

Formulation Process of the Local Biodiversity Strategies and Actions Plan of São Paulo City

Angela Maria Branco¹; Francisco Gallego Pereira²; Hélio Neves³

SUMMARY

Due to the urban pressures upon the natural environment, the local biodiversity of the city of São Paulo finds itself heavily threatened. In face of this problem, the São Paulo City Hall, member of the Local Action for Biodiversity Program, created Biodiversity Work Group (BWG), by initiative of the Municipal Secretariat for Environment. The Work Group, in line with the directives of the National Biodiversity Policy, proposed the formulation of a Municipal Biodiversity Plan, a process that counted with the participation of various representatives of different units within the Secretariat, with the contribution of the Sustainability and Health Group of the Municipal Committee of Climate Change and Eco-Economy, besides representatives from the academy. The result was a plan that contains 80 strategies and actions that begin with the knowledge about the biodiversity and lead to the government measures for the protection São Paulo City's biodiversity. This work aims to present the formulation process of the Local Biodiversity Strategies and Actions Plan of the São Paulo City and the Ordinance n. 091/SVMA-G/2011 that allows its implementation, as we believe the divulgation can contribute to similar actions in other places.

Key words: Objectives, Directives, Environmental Management, Conservation.

¹ Veterinary, Doctoring in Public Health, Master in Public Health, Environmental Management Specialist, Advisor of the Municipal Secretariat for Environment of São Paulo City, SP, Brazil, angelabranco@uol.com.br .

² Agronomist Engineer of the Municipal Secretariat for Environment of São Paulo City, SP, Brazil, fgallego@prefeitura.sp.gov.br .

³ Doctor, Doctor in Public Health, Advisor of the Municipal Secretariat for Environment of São Paulo City, SP, Brazil, helion@prefeitura.sp.gov.br .

1 INTRODUCTION

The City of São Paulo, with its 11,244,369 inhabitants and 1,525km², puts on a lot of pressure on the remaining Rainforest Biome, that holds the rich local biodiversity. 700 animal species are listed in the fauna inventory, which include endangered species such as the cougar (*Puma concolor capricorniensis*) and the southern-muriqui (*Brachyteles arachnoides*) (SÃO PAULO (City), 2010), and the recording of approximately 2,700 native vascular vegetable species, 15% of which find themselves in some degree under threat (SÃO PAULO (City), 2011a).

The city possesses approximately 21% of its territory covered by massive forests in various stages of ecological succession, but 48% of the area is lacking of vegetation coverage, mainly in the regions with high population density. (PMSP, 2009).

Besides the territorial occupation, the introduction of potentially invasive exotic species, the removal of both fauna and flora and their illegal commercialization increase the threats on the city's biodiversity.

In 2009, the São Paulo City Hall, through the Municipal Secretariat for Environment, created in 1993 to execute the municipal environment policies as a part of the SISNAMA, published the São Paulo Biodiversity Report – 2008. This report consolidated the information on the city's biodiversity presenting data such as: in 2008, there were 39 municipal parks open to the public, covering an area of approximately 1600 hectares; 21 urban parks and 35 linear parks (green area accompanying the course of a river or stream) in different stages of implementation, totaling 1099 hectares; a natural 53 hectares park and 4 more to be inaugurated by 2012; the inventory of 435 wild species across 48 areas of the city; 35,943 veterinary and biological cares of victimized wild animals; 1909 flora species collected at the Municipal Herbarium and 185,164 seedlings planted during the year of 2008. The publishing of “Local Biodiversity Strategies and Actions Plan of the São Paulo City” updates this data to 2010 and reflect the local public policies aimed at biodiversity conservation.

In 2007, the City Hall began its participation in the LAB Program (Local Action for Biodiversity), an ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability) initiative from South Africa with the support of IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature). Continuing the Program, the Municipal Secretariat for Environment created, through the Ordinance 57/SVMA-G/2009, the Biodiversity Work Group (BWG), with the task of

elaborating and proposing actions for the protection of the biodiversity. (SÃO PAULO, 2009). One of them was the formulation of the Municipal Biodiversity Plan in accordance with the main principles and directives for the implementation of the National Biodiversity Policy, guided by the Convention on Biological Diversity, ratified by Decree 4.339/2002.

The objective of this work is to present the elaboration process of a public policy instrument aimed at local biodiversity conservation and the result of the institutional integration, that through the BWG, involved other organs of the public administration that indirectly account for the environmental issues in the city.

2 METHOD

The elaboration process of the plan was developed during 18 BWG meetings, held between February 4, 2010 and July 7, 2011, as part of the various attributions conferred upon the group that, in 2011, had its participation expanded (São Paulo (City), 2011).

The work dynamic was focused on the proposing of actions for biodiversity by the group members. The propositions were discussed within each member's work unit, which operates with experienced staff from various academic areas.

In the first two meetings the group considered the possibility of elaborating a plan for the protection of biodiversity, given the city's participation in the LAB Program. During the seven following meetings the actions, strategies and executing organ within the Secretariat for Environment were defined. In this phase of the process, the directives for the implementation of the Brazilian National Biodiversity Policy, of the Annex of the Decree 4.339/2002, were considered and adapted to the municipal reality and a draft of the plan was generated. In the two subsequent meetings, the plan was systemized and the executing organs of the São Paulo City Hall were defined. In the following six meetings, the plan was opened for discussion and insertion of new contributions, and presented to the representatives of the academy. Considering that, during the process, the Sustainability and Health Work Group of the Municipal Committee of Climate Change and Eco-Economy, created by the Municipal Law n. 14.993/2009, was also elaborating and action plan for mitigation and adaptation to climate change, the Biodiversity Work Group requested the analysis of the biodiversity plan's draft, aiming at its incorporation in the climate change plan. This measure conferred the plan a

municipal extension and made it possible for it to be appreciated by other sectors of society.

Finally, in the last meeting, the plan was consolidated, with the elaboration of the ordinance draft to promote the implementation of the Local Biodiversity Strategies and Actions Plan, embraced by the incumbent Environment Secretary with the publication of the Ordinance n. 91/SVMA-G/2011 (SÃO PAULO (City), 2011).

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Local Biodiversity Strategies and Actions Plan of the São Paulo City presents nine objectives, containing 80 strategies and actions distributed amongst them, and the list of municipal organs responsible for their execution.

Objective 1 “Knowledge of São Paulo’s Biodiversity”: proposes activities for prospecting of the components of the biodiversity with geographic reference, historical survey and incentives to biogeography studies.

Objective 2 “Preservation, Conservation, Recuperation and Biodiversity Protection”: with activities focused on the conservation and expansion of green areas through recuperation of endangered species and controlling the exotic ones considered invasive, besides research that relate biodiversity to with the health area.

Objective 3 “Monitoring, Evaluating, Preventing and Mitigating of Impacts on Biodiversity”: aims to decrease irregular activities through inspection and regulation of impacting activities and the monitoring of the elements of the biodiversity and their threats. It contemplates as a preventive measure the conservation of the ecosystem.

Objective 4 “Indicators, Indexes, and Data”: points to the update and creation of new indicators.

Objective 5 “Environmental Information System”: Indicates the need to amplify, implant and integrate the systems.

Objective 6 “Payment for Environmental Services”: reinforces the importance of the development of the methodology of the valuation of the payments.

Objective 7 “Education, Public Awareness, Information and Dissemination about Biodiversity”: highlights the importance of the execution of courses and events and the development of educational material for the general public and press.

Objective 8 “Governance, Public Policies, Legal and Institutional Strengthening for the Biodiversity Management”: Suggests the review and strengthening of the legal

instruments and procedures on biodiversity based on the Plan's objectives; indicates means and source for action implementation; indicates the need for inter-institutional articulation and proposes the creation of a Program for the plan's implementation with goals for 2015 and 2020.

Objective 9 "Sustainable Utilization of the Biodiversity Components": Stimulates research and rational production of resources of the fauna and flora.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The plan is consonant with the National Biodiversity Policy, and meets the need to protect São Paulo City's biodiversity. Its formulation process counted with the participation of various parts and its execution depends on the involvement of the municipal organs.

With the jurisdiction conferred by SISNAMA (National Environment System), the City of São Paulo went ahead in the formulation of a local plan aimed exclusively at biodiversity protection, serving as an example to other cities.

In São Paulo's City Hall, the Local Biodiversity Strategies and Actions Plan was greeted as an instrument of the municipal climate change policy.

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