

Local Govt Major Group Intervention on Inter-linkages – 27 Feb 08

Madame Chair, we have now heard about the multiple needs for and benefits of inter-linkages. Allow me to focus on a specific example, currently implemented. LAB or Local Action for Biodiversity is a global initiative with cities and local authorities as main partners. These cities commit to a five-step urban biodiversity process, which allows for complete local flexibility to reflect local needs and priorities.

Upon assessing the City' local biodiversity, Councils formally approve a locally developed Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (LBSAP) which has as key component the implementation of new projects on the ground. The diverse projects under LAB include ecosystem rehabilitation, catchment, invasive species, marine and coastal management, urban agriculture, environmental education and capacity building programmes. At the cutting edge of scientific advances and strategic thinking, many of these local strategies and projects focus on local adaptation to climate change, infrastructure development, disaster management and **building resilient communities**. In this way the INTERLINKAGES are made where they are needed most - on the ground - with real, tangible and immediate results!

LAB as programme is also an upstream partnership which connects LAB cities with each other through dedicated global and regional meetings and workshops, a dedicated online network, city exchanges and “good practice” sharing - allowing them to learn from each other first-hand - with the assistance from the dedicated LAB technical and management team. LAB also connects these cities with their national governments and often we see them guiding and influencing national policy and thinking - and even national roll-out.

LAB's Global partners and supporters include many leading science institutions, local NGOs, ICLEI - Local Govts for Sustainability and the IUCN as organising partners, UNEP, UNDP, the CBD Secretariat and of course many local NGOs and CBOs. In this way, LAB brings local communities on board a global process in a very direct and tangible way, with local results feeding into numerous international processes. Linked to the ICLEI World Congress in June this year, there will be a dedicated “Urban Nature Conference”, supported by all LAB partners and cities - to further advance this cutting-edge programme and related initiatives, with a very specific focus on advancing the linkages to climate change, invasive species, urban agriculture and urban-rural linkages. LAB is a powerful

example of inter-linkages with immediate local benefits – let us embrace such practical action-oriented initiatives!

Thank you