

BIODIVERCITIES, A MODEL FOR THE FUTURE

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It is undisputable that we are living a mejor climate crisis. Global warming, the loss of biodiversity, and pollution are endangering our survival. Delaying actions to tackle these challenges is not an option, particularly when some of the most relevant actions relate to cities.

It is currently estimated that major cities contribute 80% of the world GDP and represent 75% of global greenhouse gas emissions. Furthermore, it is foreseen that by the year 2050 large cities will house 75% of the world population, thus exerting even greater pressure on ecosystems.

Hence, the measures we adopt today in cities will have a positive impact on millions of people, enhancing their quality of life. Specif-

ically, because these will impact the provision of drinking water, food security, health, energy, etc.

Thus, giving rise to the concept of BiodiverCities, whose definition starts with the ever more pressing need to integrate environmental protection in the cities' development, as well as promoting processes that create new ties between the urban and the rural that optimize land zoning, develop a nature-based economy, promote citizen participation, and include sustainable practices in their services.

I therefore present the 2030 BiodiverCities vision, together with the World Economic Forum, which seeks that those urban centers advance towards carbon-neutrality and consolidate a sustainable development that incorporates biodiversity as an element for closing the social divide and generating equity.

This means connecting natural wealth to urban growth strategies, driving the energy transition, and clean mobility. Its main pillars are territorial planning for incentivizing the creation of responsible habits, bearing in mind that citizens are at the center of this change.

Another equally important aspect of this concept is that it promotes a nature-based urban economy. This includes stimulating innovation for developing biodiversity conservation capabilities and promoting the circular economy, carbon markets and, above all, the transformation of productive sectors.

Our central government has promoted this road to sustainability under the premise of "produce conserving and conserve producing". And, we have reaffirmed the need for this change with clear goals for tackling the global climate crisis.

Thanks to the Road to Zero strategy, we committed to reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions by 51% by the year 2030 and move towards zero emissions by midcentury.

To that end, we established a clear roadmap that includes the BiodiverCities strategy, thanks to which we now have 14 large cities consolidated in the country with projects in the amount of USD\$126 million. And what is most important is that most of them are intermediate cities, thus evidencing that this process does not require huge investments.

We have also advanced in the energy transition. Over the course of the last four years, we put in place projects for multiplying 100-fold the installed capacity of unconventional renewable energy existing in 2018. We are leaders in clean mobility having over 8,100 electric ve-

hicles in circulation and the largest electric vehicle public transportation fleet in Latin America.

And we have promoted sustainable construction. We have multiplied the construction of EDGE-certified buildings and designed financial assistance programs for driving sustainable housing. Furthermore, we are the first country in the region with a green taxonomy for promoting the mobilization of resources towards environmental investments.

It is estimated that 44% of the global GDP in cities is at risk due to the loss of nature, which makes the BiodiverCities a model for transforming the future of urban centers and whose implementation must be accelerated. This model can avoid the degradation of ecosystems and the negative impacts on the environment and on human well-being. The nature inside

and around urban areas is crucial for assuring planetary health. Biodiversity must stop being an element that is distant from large cities to become the complement for developing more competitive, sustainable, and equitable cities. And, in this road, BiodiverCities are the model for the future.