



BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY



Biological diversity – defined broadly as the spectacular diversity of life on Earth – is key to the ultimate health and survival of humans and our environment. Preserving that diversity demands protecting and conserving natural resources, on which all life depends. Sustainable resource management, which includes sustainable development, entails using natural resources in ways beneficial to human beings, while maintaining their availability to support biological diversity and continuing human use in the future. Sustainability can be the hallmark of the coming years – if we choose to embrace it over current patterns of consumption and development that pay little heed to the requirements of future generations of life in all forms.

PRINCIPLES FOR SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

In its efforts to promote more sustainable patterns of land use and sustainable resource management, Audubon International recognizes a set of principles embodying the basic tenets we hold crucial for people to move forward toward a more sustainable future. Audubon International's principles form a philosophical foundation by which a community, as well as organizations, families, and individuals within it, may work toward a sustainable future. To that end, Audubon International urges that local and global communities:

- Consider the geographic and ecological contexts in which our actions take place, and at the same time strive to manage resources within the natural limitations and opportunities defined by ecosystems and geographic boundaries.
- Encourage human activities, practices, and land uses that support ecosystems that maintain and enhance biodiversity.
- Encourage resource management practices that have the greatest positive impact on plant and wildlife species, water, and the ecosystems that sustain life.
- Encourage human activities and practices that conserve water and protect or enhance water quality on a local and global basis.
- Strive to use resources that are most easily renewed.
- Strive to eliminate or reduce the use of resources that are difficult or impossible to renew.
- Encourage activities that result in identifying new resources and technologies and enhance our current resource base in ways that will maximize positive impacts on the overall quality of life and the environment.



TURNING PRINCIPLES INTO ACTIONS

Audubon International seeks to encourage and assist community leaders and property owners and managers to turn these principles into good environmental stewardship and sustainable resource management practices. In summary, these practices fall within the following categories:

- A. Assess the Natural and Man-made Resources of the Site and Its Surroundings. Before making resource management decisions, it is crucial to understand the characteristics of the site involved, in its regional context.
- B. Preserve Wildlife Habitat and Interconnections. Sustaining biological diversity necessarily entails protecting and enhancing habitat for wildlife species and corridors for movement between areas of habitat.
- C. Emphasize Natural Landscaping. Sustainable resource management should emphasize landscaping with a variety of materials and resources native to an area, and maintaining them in a natural condition.
- D. Conserve and Protect Water. Supplies of clean, pure water are vital to survival of humans and wildlife.
- E. Minimize Waste Disposal. The initial goal of waste management must be to use resources efficiently and generate as little waste as possible. The secondary goal must be to reuse and recycle as much as possible from waste materials generated.
- F. Maximize Energy Efficiency and Use of Renewable Energy Sources. A sustainable energy future demands that, in the first instance, we use energy resources as efficiently as possible to minimize our consumption of them. Sustainability further requires that we emphasize the use of energy sources that are renewable in less than geologic time spans.
- G. Increase Transportation Efficiency. Moving toward a more sustainable future requires that we: expand availability and use of mass public transportation and low-impact non-powered personal transportation; deploy more energy efficient, renewable, and cleaner burning transportation systems and vehicles; better integrate living, work, and recreational areas to reduce sprawl; and rely more on regionally available agricultural products.
- H. Build Green. Sustainability demands that we focus on environmentally sound, resource efficient building techniques and technology—whether residential, commercial, or industrial—from design to site orientation, sizing, systems, materials, furnishings, appliances, and landscaping.
- I. Preserve and Enhance Regional Agriculture. Sustainable resource management in agriculture depends not only on good environmental stewardship practices in farming operations, but also on protecting prime agricultural areas to maximize regional food self-sufficiency.
- J. Design New Communities and New Developments for Sustainability. Good community design, whether for entirely new communities or new developments within existing ones, must pull all of the above threads of sustainability together and integrate them into a unified, sustainable whole.