

INTERACT-BIO DIALOGUE SUMMARY: BIODIVERSITY, ECOSYSTEM SERVICES AND METROPOLITAN MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP III

Mainstreaming ecosystem services as a tool for urban sustainable development

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INTERACT-Bio
Integrated action on biodiversity



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1. Framing the context

Nature provides ecosystem services that are essential for the quality of life in cities. In this sense, learning about ecosystem services helps to understand and recognize the benefits of nature in urban areas, thus encouraging restoration and conservation of natural landscapes as well as the inclusion of biodiversity in local development and urban planning.

Therefore, ICLEI, together with UFZ and Cities Biodiversity Center (CBC), organized the conference and workshop “Biodiversity, Ecosystem Services and Metropolitan Management”, with representatives from different municipalities, levels and sectors. This event was the third and last of this set of events that had the objective to introduce the concept of ecosystem services, to train the technical staff of civil servants from different agencies and municipalities, to collect data for the regional diagnosis and, finally, to promote the intersectoral and governmental integration of different cities.

In addition to the government employees, public research institutions, universities, professional associations,

NGOs and consultancy and / or environmental services companies were also represented. It was a rare opportunity to bring together the challenges and potentials common to all, in a space of dialogue that, in addition to being intermunicipal, also had the participation of organized civil society and entities beyond the political-institutional scope of the municipality.

This dialogue contributed to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (Aichi Targets), which aims to raise awareness of biodiversity values and its integration into management, development and urban and territorial planning process. It is also aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), specifically with goal 11 - to make cities more inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable — and with goals 14 and 15 - to protect, restore and promote sustainable use of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems.



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2. Emerging themes

2.1. Ecosystem services in and out of Londrina

The first part of the event, the conference, had presentations covering the introduction of ecosystem services in urban context and the perspective and actions for municipal environmental zoning. There was also a presentation about the experiences in the metropolitan regions of Campinas and Belo Horizonte under the INTERACT-Bio Project. This was an important moment to understand the connection between local actions and the most important global environmental milestones of the 21st century, which have Brazil as a signatory country.

The second part was the workshop. The participants were divided in workgroups, where each group analyzed one of the cities of the Metropolitan Region of Londrina (RML). The goal was to identify the priority ecosystem services in the region, as well as to point out the pressures and threats to those services. From this activity, there were four services that appeared more frequently:

- Soil drainage;
- Pressure in areas of environmental interest;
- Soil erosion;
- Solid waste destination.

2.2. Coordinating actors in the metropolitan region

Unlike the other two cities chosen for the INTERACT-Bio Project, in Londrina there was no metropolitan agency. This is a challenge faced in its institutional arrangement, which makes it difficult to deal with regional development policies in an integrated, consistent and continuous manner.

In this context, the technical-institutional meetings, the training of managers from different municipalities, the exchange of experiences and the mapping of ecosystem services promoted by INTERACT-Bio, provided opportunities for a dialogue at the metropolitan level that provided a real and integral vision of the territory.

2.3. How can ICLEI help?

The absence of a metropolitan agency makes it difficult for the stakeholders from the RML to coordinate their work. Therefore, the support from ICLEI was essential to align actions and plans toward the integration of biodiversity into metropolitan management.

Also, at the same time that INTERACT-Bio was being implemented in Londrina, the Secretariat for Urban Development and Public Works (SEDU) was preparing the Term of Reference (ToR) for hiring a company to prepare the Integrated Urban Development Plan for the Metropolitan Region of Londrina (PDUI, in portuguese). On this occasion, ICLEI had the opportunity to review the ToR and indicate the inclusion of ecosystem services as a strategic variable to be considered during metropolitan environmental planning.



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3. Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework implications

Going forward, the dialogue and the points raised can be viewed through the Post-2020 lens, specifically in point 5 of ICLEI's 10 Point Framework, which promotes the creation of an enabling environment that supports the mainstreaming of the multiple social and health benefits of nature at the local and subnational levels to improve the quality of life and resilience of communities, enhance social cohesion and lead to financial benefits and savings for both individuals and governments. In addition, Point 3 promotes the creation of an enabling environment for significantly increased private sector investment and development aid in nature-based solutions at local and subnational levels, as they are closer to the mainstreaming sectors and best positioned to build and sustain functional and resilient ecosystems and urban-rural linkages. In this regard, both points highlight the necessity for the issues raised in this dialogue to be addressed, as their resolution can prove to be hugely beneficial to Brazil and the Post-2020 agenda.

INTERACT-Bio project at a glance

Full title: Integrated subnational action for biodiversity: Supporting implementation of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans through the mainstreaming of biodiversity objectives across city-regions

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Local Governments
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