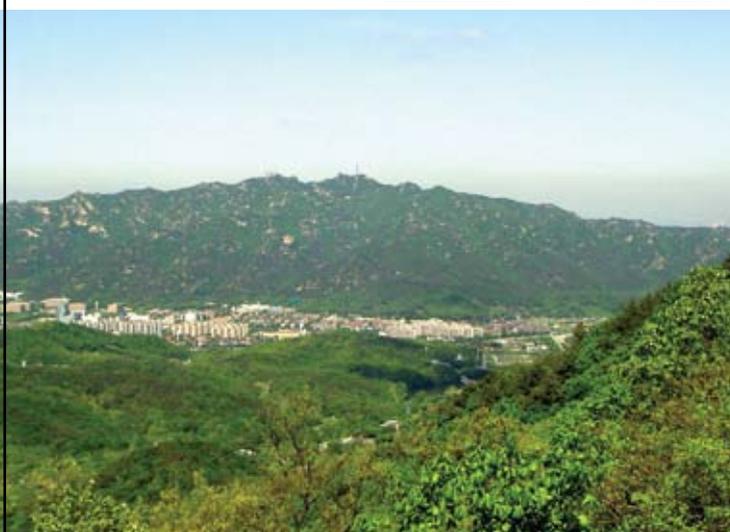
Where formal botanic gardens may never attract those whose lifestyles have divorced them from nature, the BSG offers something different which has succeeded in drawing in a wide variety of persons including a strong demand from school groups to spend educational time in the garden.

Taken from: Green Goal legacy report; City of Cape Town Annual Report 2010/2011; and Marijke Honig’s report on the Biodiversity Showcase Garden



THIS CITY WORKS FOR YOU





CITY OF SEOUL, KOREA

Hangang River Ecology Restoration Project and Ecology Education Vitalization Project

Rapid urbanization in Seoul since the 1970's, caused either fragmentation or a complete loss of green spaces such as forests, streams, and wetlands within the city. This resulted in a reduction of natural habitat and a sharp decrease in the city's biodiversity. Many species of animals and plants which were once readily found, such as swallows, frogs, and aquatic plants, are now rare. However, the advent of the popularly-elected local government in 1996 has led to efforts to conserve the remaining ecosystems and attempts have been made to enhance biodiversity by restoring damaged habitats.

Aim:

To recover the ecological functioning of the Hangang River and to promote the public's awareness of biodiversity and its importance.

Ultimate project Legacy:

Re-connecting the Hangang's fragmented green corridor as well as reconnecting and educating local citizens on the value and beauty of the City's biodiversity.

Deliverables:

In order to recover the ecological functioning of the Hangang River, this project will restore the stream ecosystem and establish a relaxation space for citizens by creating near-natural streams. Some 32km out of 72km of concrete bank protection has been converted to natural reservoir bank protection, and 2,600,00m² of 11 of the Hangang's 12 parks (2,571,000 m²) have been converted to ecology parks with riverside swamps, grassland hills, and alluvial islands. The entire portion will be completed by 2014. Nineteen green corridors were constructed from 1994-2009. The construction of seven additional corridors began in 2010. In addition, wild and indigenous tree species were planted in damaged forests and bare areas to recover

the forest ecosystem and establish habitats for wild animals and plants.

Furthermore, an ecological restoration and afforestation project was conducted on five tributaries including the Yangjaecheon stream. Ecological restoration of the degrading river basin was also conducted to cultivate swamp plants therein and establish a walkway.

In addition, approximately 100 ecology experience programs have been established to promote citizens' awareness of ecosystem preservation, and ecology study halls were constructed near protected areas in 2010 for efficient education and management of the natural ecosystems. A nature-friendly walkway or 'ecological culture road' has been constructed so that citizens can directly experience the ecological resources of Seoul, while related information is provided through their website, brochures, and smartphone application.

Links of legacy project to socio-economic development:

- › Improvement of the conservation of important riparian and freshwater species as well as their habitats, bolstering overall ecosystem dynamics and ecological functioning in the city resulting in improved ecosystem services.
- › Provision of more efficient and user-friendly facilities in order to aid environmental education.

CITY OF EDMONTON, CANADA

Natural Area Acquisition Strategy and Borrowing Initiative

The City of Edmonton's river valley comprises the longest stretch of connected urban parkland in North America, and the city has the highest per capita area of urban green space of any Canadian city. The public parks provide a unique escape from the bustling city and range from fully serviced urban parks to campsite like facilities with few amenities. Edmonton is also home to one of the largest remaining populations of healthy American elm trees in the world. These have been largely unaffected by Dutch elm disease, which has exterminated many of these trees from vast areas of eastern North America.

Aim:

To increase the amount of land secured for conservation purposes from the current total protected natural area of about 4,000ha to about 5,500ha.

Ultimate project legacy:

To curb the current trend of natural habitat conversion that has resulted from urban expansion and to increase the amount of functional and connected urban green space in the city.

Deliverables:

Given the rapid growth of the City of Edmonton, natural areas are very vulnerable to conversion to other uses. Provincial legislation restricts local authorities' ability to protect natural areas such as wetlands and forest patches. Purchase of these wetlands or forests is one of the strongest tools that the City has in its conservation toolbox. In 2009, in an effort to curb further loss of natural habitat, the City Council approved a proposal to borrow CAD\$20 million, leveraging an existing Natural Area Reserve Fund, for the purchase of natural areas within city limits before they were converted to other land uses. With the approval of this "Borrowing Initiative", the City of Edmonton also developed

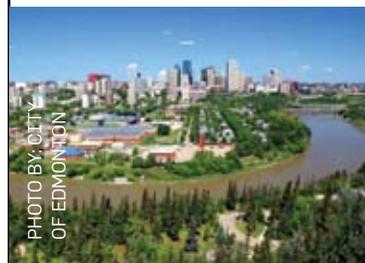
a Natural Area Acquisition Strategy which prioritized key natural areas – those with relatively high biodiversity value – for purchase.

The Strategy prioritizes an even distribution of protected natural areas throughout the city, as well as the purchase of 3-5 "core" biodiversity areas (larger than 10 ha). To date, approximately half of the funds have been expended.

Links of legacy project to socio-economic development:

From a social perspective, the protection of these "natural area parks" provides continued access to Edmontonians for purposes of recreation, learning, and spiritual renewal, as well as opportunities for community gathering and building.

The initiative also makes good economic sense – rather than delay acquisition of priority natural areas, better to purchase them now, before land values become prohibitively high. In addition, Edmonton's protected natural areas are an important draw in terms of tourism, which supports the local economy. Finally, sustaining natural processes (e.g. flood mitigation) within the ecological network means less dependence on built infrastructure (e.g. constructed storm water management facilities) which can be costly to build and maintain.



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