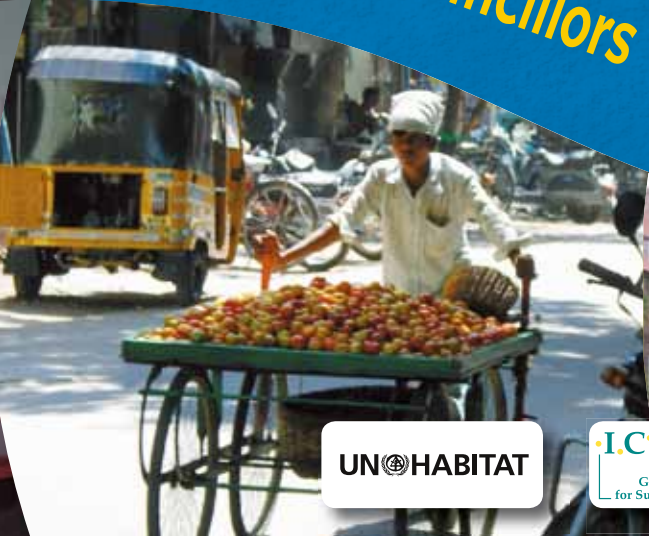




ecoBUDGET

Introduction for Mayors and Municipal Councillors





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Forewords

A balanced budget is important at any level of governance, not least the financial administration of cities. Drinking water, energy provision, and waste management all rely on the proper functioning of a city's finances. Taxation and correct valuation ensures proper delivery of essential services and investments, while any budget imbalance is quickly seen in the quality and quantity of the services provided.

Traditionally, ecosystem services, which we rely on for life, livelihoods and recreation, have not been systematically valued and budgeted for. The abundance and adequate functioning of resources and processes that keep our air and water clean and provide us with food, shelter and pleasant surroundings have been taken for granted. However, as resource depletion and unsustainable use increase, decision makers are paying more and more attention to the real value of natural resources.

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment clearly outlined the costs of ecosystem loss to human well-being. Unfortunately, ecosystems and their services are rarely part of the urban development and decision making equation, which is usually dominated by fiscal and economic development factors.

But what if we could change this by developing a system whereby both monetary and more subtle environmental values worked in harmony, informing policy for sustainable urban development? What if neighbourhoods were built with biodiversity as well as increase in housing stock in mind, and costs and benefits were weighed in terms of both the environment and economic development?

The key to sustainable urban development lies in managing natural resources with the same efficiency and attention usually reserved for financial resources. This is what *ecoBUDGET* does.

ecoBUDGET is a management system in which natural resources and environmental quality are measured and accounted for in a budget. Efficiency gains are measured by indicators that are chosen to reflect the situation of the individual municipality and the ecosystems and services on which it relies.

ecoBUDGET was developed for local governments, to help them plan, monitor and report natural resource consumption within the municipal territory. It is a cross-cutting instrument, based on three pillars: environmental master budget; statement of environmental assets and sustainability analysis; and measures management, budget balancing and evaluation.

Now that more than half the world's population lives in cities, urban governance and management of finite and often scarce environmental resources is crucial. By bridging the gap between economic and ecological thinking, *ecoBUDGET* makes a true contribution to achieving sustainable urban development.

Anna Tibaijuka
Executive Director
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*eco*BUDGET – available to you!



*e*coBUDGET is ready to be introduced by local authorities worldwide. Now that the world has become aware of the scarceness of natural resources, there is no reason for limiting the annual budgeting, controlling and reporting to our financial resource, money. It's time to routinely apply *eco*BUDGET besides financial management so that municipal councils have equally control over environmental quality and the use of natural resources.

Since I first published the idea of environmental budgeting in 1987, the methodology was developed by an ICLEI team, the approach was pilot-tested in a number of cities and counties, and the *eco*BUDGET® model developed to prove global applicability.

*eco*BUDGET works well. This has been demonstrated in municipalities in Germany, Greece, India, Italy, the Philippines, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

I would like to thank the team leader at ICLEI and author of this guide, Holger Robrecht, for his excellent work and recognize the Directors of our South Asia and Southeast Asia Secretariats, Emani Kumar and Victorino Aquitania, for the successful management of the pilot projects in India and the Philippines. This guidebook draws on the results of their solid work.

Thank you also to the co-author, David Meyrick, as well as to the other contributors: Prof Asesh Maitra, Prof. Johan Nel, Bedoshruiti Sadhukhan, and Andrea Burzacchini.

We at ICLEI are proud to be able to co-publish this booklet with UN-HABITAT and UNEP and with endorsement from United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), and appreciate in particular the support received by UN-HABITAT.

Konrad Otto-Zimmermann
Secretary General, ICLEI
Initiator of Environmental Budgeting

Money is not the only resource – the full cost of municipal action

Decision makers in local government face the ongoing challenge of how to provide services to the residents with limited resources.

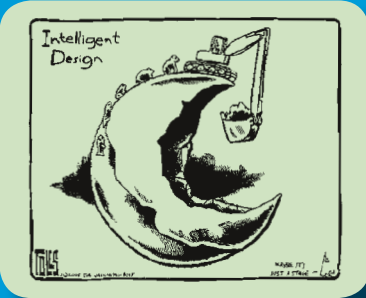
Whether drilling a new well to provide drinking water, renewing a road surface, buying new buses or issuing driving licences, municipal services require resources.

Next to skilled human resources, municipal services also require financial and natural resources. New trucks cost clean air in that their operation burns oxygen, emits carbon dioxide, creates dust, and has negative impact on human health. A new road costs biodiversity in that green space is converted into asphalt and natural habitats are split and separated. At the same time, a new road produces noise, i.e. it costs tranquillity. Similarly, new housing areas impose costs in terms of biodiversity, clean air, agricultural soil, and fresh water since the additional inhabitants will convert more fresh water into sewage. Clearly, municipal action always has both financial and natural cost implications.



“For too long, we have been of the opinion that there were only two types of capital for development – financial and human capital, the latter being knowledge, skills, creativity and education. We have been living in illusion that there was nothing like environmental or natural capital, and that we could use environment, the environmental capital free of charge. Only now, we can clearly see that this idea is no longer carrying and not allowing for economic development processes, too. We have overspent more than 60 percent of the ecosystem services available, as we luxuriously live based on economic growth without reinvesting in the environmental capital stock.”

Klaus Töpfer, Immediate past Executive Director, UNEP

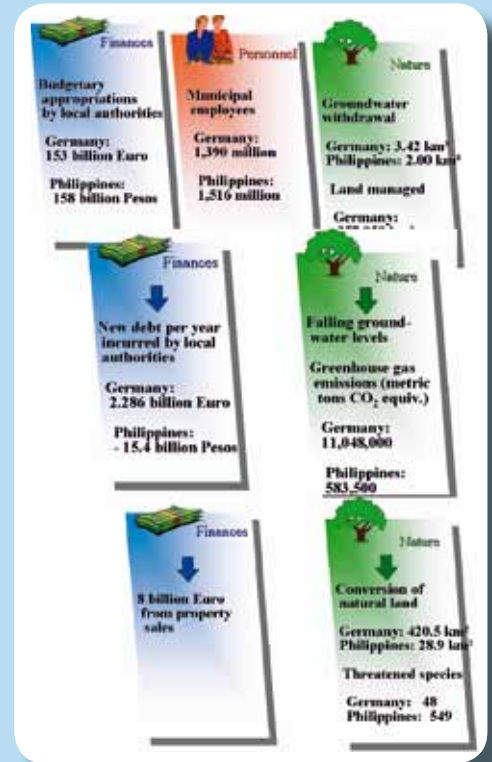


Local Governments responsible for all resources

World-wide, local governments manage and bear responsibility for significant amounts of resources, both financial and natural.

Key data for two countries with different human development indices and ecological footprints – Germany and the Philippines – illustrate this point. In both countries, decision makers are responsible for managing substantial financial budgets and supervising personnel to efficiently deliver services. This could also be done for natural resources, e.g. drinking water. Municipal balance sheets usually present new financial debts incurred, but they do not show the billions of tonnes of CO₂ emissions burdening the global climate. Decision makers often consider property sales as an appropriate way to reduce financial debts with the aim of achieving positive balances and gaining options for investment. However, they are not aware that this is usually at the cost of converting natural resources into settlements or business areas (often threatening habitats and wild-life species).

In fact, local government leaders bear responsibility for the availability and use of resources, for debt, and for property and asset management.



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