The UNESCO URBIS Partnership
Towards Global Designation

ACES Conference
Arizona State University, December 2010
The UNESCO URBIS Partnership is developing a designation process to promote and recognize urban regions efforts to engage in participatory, inclusive, and comprehensive approaches in urban planning for sustainability.
Started in 2003, the development of the URBIS Designation is a work in progress. This designation has evolved to its present status from discussions about applying the Man and the Biosphere concept in urban areas.
Urban regions as sustainable social, cultural, and ecological systems contributing to equitable access to ecosystem services production, distribution, and consumption.

Goals
1. Good living environment
2. Increased accessibility
3. Effective collaboration
4. Secure nature values
5. Climate change mitigation

Results
1. Two more green wedges have joined
2. Stockholm has been one of the Pioneer Cities for URBIS (2009)
3. Permanent collaboration has been established between municipalities and other stakeholders
Municipality of Jerusalem:
Restoration & Development of the Kidron River Basin

Goals
1. Establish a joint Israeli-Palestinian water source
2. Rehabilitate the Basin’s land and water use while preserving its historic value
3. Serve as a blueprint for the 15 trans-boundary waterways in need of action
4. Obtain recognition of the Kidron Valley/Wadi Nar as a UNESCO World Heritage Site
Designation Approach

**TIER 1**
Conduct Inventory of activities, plans and concerns. SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats). Upon competition, City becomes an URBIS Partnership Participating City.

**TIER 2**
Set Overall Vision and Goals. Assess and Prioritize areas of concern related to social-ecological urban practices.

**TIER 3**
Develop Comprehensive Plans according to Tiers 1 and 2. Identify financial, educational, technical requirements and partners.

**TIER 4**
Implement Plans using financial, educational and technological assistance and resources available.

**TIER 5**
Designation Concepts

- Informed by local and global challenges.
- Driven by international agreed development goals.
- Adapts the ecosystem approach to urban landscapes.
- Uses a collaborative management, multi-scale, and multi-disciplinary approach.
Designation Concepts

• Builds on innovative local technical and scientific expertise.
• Locally-led and implemented.
• Driven by science: both peer-reviewed and community-based.
• Provides tools for building resilience and adapting to global environmental change.
Accomplishments:

• CBD Plan of Action recognized the URBIS project and its role in the Global Partnership on Cities and Biodiversity

• The Nagoya Declaration was created and endorsed, establishing a governance structure and a road map to Rio +20.

• Established the science to policy partnership
Current Partners Also Include:

- Cornell University
- United Nations University
- Hebrew University
- IUCN
- Montréal
- Svenska Naturskyddsföreningen
- ICLEI
- Stockholm Resilience Centre
- Convention on Biological Diversity