

1 [San Francisco Biodiversity Policy]

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3 **Resolution adopting citywide biodiversity goals and articulating the role of**  
4 **the Department of Environment in protecting San Francisco's natural**  
5 **heritage.**

6 WHEREAS, Biodiversity or 'biological diversity,' according to the United  
7 Nations Environment Program, means the variability among living organisms and  
8 the ecological complexes of which they are a part; this includes diversity within  
9 species, between species and of ecosystems; and

10 WHEREAS, the City and County of San Francisco is located in the  
11 California Floristic Province, a global biodiversity hotspot, and still has indigenous  
12 ecosystems comprised of many different types of natural ecological communities;  
13 and

14 WHEREAS, the City's parks, natural areas and various open spaces still  
15 harbor hundreds of species of indigenous plants, birds, mammals, reptiles and  
16 amphibians, untold diversity of insects, and ten federally listed endangered  
17 species, including uniquely San Francisco species such as the Presidio and  
18 Franciscan manzanitas; and

19 WHEREAS, biodiversity loss along with climate change are among the  
20 most significant environmental challenges facing our planet; and

21 WHEREAS, in 2010, in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan, the United  
22 Nations Convention on Biological Diversity designated 2010-2020 the UN  
23 Decade on Biodiversity, and adopted the UN Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-

1 2020, which includes the vision of “living in harmony with nature” as well as the  
2 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets; and

3 WHEREAS, the Living Planet Index, managed by the World Wildlife Fund  
4 to measure progress toward the Biodiversity Targets, has documented a 58%  
5 reduction in global vertebrate species diversity since 1970; and

6 WHEREAS, to help urban areas contribute to the Aichi Targets and the  
7 UN Strategic Plan, the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Stockholm  
8 Resilience Center published the Cities Biodiversity Outlook, which identifies 10  
9 key findings, including “maintaining functioning urban ecosystems can  
10 significantly enhance human health and well-being” and “urban ecosystem  
11 services and biodiversity can help contribute to climate change mitigation and  
12 adaptation”; and

13 WHEREAS, the Golden Gate National Parks and the City’s watershed  
14 lands are part of the Golden Gate Biosphere Reserve, a unit of the United  
15 Nations’ Man and the Biosphere Program, the goal of which is the overall  
16 improvement of the relationship between people and their environment; and

17 WHEREAS, San Francisco’s Climate Action Goals of 0-50-100-ROOTS  
18 identify city and community greening as integral to local climate mitigation and  
19 adaptation; and

20 WHEREAS, San Francisco is a founding member of the international Wild  
21 Cities and Biophilic Cities networks, which promote conservation, awareness and  
22 stewardship of biodiversity in cities and a global conservation vision of “Nature

1 Needs Half,” which calls for half of Earth’s lands and waters to be permanently  
2 protected for nature and biodiversity; and

3 WHEREAS, the Children and Nature Network and the National League of  
4 Cities jointly created the Cities Connecting Children to Nature initiative, and San  
5 Francisco is one of a seven city cohort whose mission is to address equity in  
6 nature connection in cities; and

7 WHEREAS, San Francisco has long championed and sustained a tradition  
8 of wildland and natural resources management and stewardship in its City, State  
9 and National Parks and watershed and public trust lands; and

10 WHEREAS, 2017 is the 20th anniversary of the Sustainability Plan for the  
11 City and County of San Francisco, and conservation and restoration of our local  
12 biodiversity is integral to the city’s long-term environmental sustainability; and

13 WHEREAS, in order to fulfill the vision and goals of the 1997 Sustainability  
14 Plan, the Commission on the Environment articulated a significant commitment to  
15 biodiversity in Resolution 2011-05-COE; and

16 WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors approved a new Recreation and  
17 Open Space Element of the General Plan in 2014, which includes a Biodiversity  
18 Objective that recognizes that biodiversity exists throughout San Francisco in  
19 parks, natural areas, backyards, and in the streets, and that wildlife and pollinator  
20 diversity can be supported by local and California native plants as well as non-  
21 native non-invasive climate appropriate plants; and

22 WHEREAS, in 2014 the Board of Supervisors signed a resolution  
23 endorsing the San Francisco Children’s Outdoor Bill of Rights, which promotes

1 every child’s right to connect to nature in the City and advocates the critical  
2 importance of human connection to nature for individual, community and public  
3 health; and

4 WHEREAS, in 2016, the Recreation and Parks Commission approved the  
5 Natural Resources Management Plan, and the Planning Commission certified its  
6 Final Environmental Impact Report; and

7 WHEREAS, in 2016 the Board of Supervisors passed a resolution urging  
8 City Departments, including the Department of Environment, to conduct  
9 education and outreach to foster knowledge and appreciation of San Francisco’s  
10 pollinators and their interconnected role in the City’s natural ecosystems; and

11 WHEREAS, various City Departments, in collaboration with communities  
12 and non-profit organizations, are restoring local biodiversity; connecting San  
13 Franciscans to nature in the city; and actively bringing nature into the built  
14 environment; and collectively have coalesced around a unified vision for  
15 conservation and stewardship of San Francisco’s natural heritage; now,  
16 therefore, be it,

17 RESOLVED, that the Commission on the Environment hereby adopts the  
18 following citywide biodiversity vision and goals:

19 VISION

20 All San Franciscans connect to nature daily and are inspired to participate in  
21 some form of ecological stewardship of the City’s natural heritage. San  
22 Francisco’s biodiverse, climate resilient, and verdant ecosystems are integrated  
23 throughout its natural and built environments.

1 GOALS

- 2 1. Biologically Rich Ecosystems: Restore and maintain robust and  
3 interconnected indigenous habitats, natural areas, open spaces,  
4 watersheds, marine ecosystems, and urban forests that support a rich  
5 web of life, and mitigate climate change impacts to rare species and  
6 communities;
- 7 2. Equitable Access, Awareness and Experience of Nature: Connect all  
8 residents, workers, and visitors with nature every day in neighborhood  
9 green spaces, parks, and natural habitats;
- 10 3. Community and Ecological Stewardship: Empower people and  
11 partnerships to promote, cultivate, enjoy, and restore nature in every  
12 neighborhood;
- 13 4. Ecological Planning and Design: Incorporate biodiverse, purposeful  
14 greening into all building and open space development, with a priority on  
15 creating diverse habitats for many species of wildlife;
- 16 5. Resilience in a Living City: Leverage local natural ecosystems to  
17 sequester carbon, conserve water, prevent flooding, manage pests, and  
18 improve air quality to support San Francisco's adaptation into a climate-  
19 protected and ecological city; and, be it,

20 FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission urges the Department of the  
21 Environment to realize the five biodiversity goals, as part of its overall climate  
22 strategy, by employing the following strategies and programs, among others:

- 1        1. Serve as the hub and resource for San Francisco city government and the  
2            community at large for local biodiversity initiatives and programs, such as  
3            the Nature in the City Map and celebrating the City's efforts;
- 4        2. Lead interagency initiatives to develop, align, and implement plans,  
5            policies, practices, guidelines, trainings, and other strategies to achieve  
6            biodiversity goals, all consistent with environmentally healthy and  
7            protective integrated pest management practices and the reduced risk  
8            pesticide list;
- 9        3. Work with City Departments, other public agencies including the Presidio  
10           Trust and the National Park Service, the California Academy of Sciences  
11           and other non-governmental organizations and stakeholders to produce a  
12           citywide inventory of the City's biodiversity and develop key indicators and  
13           monitoring protocols for ecosystem health;
- 14       4. Promote biodiversity in major development projects by, for example,  
15           encouraging wildlife-friendly landscaping, and biophilic, nature-based  
16           urban design;
- 17       5. Lead the Environment Department's Pollinators Program to include  
18           expanding the use of the San Francisco Plant Finder website and the  
19           application of Bay-Friendly Landscaping;
- 20       6. Promote biodiverse greening of the built environment through facilitating  
21           collaborative and community-based implementation of the Green  
22           Connections Plan, the Urban Forest Plan, and others that support natural  
23           carbon sequestration and climate resilience;

1       7. Support the Urban Forest Council in its advocacy for full funding of the  
2       Urban Forest Plan and its four primary recommendations, including the  
3       street tree planting goal and maximizing street tree benefits like  
4       biodiversity;

5       8. Participate in relevant local-to-international networks to share San  
6       Francisco’s urban biodiversity best practices with cities everywhere.

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8       I hereby certify that this Resolution was adopted at the Commission on the  
9       Environment meeting on May 23, 2017.

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Anthony Valdez, Commission Affairs Manager

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Vote:       5-0 Approved

15

Ayes:       Commissioners Bermejo, Hoyos, Stephenson, Wald and Wan

16

Noes:       None

17

Absent:     None

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