ABOUT QUITO

At 2,800 meters above sea level, Quito is one of the highest capital cities in the world. The city sits amid volcanoes and deep valleys. Quito was named a World Heritage Site in 1978 not only for its architecture, but also due to its dramatic landscape and its biological diversity. At the same time, this cultural and natural wealth is threatened by a variety of environmental, economic, and social challenges.

The Metropolitan District of Quito has a population of 2.6 million (2017) with a density of 5400 inh/km². The city presents high levels of biodiversity derived from the richness of climates and landscapes given by its location. Ranging from high altitude mountains to humid subtropical areas, the city hosts nearly 18000 registered plants, 112 species of mammals and 542 species of birds (2016).

This diverse and vibrant environment offers a privileged opportunity for the Metropolitan District of Quito to enhance NBS projects by becoming an urban laboratory that merges both social and environmental issues.

ABOUT SAN ENRIQUE DE VELASCO NEIGHBOURHOOD

Neighborhood with a high level of environmental degradation. Urban area totally deprived of services while although the site benefits from a great natural landscape with its surrounding ravines. Urban quality is low due to a structure that is incomplete and mobility is chaotic. The local community is disorganized but suffers from segregation and unemployment.

Urban growth scenario

Possible growth scenarios

NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS: FIRST IDEAS

Due to its designation as Ecuador’s capital city, its geographic position, and its tangible and intangible heritage, Quito has an economic, ecological, and cultural role to play on the world stage.

Urban expansion has had a detrimental effect on the environmental and the city’s ecology. All of these actions exacerbate the stresses on the different ecosystems, contaminate water sources and networks, and put the city’s capacity to supply ecosystemic services at risk (MDMQ, 2015). Its territory contains immensely rich valleys and mountains as well as conservation corridors that are part of the Tumbes-Chocó-Magdalena bioregion, one of the planet’s biodiversity hotspots. As a result of their biological, cultural, and social assets, these areas meet the conditions needed for sustainable development opportunities in Quito.

In Quito, inadequate mobility is one of the main chronic stresses, reflected mainly in the quality of service, measured by its accessibility, quality, and use of public places; transfer time, coverage, environmental impacts due to greenhouse gas emissions (GHG), and decline in air quality. The city’s disorganized growth hinder the efforts of the municipality to address its citizens’ demands for access to services, including transportation.

In relation to land management, the city’s unregulated growth affects its social assets, these areas meet the conditions needed for sustainable development opportunities in Quito.

As a result of the above, the city is facing challenges in urban planning with insufficient access to public transport, green corridors and public green areas being built up. The rapid rate of the city’s growth translates into social inclusion and economic development issues. Therefore as the only non-European fellow city in the project, Quito’s involvement will provide insights to the challenges and opportunities faced in implementing nature-based solutions.

CLEVER CITIES PLANS

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