

# LOCAL ACTION FOR BIODIVERSITY

A SERIES OF LOCAL CASES



## City of São Paulo, Brazil

### Urban contribution to protecting the rain forests

**SUMMARY:** as the largest metropolis in the Southern hemisphere and major financial and commercial centre, São Paulo is an important consumer of natural resources and has therefore adopted a series of measures to protect biodiversity.

### Biodiversity & biodiversity management in São Paulo

#### Measures to protect and improve São Paulo's biodiversity

The City of Sao Paulo has been implementing a series of measures to protect and improve its biodiversity. These measures include:

- The creation of Protected Areas: São Paulo had 32 parks in 2004. By the end of 2008 there will be 67 traditional, riparian and natural parks in the city – thus doubling the geographic area occupied by parks.
- By the end of 2008 there will be 10 riparian parks, covering 50 hectares. Riparian parks surround bodies of water and aim to protect watershed areas, offer recreational space and an opportunity for contact with nature.
- São Paulo's Natural Parks are land areas with well preserved natural vegetation, created to foster conservation and research activities. One natural park has been established and there are five others due to be established, totalling about 1,653 hectares.



Environmental Protection Area, Capivari Manos, in the City of Sao Paulo.  
Photographer: Gepp Maia

- Environmentally Protected Areas (APA) are conservation units encompassing public and private properties. Specific laws and a community council define the categories of permitted use of these land units and there are a series of initiatives to improve sustainable development. There are two municipal APA in São Paulo City, covering approximately 20% of its territory.
- Urban tree planting policy: Since 2006, about 9,000 trees (comprising over 100 native species) are planted each month in São Paulo City. They are used for the creation of small urban woods and the increase of municipal forests, to create green corridors and to provide food and habitat for the avifauna.

- The establishment of an educational centre called "Timber School" to train young people to realise the value of timber as a resource is in process.
- Fauna protection: the municipal division of veterinarian medicine and wildlife management. A new and encompassing service is being constructed, to foster wildlife health care and the reintroduction of these animals into the natural habitat.
- The Municipal Environmental Police was created in 2006, comprising 300 agents who protect the city's environment, including its main forests and watersheds areas.

## Wildlife management to protect biodiversity

The municipality has a dedicated division of veterinarian medicine and wildlife management. A new service is being developed to foster wildlife health care and the reintroduction of rehabilitated animals into their natural habitats. Researchers have identified many species of animals in São Paulo including: 429 vertebrates, 285 birds (of which 44 are endemic), 58 mammals (47 of which are endemic), 37 reptiles, 40 amphibians (21 endemic species) and 9 fish species. 105 species are listed as being at risk of extinction.

### Green Procurement

São Paulo is an active partner in many initiatives promoting good governance and sustainable urban management. São Paulo is promoting strict enforcement of illegal timber procurement for its buildings and works. 20% of Amazon hard wood, illegally extracted in protected areas, is consumed in the State of São Paulo. The municipal administration passed a law to secure that the timber it purchases provides all documentation of origin. The next step is to require certified timber for municipal construction.



Ibirapuera Park in the City of Sao Paulo. Photographer: Jefferson Pancieri

### Involvement in international initiatives

São Paulo participates in leadership groups such as United Cities and Local Governments – UCLG, the C40 Large Cities Climate Leadership Group, the Mercocities and Metropolis networks. The municipality also has bilateral agreements with sister cities in 27 countries worldwide. São Paulo City hosts the Brazil Project Office of ICLEI's Latin America Secretariat (LACS) and has a member of the ICLEI Executive Committee. The city acts as pilot government in the ICLEI initiatives for Climate Protection, Biodiversity and Sustainable Public Procurement.

## City contacts & profile



One of the world's largest cities and home to more than 11 000 of the world's plant and animal species

As capital of São Paulo State, the **CITY OF SÃO PAULO** is located in the Southern part of Brazil and covers 1,525 km<sup>2</sup>. It is home to approximately 11 million people and the centre of a Metropolitan Region with 18 million inhabitants. São Paulo is surrounded by a Green Belt Biosphere Reserve.

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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](http://www.iclei.org/lab); [lab@iclei.org](mailto: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 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](http://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](http://www.iclei.org/biodiversity)

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