



**LA SANITATION**

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**CITY OF LOS ANGELES SCORES HIGH AS FIRST U.S. CITY TO UTILIZE INNOVATIVE SINGAPORE BIODIVERSITY INDEX LED BY LA SANITATION**

*2018 Biodiversity Report Addresses the City’s Current Biodiversity State and Recommendations for a Customized Los Angeles Index*

**LOS ANGELES (APRIL 18, 2018)** – LA Sanitation (LASAN), the lead agency for the City’s environmental programs and initiatives, released the 2018 Biodiversity Report for the City of Los Angeles. Prepared in collaboration with Mayor Eric Garcetti’s Sustainability Team and City Councilmember Paul Koretz, this Report calculates the Singapore Index of Cities Biodiversity for Los Angeles and is the first step toward implementing the Biodiversity Motion that was approved by the City Council last year.

For metropolitan areas like Los Angeles, biodiversity includes the natural areas, urban landscapes, parks and all other environments that a variety of species inhabit. The City of Los Angeles is fortunate to be located within the California Floristic Province, a globally-recognized hotspot of native biodiversity. However, urbanization can threaten biodiversity, and innovative strategies are needed to ensure its sustainability.

The survival and well-being of the City’s residents depends directly on our ecosystem built directly from an integrated community of natural biodiversity. Biodiverse landscapes provide benefits to residents such as moderation of urban heat, improved air and water quality, recreational and educational opportunities and instilling a greater sense of community pride.

The motion introduced by Councilmember Koretz underscores that the City does not have an integrated program to sustain and enhance the unique biodiversity within the larger urban ecosystem in the City. Recognizing this, Mayor Garcetti’s Sustainable City pLAN and Councilmember Paul Koretz’s original motion specifically call for the development of a “no-net-loss” biodiversity strategy.

In keeping with the Mayor’s pLAN and the goals of the City Council, LASAN measured the biodiversity in Los Angeles using the Singapore Index on Cities’ Biodiversity. This makes Los Angeles the first City in the U.S. to perform such a measurement, joining Helsinki, Montreal, Lisbon, and a few other global cities. Leading this effort, LASAN brought together like-minded individuals to form an Expert Council and an Interdepartmental



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Biodiversity Team, whose collective knowledge and data resources were utilized to measure the Singapore Index and provide the recommendations presented throughout the Report.

The Biodiversity Report addresses the aforementioned measurement of the Singapore Index of Cities' Biodiversity and includes general recommendations toward achieving the objectives set forth in the Council motion authored by Councilmember Koretz. The objectives include: developing an index to measure protection, enhancement, and mitigation of impacts to biodiversity; developing policies/projects to enhance biodiversity, and developing options for community outreach and engagement, particularly to communities lacking parks, natural areas and biodiversity.

"Our famous Hollywood mountain lion, P-22, made his appearance known at exactly the right time to educate us on how to successfully co-exist with our more wild residents," says Councilmember Paul Koretz. "We have an important responsibility to preserve and protect the natural areas we still have left for the health and quality of life of all Angelenos. I'm proud of the Report that lead Isaac Brown, LASAN staff and our Biodiversity experts have produced and hope we will inspire the cities of the U.S. and the world to follow our lead."

"As a lead environmental agency for the City of Los Angeles, we are pleased to be given the opportunity to spearhead the development of innovative strategies, many of which have already started to help further protect and improve biodiversity in the City of Los Angeles," says Enrique C. Zaldivar, Director and General Manager of Los Angeles Sanitation. "This Report is yet another stepping stone toward reaching our ultimate goal of harnessing natural resources efficiently and effectively, while providing a cleaner and healthier City environment for future generations of Angelenos."

#### **2018 BIODIVERSITY REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- The City received the highest scores possible for a number of biodiversity indicators including the percentage of natural areas, number of native bird species in the City, and protection of sensitive species and ecosystems.
- Documents approximately 1,200 different native species recorded within the City, and perhaps more than double that are present, but unrecorded. Also provides a summary of LA's biodiversity based on a set of indicators that make up the "Singapore Index of Cities' Biodiversity" (Singapore Index or SI).
- Los Angeles received a preliminary score of 48 out of 72 possible points. This score is "preliminary" because five of the indicators (indicators 4-8) measure change in the number of recorded species over time. Therefore, the score for these indicators is determined during a second measurement of the SI using the preliminary measurement as the baseline.



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- Indicators also address the benefits provided by non-native biodiversity including the urban tree canopy and the City’s diverse private landscapes. Governance and management activities by City agencies, the Los Angeles Unified School District, nongovernmental organizations, and other local agencies are also addressed.

Prior to the development of the Singapore Index, an effective self-assessment tool designed to help cities better understand biodiversity and how to improve conservation and preservation efforts, did not exist. This index allows cities to not only create baseline measurements of their current biodiversity in order to monitor and assess them over time, but it also serves as a valuable method of raising public awareness with the hope of mobilizing the community to do its part in protecting the environment.

The information presented in the City of Los Angeles Biodiversity Report is a valuable resource from which an effective biodiversity strategy can be developed that helps to create equitable access to natural places for all Angelenos while protecting and enhancing biodiversity and making Los Angeles a better place to live. Additionally, every city and ecosystem is unique, so modification of the index will be completed to produce a customized biodiversity index specific for the City of Los Angeles.

According to recommendations made by stakeholders and experts involved in this preliminary Singapore Index measurement, continuing biodiversity efforts will need to focus on improvement in the following areas: species conservation, public access to nature, public health, invasive species control, habitat quality and connectivity, environmental stewardship, and climate change resilience.

The 2018 Biodiversity Report is an important first step in establishing a citywide framework for maintaining LA’s diverse wildlife, as part of a combined set of strategies to achieve sustainability and raise the quality of life for the City’s four million residents.

More information on the LASAN Biodiversity Report is viewable [here](#).

#### About Los Angeles Sanitation

As the lead agency for the City’s environmental programs and initiatives, LA Sanitation protects public health and the environment through the administration and management of four program areas: Clean Water (Wastewater), Solid Resources (Solid Waste Management), Livability (Environmental Quality), and Watershed Protection (Stormwater). These infrastructure programs collect, treat, recycle, and dispose the solid and liquid waste generated by the nation’s second largest city of more than four million residents. Through these essential public service programs, LA Sanitation delivers a triple bottom line of economic, environmental, and social benefits that sustain the quality of life in Los Angeles. For more information, please visit [www.lacitysan.org](http://www.lacitysan.org)



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