

LOCAL ACTION FOR BIODIVERSITY

A SERIES OF LOCAL CASES



City of Rome, Italy

Extra commitment to reach the 2010 biodiversity targets

SUMMARY: The City of Rome is one of Europe's largest cities with the highest number of protected areas for a European city: nineteen terrestrial Protected Areas and one Marine Reserve totalling 40,000 hectares under protection (31% of the total area). These are complemented by 5,000 hectares of green public areas including historical urban parks, gardens and small local green areas. With its rich natural heritage, Rome is committed to the achievement of the 2010 biodiversity target through a diverse range of actions.

Biodiversity & biodiversity management in Rome

Rome's natural areas

The extraordinary natural heritage of the city, which is often interconnected with its historical heritage, is a unique characteristic of Rome. Rome's urban protected areas, with their impressive richness in fauna and flora, their variety of habitats and ecosystems, ranging from wetlands to agricultural biotopes, from forests to coastal dunes and marine ecological communities, form the structure of the ecological network of the city and have been officially recognized as an instrument of the Master Plan. The "Ecological Network", defined in the Master Plan, covers about 87,000 hectares (two thirds of the total surface area of the municipality).

Countdown 2010 Partnership: Sustainable buildings in protected areas

In 2008, Rome decided to formally support the achievement of the 2010 biodiversity targets and has committed to intensify its efforts to protect and conserve biodiversity by signing the Countdown 2010 Declaration.



Panoramic view of Rome

Among others projects, the city has committed to launch an initiative for the construction of sustainable buildings with the use of the best available technologies. The Environmental Policies Department of the Municipality of Rome, jointly with the Sapienza University and with the endorsement of the Italian Ministry of Environment, Land and Sea, has designed a pilot project focusing on advanced technologies for sustainable building. Biodiversity aspects can be integrated into the building sector, for example through: green roof coverings, solar collectors for hot water production and photovoltaic systems, high performance glass in terms of light transmission, solar control and thermal isolation.

With low energy and water consumption these buildings will contribute to the protection of biodiversity through reducing carbon footprints and environmental impacts. The buildings will also serve as educational and awareness raising centres, reinforcing the need of education towards sustainability in architecture.

Involvement in international initiatives

The City of Rome plays a crucial role in networking with cities around the Mediterranean. Climate protection and new approaches to reducing motorised traffic are raising international attention. Through the Countdown 2010 network, Rome is involved in several international projects, which are contributing to biodiversity conservation by means of restoring land, reducing the carbon emissions of the city and improving sustainable mobility.

Urban Forestry Programme for 2010 in Rome

In the framework of the Countdown 2010 initiative, the City of Rome has committed to pay special importance to biodiversity conservation and to the improvement of the local climatic and environmental conditions. One example is the strategic plan for urban forestry, which will be implemented by the Municipality of Rome in the next 5 years and consists in planting 500,000 new trees in the city territory, using indigenous species.

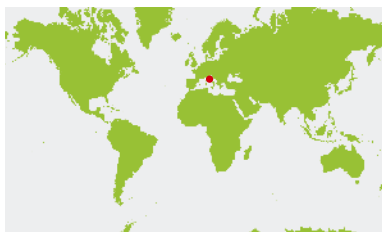


View of the Roman Forum

These European projects include:

- “Ville Emission Zéro – Zero Emission City”, to improve sustainable mobility and intermodal freight transport;
- “HORTUS”, to harmonise the ecological restoration of the urban landscape according to the principle of sustainability;
- “URB-AL”, to restore a former industrial area, which has already been partially converted in an “Energy Park”.

City contacts & profile



ROME is Italy's capital city as well as the country's largest (128,500 hectares) and most populous city, with more than 2.7 million residents. As one of the few major European cities that escaped World War II relatively unscathed, central Rome remains essentially Renaissance and Baroque in character and is listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.

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LOCAL ACTION FOR BIODIVERSITY is a global urban biodiversity initiative of ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability in cooperation with IUCN. This pilot project of 21 cities around the globe focuses on the key roles that local governments play in conserving the world's biodiversity and retaining the relationship between people and nature. See: www.iclei.org/lab; lab@iclei.org

COUNTDOWN 2010 is a powerful network of more than 600 partners working together towards the 2010 biodiversity target. Each partner commits additional efforts to tackle the causes of biodiversity loss. The secretariat – hosted by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) – facilitates and encourages action, promotes the importance of the 2010 biodiversity target and assesses progress towards 2010. See: www.countdown2010.org

CITIES & BIODIVERSITY is an initiative of local governments and UN agencies to increase awareness on the relevant role of cities and towns for conserving and managing biodiversity. See: www.iclei.org/biodiversity

THE “CITIES & BIODIVERSITY CASE SERIES” is started in 2008 on the occasion of the UNCBD Conference of the Parties (COP) 9 in Bonn/Germany in May 2008. Funding is provided by UNEP, with co-funding from ICLEI, IUCN and the City of Bonn. The case descriptions are compiled by the “Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB)” project team in the ICLEI Africa Secretariat and ICLEI's International Training Centre.

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