



Council Member Motion
For the Committee of the Whole Meeting June 22, 2023

To: Committee of the Whole **Date:** June 18, 2023
From: Councillor Marg Gardiner and Councillor Chris Coleman
Subject: Supporting Biodiversity in Local Communities (UBCM Resolution)

BACKGROUND

Protecting and restoring biological diversity is consistent with Canada's commitments under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and BC's commitments in the *Together for Wildlife* Strategy, as well as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and BC's *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.

City of Victoria Interest

While the City of Victoria supports biodiversity through the Climate Action Leadership Plan, parks policies and programs, transportation initiatives, accelerated 'green' building policies, and several CRD programs, this Resolution could assist the City, First Nations, Region, and Province in more quickly restoring biodiversity.

This Resolution is consistent with Resolution NR38 adopted at the 2022 UBCM convention ("*new legislation to protect and restore biological diversity and ecosystem health, in a manner consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and with the involvement of local governments, civil society groups, Indigenous Knowledge Holders, scientists, and members of the public.*").

Government of British Columbia Interest

In November 2022, the Province released a "Conversation Primer" on *Developing a Declaration on Ecosystem Health and Biodiversity as a Priority for all Sectors*. <https://pub-crd.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=42822>

Government of Canada Interest

The federal government has set the goal of conserving 30% of Canada's land and water by 2030 in response to decline in biodiversity. (Government of Canada bulletin, December 9, 2022) <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/news/2022/12/government-of-canada-recognizing-federal-land-and-water-to-contribute-to-30-by-30-nature-conservation-goals.html>)

In the context of all orders of government working together, it is timely for the City of Victoria to take further action for biodiversity and ecosystem health. This resolution is consistent with this Council's

2023-2026 Strategic Plan which speaks of environmental stewardship and respect for and forwardness of reconciliation calls to action.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council endorse the resolution “BE IT RESOLVED THAT the UBCM call upon the Province of British Columbia to work with local governments and First Nations to support the protection and restoration of biological diversity in local communities, including establishing a *Local Natural Areas Protection Fund* to support local efforts to acquire land for biodiversity and ecosystem health”.

AND THAT Council direct staff to send electronic copies of Council’s resolution to the Union of British Columbia Municipalities prior to June 30, 2023.

AND THAT Council forward this matter to the June 22, 2023 daytime Council meeting for ratification.

Respectfully submitted,



Councillor Gardiner



Councillor Coleman