

# Biodiversity Planning in King County: The LAB Project

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# Local Action for Biodiversity

- A project of the International Committee for Local Environmental Initiatives, began in 2006
- Sponsored by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Countdown 2010, South African Biodiversity Initiative, Roma Natura;
- Contributions of urban(izing) areas to biodiversity
- 20 participants worldwide
- King County joined the initiative in 2007

# Current Participants

- Barcelona (Spain)
- Bonn (Germany)
- Cape Town (South Africa)
- Durban (South Africa)
- Edmonton (Canada)
- Ekurhuleni (South Africa)
- Ile de France (Paris, France)
- Johannesburg (South Africa)
- Joondalup (Australia)
- King County (USA)
- Leicester (U.K)
- Liverpool (Australia)
- Nagoya (Japan)
- Querétaro (Mexico)
- São Paulo (Brazil)
- Seoul (Korea)
- Tilburg (Netherlands)
- Waitakere (New Zealand)
- Walvis Bay (Namibia)
- Zagreb (Croatia)

# The LAB Project Timeline








- Complete biodiversity report in 2007
- Develop a biodiversity framework and strategy in 2008
- Develop a biodiversity plan in 2009
- Implement 5 new biodiversity projects or programs by 2010

# Progress

- Draft biodiversity report completed in June 2007
- Met with other participating cities October 2007
- Preliminary conservation principles, framework, and strategy in development

# King County Biodiversity Report

- Draft completed June 2007; final by December 31.

KING COUNTY ANIMAL AND PLANT SPECIES	
Species Group	No. of Species in King County
 Birds	221 (5 are introduced)
 Mammals	69 (8 are introduced)
 Amphibians	12 (1 is introduced)
 Reptiles	8 (2 are introduced)
 Freshwater Fish	50 (20 are introduced)
 Marine Fish in Intertidal/ Shallow Subtidal Habitat	Over 60
 Vascular Plants	1249 (383 are introduced)

# King County Biodiversity Report

- Topics: Status, Threats, Management, & Governance
- Two maps produced
- Biodiversity levels covered: species, habitat, ecosystems, and ecoregions
- Missing: biodiversity at the genetic level

# Information Gaps

- Our knowledge of species' distributions and status is often poor
- Little genetic and life history information available to assess diversity

# Threats

- Effects of land development (habitat transformation, isolation, and fragmentation)
- Invasive species
- Climate change emerging as a dominant (but uncertain) factor that may increase risk from other threats

# Challenges to Biodiversity Management

- Wide range of land use: urban, suburban, industrial, agriculture, forest production, protected 'wilderness'
- Dams and locks on river systems
- Tribal status as sovereign government related to resource management
- Tribal standing on ceremonial, subsistence uses of resource, hunting, gathering

# Challenges to Biodiversity management

- Private property challenges
- Large, long established ownerships in checkerboard pattern in forest protection zone
- Expanding population at edge of urban growth boundary
- Climate change pressure on species ranges
- Existing single species management framework
- Multiple other jurisdictions within King County

# King County Comprehensive Plan

- Management of biodiversity in King County predominantly at the species and habitat level
- New section on Biodiversity added for 2008 Comp Plan update
  - Includes 8 guiding principles from conservation biology
  - Does not address biodiversity at the genetic level

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# Looking Ahead – Biodiversity Framework & Strategy

- Ultimate King County Biodiversity Goals:
  - Functional landscapes
  - Viable populations (native species and humans)

# Looking Ahead – Biodiversity Framework & Strategy

Elements of an ecosystem-based approach to biodiversity conservation:

- Set boundaries using ecological and evolutionary processes
- Represent native ecosystem types and seral stages
- Address multiple levels of organization
- Address multiple temporal and spatial scales
- Manage for Resilience and Redundancy
- Renew the ethical commitment to conservation (Leopold)
- Engage citizens