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## City of Quito

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Quito - a sustainable proposal from the middle of the world

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Cover image courtesy of the City of Quito.



## Quito – a sustainable proposal from the middle of the world

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Seeking to preserve its unique and rich cultural and historical legacy, the capital of Ecuador, Quito, is pursuing a sustainable future. Its first actions are with the private sector, academia and civil society – promoting environmentally friendly practices and reducing the city's carbon footprint.

Imagine a city that is largely rural, located between 500 and 4,800 meters above sea level and characterized by a diversity of weather conditions and microclimates. It is a city that is home to more than 18,000 species of flora, 540 species of birds and 111 species of mammals. It is a place with a historical and artistic legacy that was recognized when it was declared as one of the world's first UNESCO World Cultural Heritage sites.

Such a place almost seems fictional, but this city is real. Quito is the capital of the Republic of Ecuador and has an area of 4240km<sup>2</sup>. It is divided by the equator and has a population of over 2.2 million inhabitants who are able to enjoy its charms each day. Quito's globally recognized uniqueness makes its inhabitants responsible for preserving and protecting its environment within a sustainability framework.

Conscious of this responsibility, the Metropolitan District of Quito has been promoting the '*Quito Ciudad Sostenible*' initiative, which encourages the development of a city with low carbon rates to maintain balance for the next and future generations. The initiative includes aspects such as the use of alternative energies, water resources, the accurate management of solid waste and green areas, as well as environmentally responsible transport options.

Quito's government, together with the private sector, scholars and other civil society actors, promotes programs that lead to the application of environmentally friendly practices as a starting point for development. The government's aim is to make some changes to the behaviour of Quito's inhabitants to help prevent and reduce negative environmental impacts.

The program began with an analysis to gather information related to the city's hydric, ecological and coal footprints as a result of the daily activities of Quito's citizens. These measurements contributed to the identification

of Quito inhabitants' natural resource demands in the context of the territory's regenerative capacity. Quito's local government is convinced that the construction of a sustainable city depends on the cooperation of all its inhabitants. Therefore, we defined a set of parameters to determine the ideal environmental management of the city. These aspects have been communicated to all citizens in an accessible way.

With the evaluation completed, we proposed the following activities in order to reduce negative environmental impacts. Inside Quito's government offices, public servants are carrying out a cleaning project and organizing their workplaces, including desks, storage rooms and filing cabinets. The goal is to identify unused equipment and materials that can be reused in other parts of the city government headquarters. A set of environmental criteria will also be introduced to guide public procurement and official events within this project framework.

As the city's administration promotes environmentally friendly behaviour amongst its citizens, it is encouraging prevention rather than punishment. As a result, the city's government has created a program to recognize and highlight the environmentally responsible initiatives and practices undertaken by companies from the private sector, educational institutions and neighbourhoods. This program aims to promote better use of resources and cleaner production.

In this way, Quito is generating a culture of responsibility between local government and civil society, which will be complemented an additional project – the city's volunteering program.

This program aims to promote solidarity and community service among city inhabitants. The volunteer program seeks to include people of different ages, as well as corporate, academic, not-for-profit and other civil society

actors to promote active citizen participation. Since building a sustainable city goes beyond environmental development, our volunteering program provides a wide range of options for those who want to get involved, including projects in areas such as health, culture and education, among others.

This is just the beginning. Those who have been lucky enough to visit Quito and even live here believe in the importance of taking firm steps to add sustainability to the many qualities Ecuador's capital already possesses.

We invite everyone to join this effort and contribute to Quito's Mayor's initiative to give life to this wonderful city in the middle of the world.

*Quito made the commitment to the Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact in 2014. Quito is strongly supported by the Ecuador Global Compact Network.*



As part of Quito's commitment to the Global Compact, the Mayor of Ecuador's capital, Mauricio Rodas, committed to working with private enterprise and citizens to reduce the city's carbon footprint, one of the first steps in Quito becoming a sustainable city. Image: Alcaldía de Quito.