



Biodiversity: insurance for the future and for our well-being

Biodiversity is life insurance for the planet. It provides many different environmental services, which can be grouped into four broad categories:

Provisioning services

Biodiversity makes it possible for us to have food, water, shelter, clothing and medical care.

For example: The St. Lawrence River is a source of drinking water for citizens of Montréal.

Regulating services

This refers to the ability of ecosystems to protect conditions necessary for human life. Biodiversity acts as an ecosystem regulator: it reduces the risk of flooding, controls erosion along shorelines, purifies water and air, regulates the earth's climate and controls insect pests that ravage crops.

For example: Trees create cool areas and improve air quality.

Ontogenic services

This refers to biodiversity's contribution to the development of a human being, from conception to adulthood. Biodiversity helps a child's immune system to develop by exposing the child to various life-forms during childhood; it also contributes to a child's brain development through the psychological benefits of contact with nature.

For example: Taking a nature walk in Saint-Laurent, such as in the parc Marcel-Laurin woodland, can help to reduce stress.

Socio-cultural services or non-material benefits

Biodiversity makes it possible for us to practice outdoor leisure activities or cultural activities.

For example: A neighbourhood park is a place to pursue a leisure activity such as cross-country skiing.