




# King County

## King County Administrative Policies and Procedures

## Executive Orders, Policies & Procedures

<small>Title</small> <b>Directing Integration of Biodiversity Conservation Principles into Operations and Planning and Approving Participation in the Local Action for Biodiversity Project Including Implementation of Actions Outlined in the "Durban Commitment"</b>	<small>Document Code No.</small> PUT 8-20 (AEO)
<small>Department/Issuing Agency</small> Executive Office	<small>Effective Date.</small> September 5, 2008
<small>Approved</small> 	

**This Order directs the county to integrate biodiversity conservation principles into its operations and planning and approves participation in the Local Action for Biodiversity Project, including implementation of actions outlined in the "Durban Commitment" attached to this order.**

**WHEREAS**, biodiversity is defined as the variety of living organisms considered at all levels from genetic diversity through species and higher taxonomic levels, including the variety of habitats, ecosystems and landscapes in which the species are found; and

**WHEREAS**, King County possesses a diverse array of landforms and habitats ranging from the Cascade mountains to rare and sensitive lowland bogs, from forests to farm fields; and

**WHEREAS**, biodiversity is our living heritage and provides us with food, clothing, shelter, clean water and air and inspiration; and

**WHEREAS**, in the face of climate change, the conservation of biodiversity will be of critical importance for buffering the effects of rising temperatures on regional ecosystems, dampening rates of ecological change and reducing the potential for sudden extreme changes in the environment; and

**WHEREAS**, King County is home to approximately two hundred twenty species of breeding and non-breeding birds, sixty-nine species of mammals, twelve species of amphibians, eight species of reptile and one thousand two hundred forty-nine species of vascular plants; and

**WHEREAS**, approximately fifty species of native freshwater fish are found in the freshwater streams, rivers, ponds and lakes of King County; and

**WHEREAS**, King County's marine environment supports over two hundred species of fish, some five hundred species of invertebrate animals, and eight species of marine mammals; and

**WHEREAS**, Policy E-169 in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan directs the county to maintain the existing diversity of species and habitats in King County; and

**WHEREAS**, King County's ecological land conservation programs have identified lands for protection on a countywide scale using criteria based on both ecological and community value; and

**WHEREAS**, King County owns and manages five thousand three hundred acres of ecological lands; and

**WHEREAS**, cooperative efforts to develop watershed-based salmon conservation plans and recurring listings of species as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act have underscored the need for ecosystem-based approaches to biodiversity conservation; and

**WHEREAS**, King County's population is projected to grow by another one hundred eighty-eight thousand residents, which is an increase of ten percent, by 2022; and

**WHEREAS**, development associated with population will place increasing pressure on biodiversity; and

**WHEREAS**, King County's land use and development practices, open space acquisitions, habitat restoration projects, land management practices, public education and involvement programs and tax incentive programs offer opportunities for conserving biodiversity; and

**WHEREAS**, the Executive-proposed 2008 Comprehensive Plan Update includes policies to guide conservation of biodiversity in King County; and

**WHEREAS**, state and federal agencies, including the Washington State Biodiversity Council, the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife and the United States Forest Service are undertaking initiatives to conserve biodiversity; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2002, the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity established the 2010 Biodiversity Target as part of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals; and

**WHEREAS**, local governments, with authorities to establish land use patterns, have a significant role to play in conserving biodiversity; and

**WHEREAS**, species ranges and functional ecosystems often cross local and international political boundaries; and

**WHEREAS**, local efforts to conserve biodiversity will be more effective if carried out as part of a coordinated, ecosystem-based approach; and

**WHEREAS**, the Local Action for Biodiversity ("LAB") Project is a three-year project initiated by the City of Cape Town and developed in conjunction with Local Governments for Sustainability or "ICLEI;" and

**WHEREAS**, the LAB Project brings together local governments from around the world to share strategies for urban biodiversity conservation, enhancement, utilization and management; and

**WHEREAS**, the LAB Project is intended to facilitate understanding, communication and support among decision-makers, citizens and other stakeholders regarding urban biodiversity issues and the need for local action; and

**WHEREAS**, LAB Project goals include demonstrating best practices in urban biodiversity management, providing documentation and development of biodiversity management and implementation tools, securing funding support for international agencies for biodiversity-related development projects and increasing global awareness of the importance of biodiversity; and

**WHEREAS**, King County is one of the twenty-one convening parties and is the first government from the United States to participate in the LAB Project; and

**WHEREAS**, the first milestone in the LAB Project is completing an evaluation of the state of local biodiversity and recommending local strategies for biodiversity conservation; and

**WHEREAS**, in April 2008, the King County Executive published the 2008 King County Biodiversity Report; and

**WHEREAS**, continued participation in the LAB project will provide benefits to King County in terms of learning about strategies being undertaken by local governments to conserve biodiversity; and

**WHEREAS**, the twenty-one initiating LAB participants have developed the Durban Commitment: Local Governments for Biodiversity; and

**WHEREAS**, the Durban Commitment recognizes “ecosystem services” provided by conserving biodiversity; and

**WHEREAS**, the Durban Commitment recognizes that continued population growth, development, and resource use will place increasing pressure on biodiversity; and

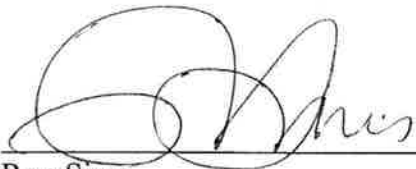
**WHEREAS**, the Durban Commitment outlines actions to be undertaken by participating local governments with a focus on integrating biodiversity considerations into local planning, management of natural areas, government operations, public education, and partnerships with other local governments.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Ron Sims, King County Executive do hereby approve and direct King County to:

- i. Actively participate in the ICLEI LAB Project;
- ii. Continue to document and monitor biodiversity in King County;
- iii. Develop a biodiversity conservation framework and conservation strategy for conserving native biodiversity in King County;

- iv. Integrate biodiversity conservation strategies into management of natural and resource lands, capital facilities planning, operation of facilities, and environmental education programs;
- v. Propose and support amendments to the King County Comprehensive Plan to integrate biodiversity conservation principles into policies for land and water resource management, climate change, and fish and wildlife habitat conservation;
- vi. Implement the commitments outlined in the attached Durban Commitment: Local Governments for Biodiversity.

Dated this 5<sup>th</sup> of Sept., 2008



Ron Sims  
King County Executive

Attest:



Carolyn Ableman  
Director, Records and Licensing Services  
Department of Executive Services

Attachment: The Durban Commitment: Local Governments for Biodiversity

# The Durban Commitment Local Governments for Biodiversity



The Durban Commitment: Local Governments for Biodiversity was developed, founded and signed by 21 Local Action for Biodiversity Local Governments:

- Barcelona City Council (Spain)
- City of Amsterdam (Netherlands)
- City of Bonn (Germany)
- City of Cape Town (South Africa)
- City of Curitiba (Brazil)
- City of Edmonton (Canada)
- City of Johannesburg (South Africa)
- City of Joondalup (Australia)
- City of Nagoya (Japan)
- City of Tilburg (Netherlands)
- City of Zagreb (Croatia)
- eThekweni Municipality (South Africa)
- Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality (South Africa)
- Île de France (France)
- King County (U.S.A)
- Leicester City Council (England)
- Liverpool City Council (Australia)
- Municipality of Walvis Bay (Namibia)
- São Paulo City (Brazil)
- Seoul Metropolitan Government (South Korea)
- Waitakere City Council (New Zealand)

as a commitment and model by local government, for local government and the communities they serve, to protect and enhance biodiversity at the local level.

By signing this Commitment, ..... joins these leading local governments from across the world as a partner and we acknowledge accountability and responsibility for the health and well-being of our communities through protecting, sustainably utilising and managing biodiversity and recognising its role as the foundation of our existence.

This Commitment recognises that biodiversity is the variety of life on earth on which human well-being is dependent and that biodiversity provides ecosystem services that underpin all of our community's needs. Furthermore, it recognises that the value of biodiversity is multi-faceted - including ecological, economic, tourism, recreational, environmental, heritage, stewardship, spiritual, intrinsic, medicinal, nutritional, health, educational, scientific, cultural and social dimensions.

By signing this Commitment we acknowledge that

- 2.1 Biodiversity is increasingly under pressure with unprecedented rates of loss due to human activities including the over-consumption of natural resources;
- 2.2 Increasing global trends towards urbanisation are placing increased direct pressure on biodiversity at both the local area level and globally through increased resource consumption and ecological footprints;
- 2.3 The impacts of climate change on biodiversity pattern and process will be significant and therefore we need to build appropriate programmes to address, mitigate and adapt to these changes;
- 2.4 Future sustainable development and human well-being are dependent on our ability to meet the biodiversity challenges we face;

- 2.5 Ecosystem services can play an important role in poverty alleviation and as a result the consequences of biodiversity loss and ecosystem disruption are harshest for the poor;
- 2.6 It is our collective responsibility to reverse the current trends of biodiversity loss; and
- 2.7 Local government, which works most closely with communities and biodiversity, has a critical role and responsibility (globally, nationally and locally) to ensure that biodiversity is conserved, protected, restored and sustainably used for the benefit of current and future generations.

4. **Our Biodiversity Commitment** we commit to promoting, increasing and enhancing biodiversity within our administrative area and recognise that our ecological footprint extends beyond our administrative area: we will therefore integrate biodiversity considerations into all aspects of our governance and development planning.

5. **Our Biodiversity Commitment** we describe our intention to:

- 4.1 Regularly publish *biodiversity reports* on the state of biodiversity within our administrative area and our progress in protecting biodiversity, which will stand as public record;
- 4.2 Contribute towards the formulation of globally relevant local authority biodiversity good practice guidelines;
- 4.3 Develop and implement a long-term local *biodiversity strategy* for our administrative area and governance practices, which will address, for example:
  - 4.3.1 The consideration of biodiversity in all aspects of local planning including, amongst other things: land-use planning, mobility planning, economic development planning, and conservation planning;
  - 4.3.2 The management of natural areas and green spaces, including the restoration and rehabilitation of degraded natural areas and the control of invasive species;
  - 4.3.3 The provision of municipal services, including fresh and waste water treatment, energy generation and housing;
  - 4.3.4 Public procurement strategies, including purchasing of eco-certified goods and services and the ban of hazardous products;
  - 4.3.5 Social development including poverty alleviation and job creation;
  - 4.3.6 Awareness-raising of the value of biodiversity and the need for its protection in all sectors of society;
  - 4.3.7 Stakeholder participation in all relevant aspects of local biodiversity governance; and
  - 4.3.8 The inclusion of biodiversity in city partnerships and cooperation projects with public and private partners.
- 4.4 Remain committed to ongoing implementation of that long-term local *biodiversity strategy* through the enactment of guiding policies;
- 4.5 Actively engage with, and ensure participation and involvement of all stakeholders; and

4.6 Actively participate in the ICLEI Local Action for Biodiversity Initiative as the global network of local governments for biodiversity.

As a local government, we support efforts to promote greater recognition by national governments and international bodies of the critical role local government plays in protecting biodiversity at the local and global level. We recognise our own role within the global environment and by signing this Commitment we entrench our dedication to global biodiversity. We recognise the need to contribute actively to the implementation of the objectives of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity and the objectives of the 2010 biodiversity target, adopted at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development and a part of the Millennium Development Goals, aimed at reducing the rate of loss of biodiversity on our planet. We entrench our dedication to global biodiversity by becoming a formal partner to Countdown 2010 (if not already a partner) and by signing the Countdown 2010 Declaration, thereby committing to its targets, goals, objectives and principles.



Please fill in the details below to sign the Durban Commitment:

Signed at: Seattle this 5<sup>th</sup> day of September

Local authority name: King County Government

Signature: [Handwritten Signature]

Name / position: Ron Sims, King County Executive