

Resolution of Council

21 September 2020

Item 12.5

Go Native

Moved by Councillor Phelps, seconded by Councillor Vithoukas –

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note:

- (i) the City of Sydney is located in a spectacular and unique part of the Sydney basin. The inner city is home to around 365 local native plants and 90 different native bird species;
- (ii) while the City's urban population has grown, the urban biodiversity has been greatly reduced from its original state in the City of Sydney local government area;
- (iii) the City should create areas that celebrate local native plants that thrive in the Sydney region and that create habitats for native fauna;
- (iv) through its Urban Ecology Strategic Action Plan, the City encourages residents to create "habitat gardens," in backyards, on balconies, in common areas, or community spaces like local schools;
- (v) the City of Sydney's Street Tree Master Plan focuses on planting "the right tree in the right location," but the Master Plan does not account for available habitat or assist in the movement of native fauna species between those areas;
- (vi) currently 75 per cent of the City's park trees and 58 per cent of the City's street trees are native. Approximately 30 per cent of plants in the City's park and public domain gardens are native; and
- (vii) there are restrictions on what species can be planted in particularly harsh urban environments, however, the City can continue to improve on its efforts to create lush green spaces which showcase native Australian plant species and provide homes for native animals and birds; and

- (B) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to:
- (i) consult with WIRES to compile a list of preferred trees and shrubs for planting in the City of Sydney that creates suitable habitats to enable birds, frogs, lizards, flying foxes, microbats, possums and other small mammals such as bandicoots to successfully survive;
 - (ii) use this list in planning considerations and maximising the planting of native flora where possible; and
 - (iii) share the list via the CEO Update.

Note – the motion above was not carried. The resolution as below was carried –

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council note:
- (i) the City of Sydney is located in a spectacular and unique part of the Sydney basin. The inner city is home to around 365 local native plants and 90 different native bird species;
 - (ii) the City creates areas that celebrate local native plants that thrive in the Sydney region and that create habitats for native fauna;
 - (iii) the City's urban population has grown, and while the urban biodiversity has been greatly reduced from its original state in the City of Sydney local government area, the City has increased its bush restoration areas in open spaces from a baseline of 4.2hectares to approximately 13 hectares in the last seven years;
 - (iv) these areas are managed in accordance to the guidelines outlined in the City's Bush Restoration Management Plan;
 - (v) the objective of these areas is to create habitat for native flora and fauna;
 - (vi) the City has developed a planting guide for its bush restoration and habitat sites to ensure that flora and fauna thrive in an urban environment;
 - (vii) the City is developing a list of preferred tree species for the Grey-headed flying fox based on the extensive work carried out by experts;
 - (viii) the City encourages developers to use the City's planting guide in their development projects, and the Urban Ecology Co-ordinator advises City Projects on park upgrades where native planting is recommended for habitat outcomes;
 - (ix) through its Urban Ecology Strategic Action Plan, the City encourages residents to create "habitat gardens," in backyards, on balconies, in common areas, or community spaces like local schools;
 - (x) the City of Sydney's Street Tree Master Plan and other policies and plans consider habitat a key consideration when selecting a tree species to encourage native flora and fauna;

- (xi) the City of Sydney also considers environmental tolerance, functional requirements and aesthetic and design requirements when planting trees;
 - (xii) the City is currently working with consultants to further improve the identification of biodiversity and habitat corridors to encourage the movement of native fauna across the City of Sydney;
 - (xiii) the objective of these works is to define how public and private landscapes can assist in strengthening habitat corridors and provide the opportunity for planning controls to be amended to support this aim;
 - (xiv) currently 75 per cent of the City's park trees and 58 per cent of the City's street trees are native. Approximately 30 per cent of plants in the City's park and public domain gardens are native;
 - (xv) there are restrictions on what species can be planted in particularly harsh urban environments, however the City can continue to improve on its efforts to create lush green spaces which showcase native Australian plant species and provide homes for native animals and birds; and
- (B) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to consult with WIRES as part of the current review of the Greening Sydney Strategy, Street Tree Master Plan and Urban Forest Strategy.

The amendment was carried on the following show of hands –

Ayes (8) The Chair (the Lord Mayor), Councillors Vithoukias, Scott, Thalys, Kok, Forster, Scully and Miller

Noes (2) Councillors Chung and Phelps.

Amendment carried.

The motion was carried unanimously.

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