# Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 Country Dossier: AUSTRIA

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# GLOSSARY

| | |
|---|---|
| AZEs | Alliance for Zero Extinction sites |
| CEPF | Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund |
| EEZ | Exclusive Economic Zone |
| GCF | Green Climate Fund |
| GD-PAME | Global Database on Protected Area Management Effectiveness |
| GEF | Global Environment Facility |
| IBA | Important Bird and Biodiversity Area |
| ICCAs | Indigenous and Community Conserved Area Area (may also be referred to as territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples and local communities or "territories of life") |
| IPLC | Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities |
| KBA | Key Biodiversity Area |
| NBSAP | National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan |
| OECM | Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures |
| PA | Protected Area |
| PAME | Protected Area Management Effectiveness |
| PPA | Privately Protected Area |
| ProtConn | Protected Connected land indicator |
| SOC | Soil Organic Carbon |
| TEOW | Terrestrial Ecosystems of the World |
| WDPA | World Database on Protected Areas |
| WD-OECM | World Database on Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures |

## Disclaimer

The designations employed and the presentation of material in this dossier do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD) or United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The information contained in this publication do not necessarily represent those of the SCBD or UNDP.

This country dossier is compiled by the UNDP and SCBD from publicly available information. It is prepared, within the overall work of the Global Partnership on Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, for the purpose of attracting the attention of the Party concerned and other national stakeholders to facilitate the verification, correcting, and updating of country data. The statistics might differ from those reported officially by the country due to differences in methodologies and datasets used to assess protected area coverage and differences in the base maps used to measure terrestrial and marine area of a country or territory. Furthermore, the suggestions from the UNDP and SCBD are based on analyses of global datasets, which may not necessarily be representative of national policy or criteria used at the national level. The analyses are also subject to the limits inherent in global indicators (precision, reliability, underlying assumptions, etc.). Therefore, they provide useful information but cannot replace analyses at a national level nor constitute a future benchmark for national policy or decision-making.

The preparation of this dossier was generously supported by: the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GMbH*; the European Commission; the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; and the Government of Japan (Japan Biodiversity Fund). The dossier does not necessarily reflect their views.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document provides information on the coverage of protected areas (PAs) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs), as currently reported in global databases (the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) and World Database on Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (WD-OECM)). It also includes details on the status of the other qualifying elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 based on this data. These statistics might differ from those reported officially by countries due to difference in methodologies and datasets used to assess protected area coverage, differences in the base maps used to measure terrestrial and marine area of a country or territory, or if global datasets differ from the criteria and indicators used at the national level. This dossier also provides a summary of commitments made under Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, and a summary of potential opportunities regarding elements of the target for future planning.

The dossier has been developed in consultation with the UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), which manages the WDPA, WD-OECM and Global Database on Protected Area Management Effectiveness (GD-PAME). Parties to the CBD are requested to contact protectedareas@unep-wcmc.org with any updates to the information in these databases.

## Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 Elements: Current status and opportunities for action

### Coverage

- **Status:** as of May 2021, terrestrial coverage in Austria is 24,413.7 km$^2$ (29.1%).
- **Opportunities for action:** opportunities for the near-term include updating the WDPA with any unreported PAs, and the recognizing and reporting OECMs to the WD-OECM. In the future, focus on relatively intact areas, while addressing the elements in the following sections, could be considered if planning new PAs or OECMs.

### Ecological Representativeness

- **Status:** Austria contains 4 terrestrial ecoregions (all of which have at least 10% coverage by reported PAs and OECMs): the mean protected coverage by reported PAs and OECMs is 28.8%. National Parks in Austria cover 80% of the habitats of European concern relevant for Austria, 86% of mammals, 87% of birds, 79% of reptiles, 90% of amphibians, and 72% of fish within the country.
- **Opportunities for action:** there is opportunity for Austria to increase protection in terrestrial ecoregions that have lower levels of coverage by PAs or OECMs; and focus on effective management for ecoregions that already have higher coverage.

### Areas Important for Biodiversity

- **Status:** Austria has 56 Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs): the mean protected coverage of KBAs by reported PAs and OECMs is 67.6%, while 2 KBAs have no coverage by reported PAs and OECMs.

- **Opportunities for action:** there is opportunity for Austria to increase protection of KBAs that have lower levels of coverage by PAs and OECMs; priority could be given to those with no current coverage.

### Areas Important for Ecosystem Services

- **Status:** coverage of areas important for ecosystem services: In Austria, 32.1% of aboveground biomass carbon, 32.0% of belowground biomass carbon and 30.1% of soil organic carbon is covered by PAs and OECMs.

- **Opportunities for action:** for carbon, there is opportunity for Austria to increase PA and OECM coverage in terrestrial areas with high carbon stocks. Protecting areas with high carbon stocks secures the benefits of carbon sequestration in the area.

- For water, there is opportunity to increase the area of the water catchment under protection by PAs and OECMs, or in cases where there is high levels of protection, focus on effective management for these areas. Protecting the current area of forested land and potentially reforesting would have benefits for improving water security.

### Connectivity and Integration

- **Status:** coverage of protected-connected lands is 24.9%.

- **Opportunities for action:** there is opportunity to focus on PA and OECM management for enhancing and maintaining connectivity. Increasing connectivity increases the effectiveness of PAs and OECMs and reduces the impacts of fragmentation.

- As well, a range of suggested steps for enhancing and supporting integration are included in the voluntary guidance on the integration of PAs and OECMs into the wider land- and seascapes and mainstreaming across sectors to contribute, inter alia, to the SDGs (Annex I of COP Decision 14/8).

### Governance Diversity

- **Status:** the most common governance type(s) for reported PAs in Austria is: 98.4% under Government (Federal or national ministry or agency).

- **Opportunities for action:** explore opportunities for governance types that have lower representation, for Austria this could relate to shared governance.

- There is also opportunity for Austria to complete governance and equity assessments, to establish baselines and identify relevant actions for improvement. As well, a range of suggested actions are included in the voluntary guidance on

effective governance models for management of protected areas, including equity (Annex II of COP Decision 14/8).

### Protected Area Management Effectiveness

- **Status:** 1.9% of terrestrial PAs have completed Protected Area Management Effectiveness (PAME) assessments reported.
- **Opportunities for action:** the 60% target for completed management effectiveness assessments (per COP Decision X/31) **has not** been met for terrestrial PAs, therefore, there is opportunity to report on completed assessments and to increase protected area management effectiveness (PAME) evaluations for terrestrial PAs to achieve the target.
- There is also opportunity to implement the results of completed PAME evaluations, to improve the quality of management for existing PAs and OECMs (e.g. through adaptive management and information sharing, increasing the number of sites reporting 'sound management') and to increase reporting of biodiversity outcomes in PAs and OECMs.

# INTRODUCTION

The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 was adopted at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) held in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan from 18-29 October 2010. The vision of the Strategic Plan is one of "Living in harmony with nature" where *"By 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people*" (CBD, 2010). In addition to this vision, the Strategic Plan is composed of 20 targets, under five strategic goals. Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 states that *"By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes."*

With the conclusion of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets in 2020, Target 11 on area-based conservation has seen success in the expansion of the global network of protected areas (PA) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs). The negotiation of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and its future targets provide an essential opportunity to further improve the coverage of PAs and OECMs, to improve other aspects of area-based conservation, to accelerate progress on biodiversity conservation more broadly, while also addressing climate change, and the Sustainable Development Goals. This next set of global biodiversity targets are to be adopted at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. These new targets must aim to build upon lessons learned from the last decade of progress to deliver transformative change for the benefit of nature and people, to realize the 2050 Vision for biodiversity.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity have developed the Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 Country Dossiers, which provide countries with an overview of the status of Target 11 elements, opportunities for action, and a summary of commitments made by Parties over the last decade. Each country dossier can support countries in assessing their progress on key elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 and identifying opportunities to prioritize new protected areas and OECMs.

This dossier provides an overview of area-based conservation in Austria. Section I of the dossier presents data on the current status of Austria's PAs and OECMs. The data presented in Section I relates to each element of Target 11. Section I also presents the PA and OECM coverage for two critical ecosystem services: water security and carbon stocks. In addition, the dossier presents potential opportunities for action for Austria, in relation to each Target 11 element. The analyses present options for improving Austria's area-based conservation network to achieve enhanced protection and benefits for livelihoods and climate change. Section II presents details on Austria's existing PA and OECMs commitments as a summary of existing efforts towards achieving Target 11. This gives focus not only to national policy and actions but also voluntary commitments to the UN.

Furthermore, where data is available, this dossier provides information on potential OECMs, Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs; also often referred to as territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples and local communities or "territories of life") and Privately Protected Areas (PPAs) and the potential contribution they will have in achieving the post-2020 targets.

The information on PAs and OECMs presented here is derived from the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) and World Database on Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (WD-OECM). These databases are joint products of UNEP and IUCN, managed by UNEP-WCMC, and can be viewed and downloaded at www.protectedplanet.net. Parties are encouraged to provide data on their PAs and OECMs to UNEP-WCMC for incorporation into the databases (see e.g. Decisions 10/31 and 14/8). The significant efforts of Parties in updating their data in the build up to the publication of the Protected Planet Report 2020 (UNEP-WCMC and IUCN, 2021) were greatly appreciated. UNEP-WCMC welcomes further updates, following the data standards described here, and these should be directed to protectedareas@unep-wcmc.org. The statistics presented in this dossier are derived from the May 2021 WDPA and WD-OECM releases, unless explicitly stated otherwise. Readers should consult www.protectedplanet.net for the latest coverage statistics (updated monthly).

Some data from the WDPA and WD-OECM are not made publicly available at the request of the data-provider. This affects some statistics, maps, and figures presented in this dossier. Statistics provided by UNEP-WCMC (terrestrial and marine coverage) are based upon the full dataset, including restricted data. All other statistics, maps, and figures are based upon the subset of the data that is publicly available.

Where data is less readily available, such as for potential OECMs, ICCAs and PPAs, data has also been compiled from published reports and scientific literature to provide greater awareness of these less commonly recorded aspects. These data are provided to highlight the need for comprehensive reporting on these areas to the WDPA and/or WD-OECM. Parties are invited to work with indigenous peoples, local communities and private actors to submit data under the governance of these actors, with their consent, to the WDPA and/or WD-OECM.

Overall, PAs and OECMs are essential instruments for biodiversity conservation and to sustain essential ecosystem services that support human well-being and sustainable development, including food, medicine, and water security, as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation and disaster risk reduction. The data in this dossier, therefore, aims to celebrate the current contributions of PAs and OECMs, whilst the gaps presented hope to encourage greater progress, not just for the benefit of biodiversity and the post-2020 GBF, but also to recognize the essential role of PAs and OECMs to the Sustainable Development Goals and for addressing the climate crisis.

# SECTION I: CURRENT STATUS

Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 refers to both protected areas (PAs) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs). This section provides the current status for all elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 where indicators with global data are available. Statistics for all elements are presented using data on both PAs and OECMs (where this data is available and reported in global databases like the WDPA and WD-OECM). It is recognized that statistics reported in the WPDA and WD-OECM might differ from those reported officially by countries due to differences in methodologies and datasets used to assess protected area coverage and differences in the base maps used to measure terrestrial and marine area of a country or territory. Details on UNEP-WCMC's methods for calculating PA and OECM coverage area available here. The global indicators adopted here for presenting the status of other elements of Target 11 may also differ from those in use nationally.

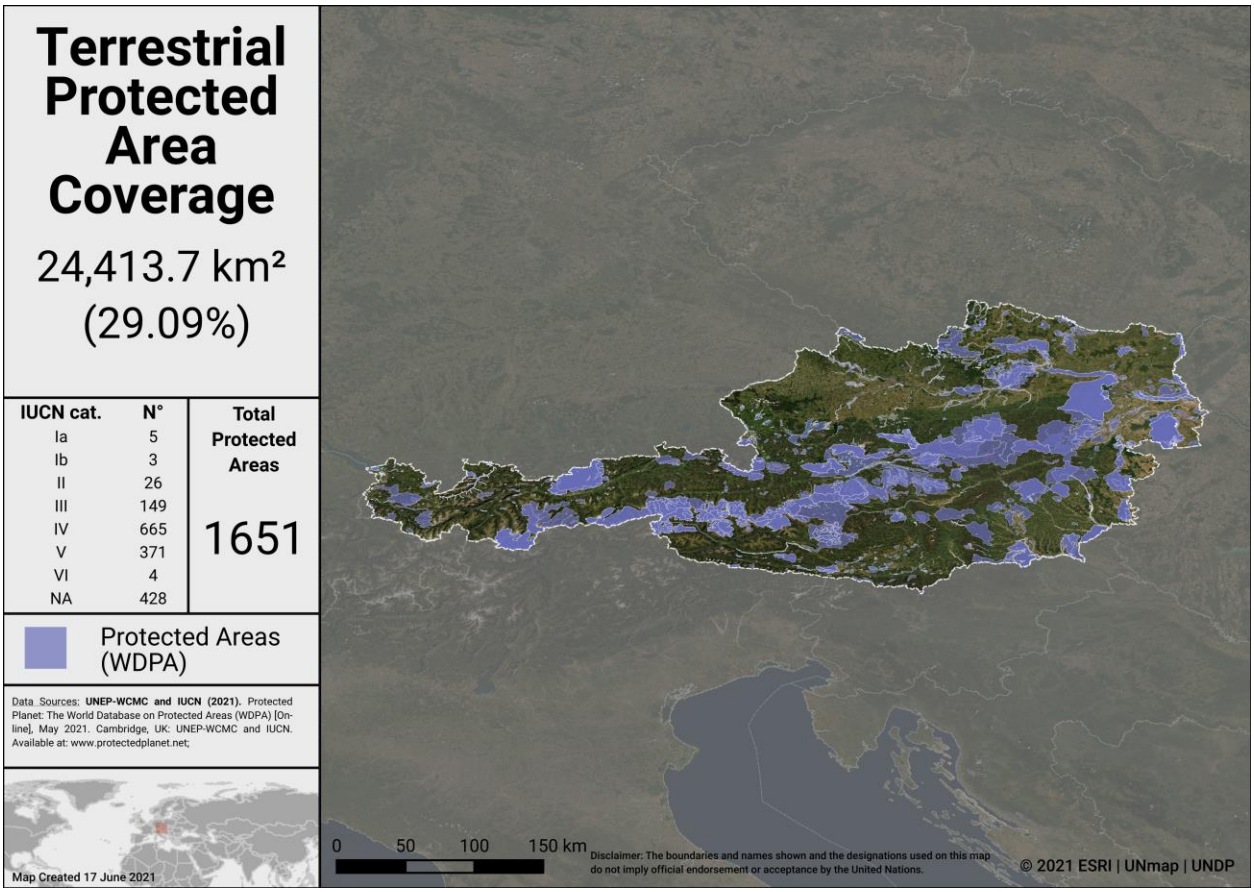
## COVERAGE

As of May 2021, Austria has **1,653** protected areas reported in the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA). 2 UNESCO-MAB Biosphere Reserves are not included in the following statistics (see details on UNWP-WCMCs methods for calculating PA and OECM coverage **here**).

As of May 2021, Austria has **0** OECMs reported in the world database on OECMs (WD-OECM).

Current coverage for Austria:

- 29.1% terrestrial (1,651 protected areas, 24,413.7 km$^2$)



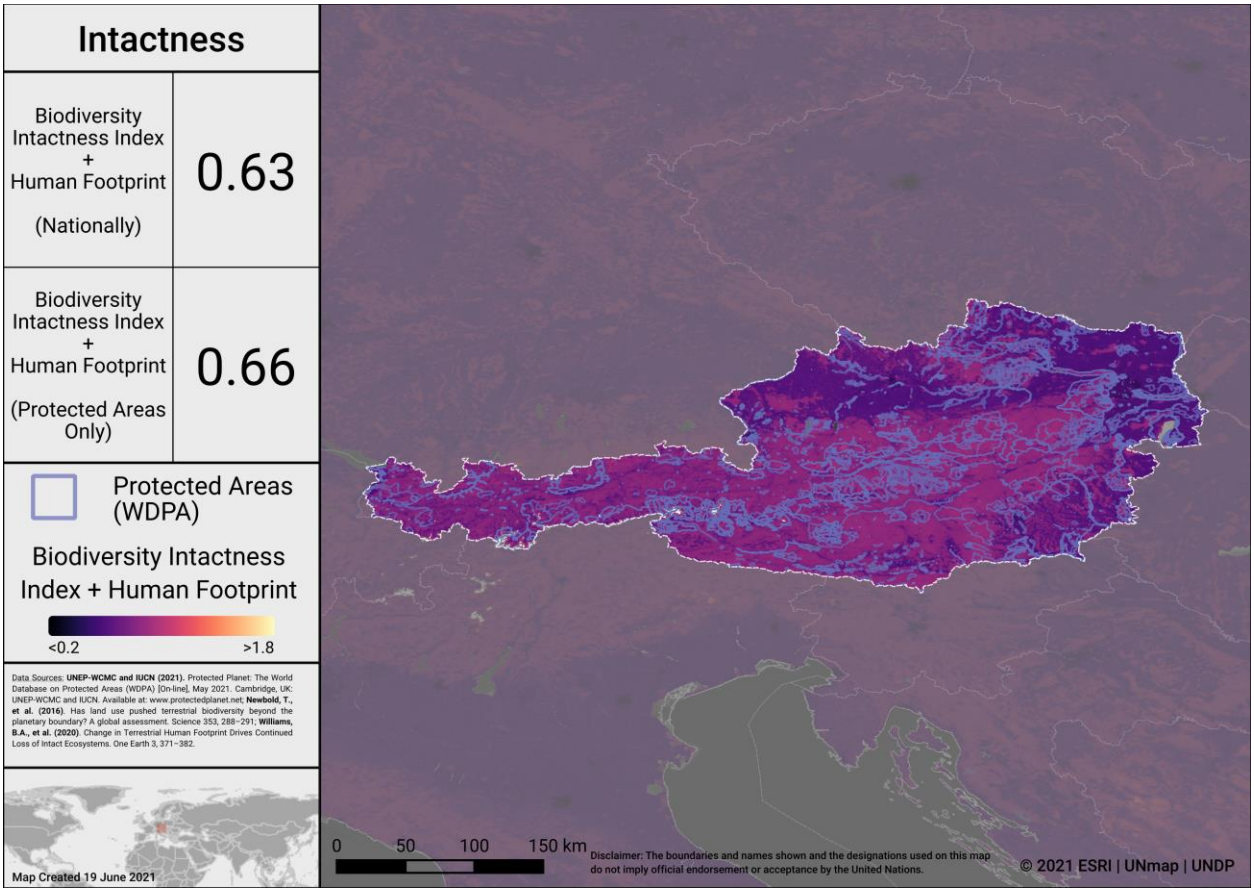

Terrestrial Protected Areas in Austria

### Potential OECMs

There are currently no potential OECM examples in Austria.

## Opportunities for action

Opportunities for the near-term include updating the WDPA with any unreported PAs, and the recognizing and reporting OECMs to the WD-OECM. In the future, as Austria considers where to add new PAs and OECMs, the map below identifies areas in Austria where intact areas are not currently protected. Focus on relatively intact areas, while addressing the elements in the following sections, could be considered if planning new PAs or OECMs.




Intactness in Austria

To explore more on intactness visit the UN Biodiversity Lab: map.unbiodiversitylab.org.

## ECOLOGICAL REPRESENTATIVENESS

Ecological representativeness cam be assessed based on the PAs and OECMs coverage of broad-scale biogeographic units (it may also be assessed by the representation of species within PAs and OECMs). Globally, ecoregions have been described for terrestrial areas (Dinerstein et al, 2017), marine coastal and shelf ecosystems (to a depth of 200m; Spalding et al 2007) and surface pelagic waters (Spalding et al 2012).

Natura 2000 sites, according to EU Habitats and Birds Directive (which cover 15% of the Austrian territory) cover **habitats and species of European concern** within two biogeographical regions (**alpine** and **continental**)

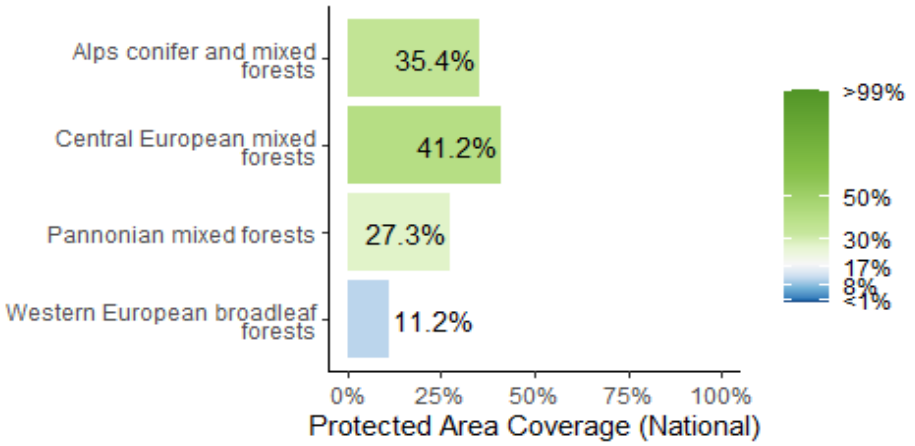
In national parks (3% of the Austrian territory) occur:

- 57 of the 71 habitats of European concern relevant for Austria (80% of the habitats)
- 86% of mammals
- 87% of birds
- 79% of reptiles
- 90% of amphibians
- 72% of fish

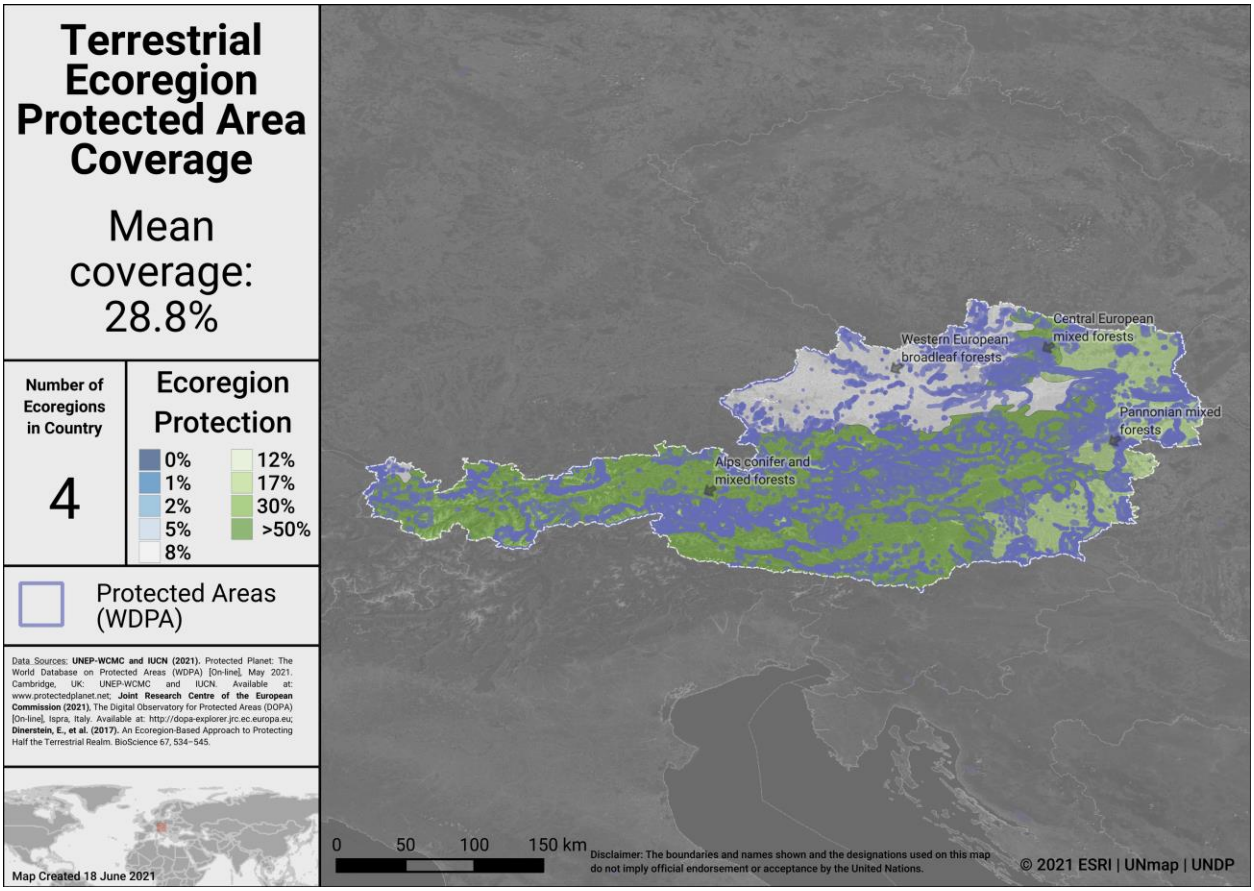
Austria has 4 **terrestrial** ecoregions. Out of these:

- All 4 ecoregions have at least some coverage from PAs and OECMs.
- 3 ecoregions have at least 17% protected within the country.
- The average terrestrial coverage of ecoregions is 28.8%.

A full list of ecoregions in Austria is available in Annex I.




Terrestrial ecoregions of the World (TEOW) in Austria




Terrestrial ecoregions in Austria

## Opportunities for action

There is opportunity for Austria to increase protection in terrestrial ecoregions that have lower levels of coverage by PAs or OECMs; and focus on effective management for ecoregions that already have higher coverage.

## AREAS IMPORTANT FOR BIODIVERSITY

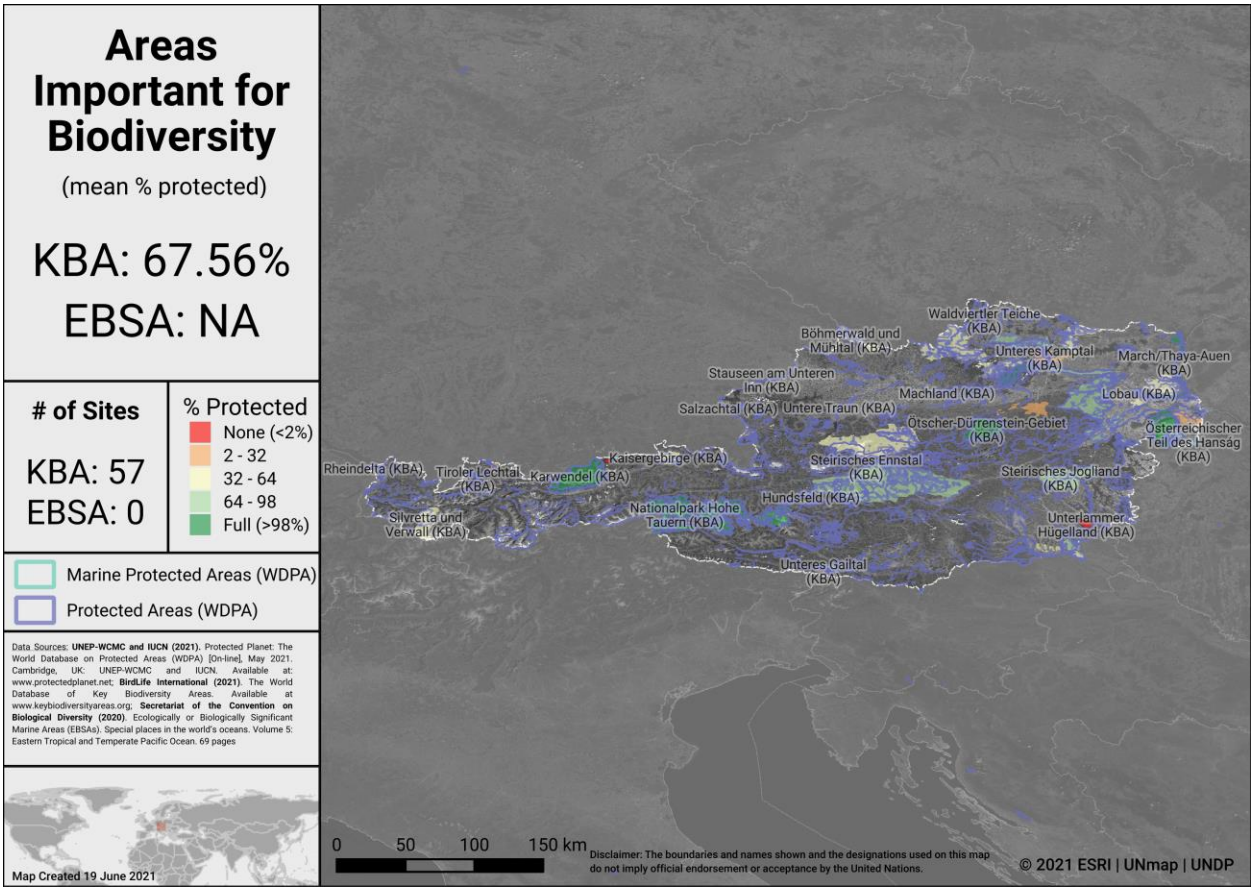
**Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs)**

Protected area and OECM coverage of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) provide one proxy for assessing the conservation of areas important for biodiversity at national, regional and global scales. KBAs are sites that make significant contributions to the global persistence of biodiversity (IUCN, 2016). The KBA concept builds on four decades of efforts to identify important sites for biodiversity, including Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas, Alliance for Zero Extinction sites, and KBAs identified through Hotspot ecosystem profiles supported by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund. Incorporating these sites, the dataset of internationally significant KBAs includes Global KBAs (sites shown to meet one or more of 11 criteria in the Global Standard for the Identification of KBAs, clustered into five categories: threatened biodiversity; geographically restricted biodiversity; ecological integrity; biological processes; and irreplaceability), Regional KBAs (sites identified using pre-existing criteria and thresholds, that do not meet the Global KBA criteria based on existing information), and KBAs whose Global/Regional status is Not yet determined, but which will be assessed against the global KBA criteria within 8-12 years. Regional KBAs are often of critical international policy relevance (e.g., in EU legislation and under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands), and many are likely to qualify as Global KBAs in future once assessed for their biodiversity importance for other taxonomic groups and ecosystems. To date, nearly 16,000 KBAs have identified globally, and information on each of these is presented in the World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas: www.keybiodiversityareas.org.

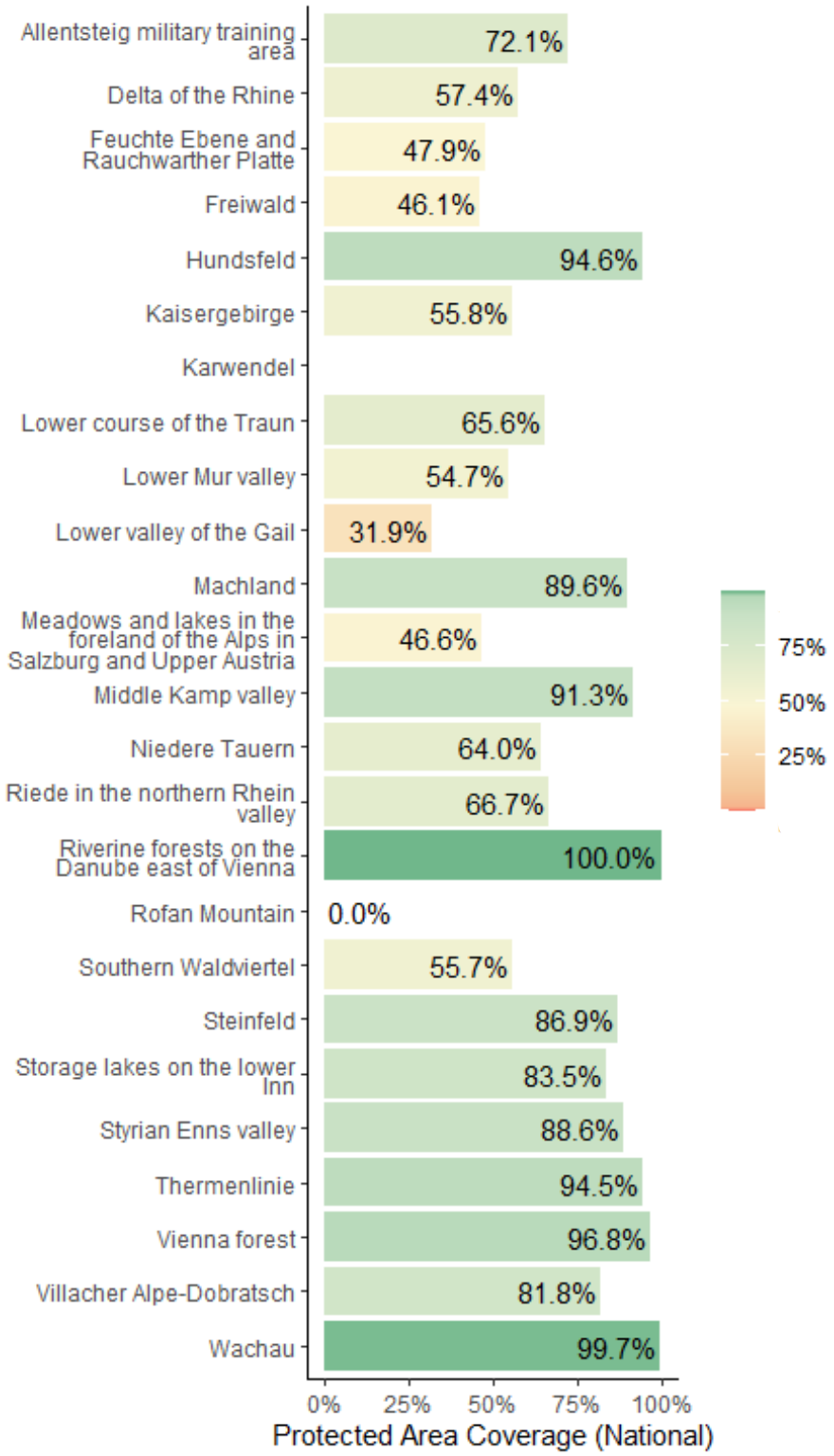
Austria has 57 Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) [only **56** included in analysis].

- Mean percent coverage of all KBAs by PAs and OECMs in Austria is **67.6%**.
- **9** KBAs have full (>98%) coverage by PAs and OECMs.
- **45** KBAs have partial coverage by PAs and OECMs.
- **2** KBAs have no (<2%) coverage by PAs and OECMs.
- *1 KBA lacks spatial data to allow PA and OECM coverage to be determined*

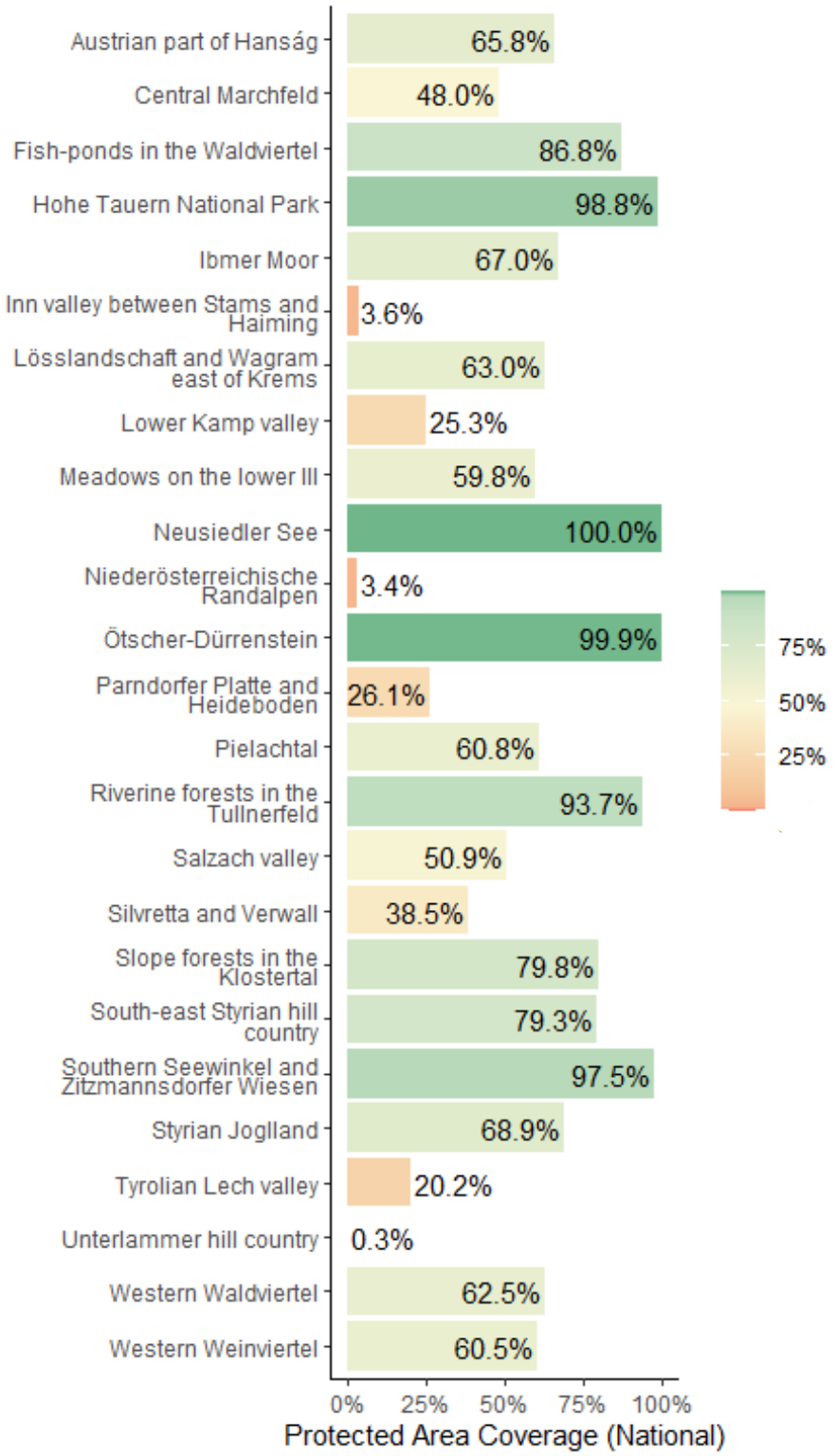
Areas important for biodiversity in Austria are protected as national heritage sites (UNESCO), wilderness areas (IUCN management categories Ia and Ib), national parks (IUCN management category II), Natura 2000-sites (under EU directives), and together, they cover ~18% of the national territory.



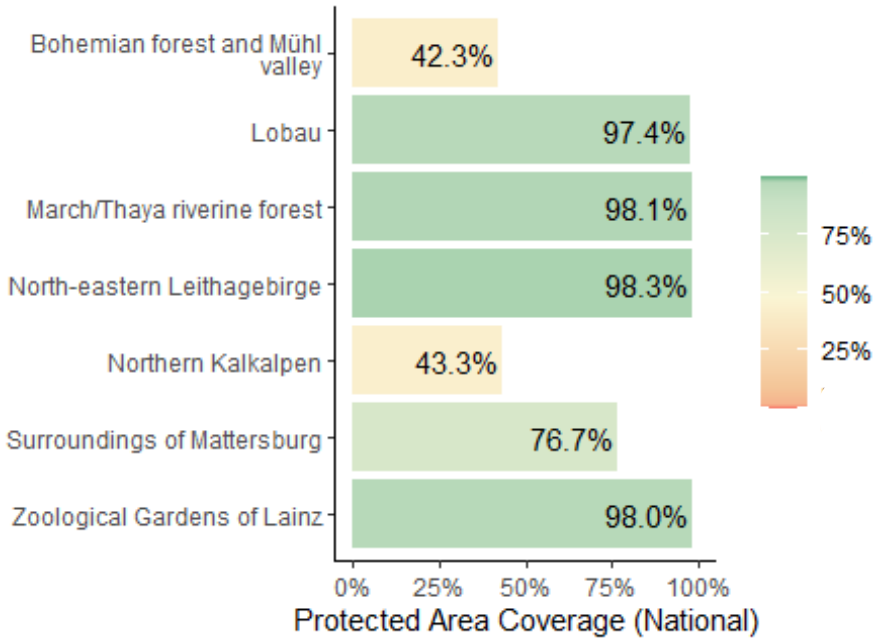

Areas Important for Biodiversity in Austria




Key Biodiversity Area Coverage (KBA) in Austria




Key Biodiversity Area Coverage (KBA) in Austria (continued)




Key Biodiversity Area Coverage (KBA) in Austria (continued)

## Opportunities for action

There is opportunity for Austria to increase protection of KBAs that have lower levels of coverage by PAs and OECMs; priority could be given to those with no current coverage.

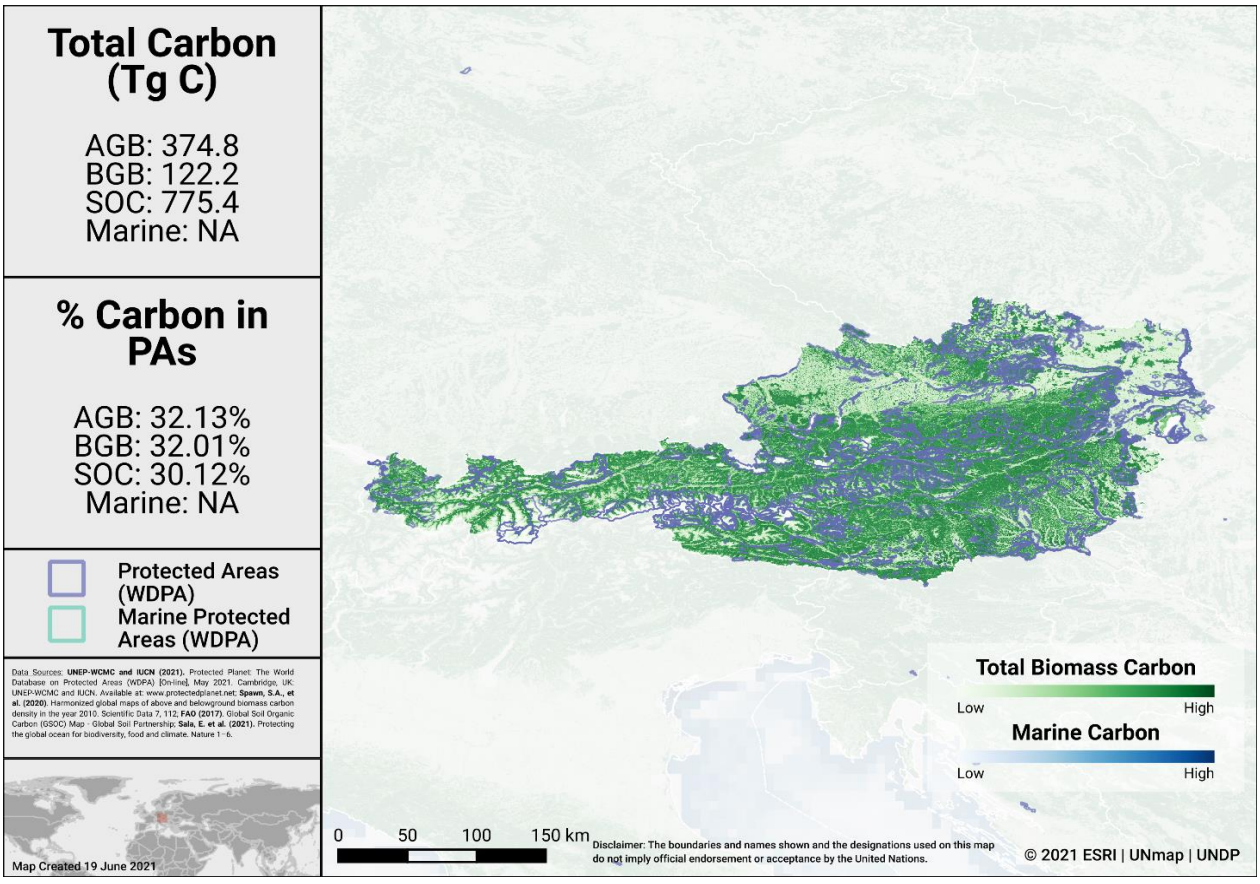
## AREAS IMPORTANT FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

There is no single indicator identified for assessing the conservation of areas important for ecosystem services. For simplicity, two services with available global datasets are assessed here (carbon and water). In future, other critical ecosystem services could be explored. In Austria, there are no protected areas established mainly for ecosystem services, although PAs are surely providing them, e.g. carbon storage in old growth forests and mires, all cultural services, etc.

### Carbon

Data for biomass carbon comes from temporally consistent and harmonized global maps of aboveground biomass and belowground biomass carbon density (at a 300-m spatial resolution); the maps integrate land-cover specific, remotely sensed data, and land-cover specific empirical models (see Spawn et al., 2020 for details on methodology). The Global Soil Organic Carbon Map present an estimation of SOC stock from 0 to 30 cm (see FAO, 2017 for details on methodology)

The map below presents the total carbon stocks in Austria and the percent of carbon in protected areas. The total carbon stocks is 374.8 Tg C from aboveground biomass (AGB), with 32.1% in PAs; 122.2 Tg C from below ground biomass (BGB), with 32.0% in PAs and 775.4 Tg C from soil organic carbon (SOC), with 30.1% in PAs.



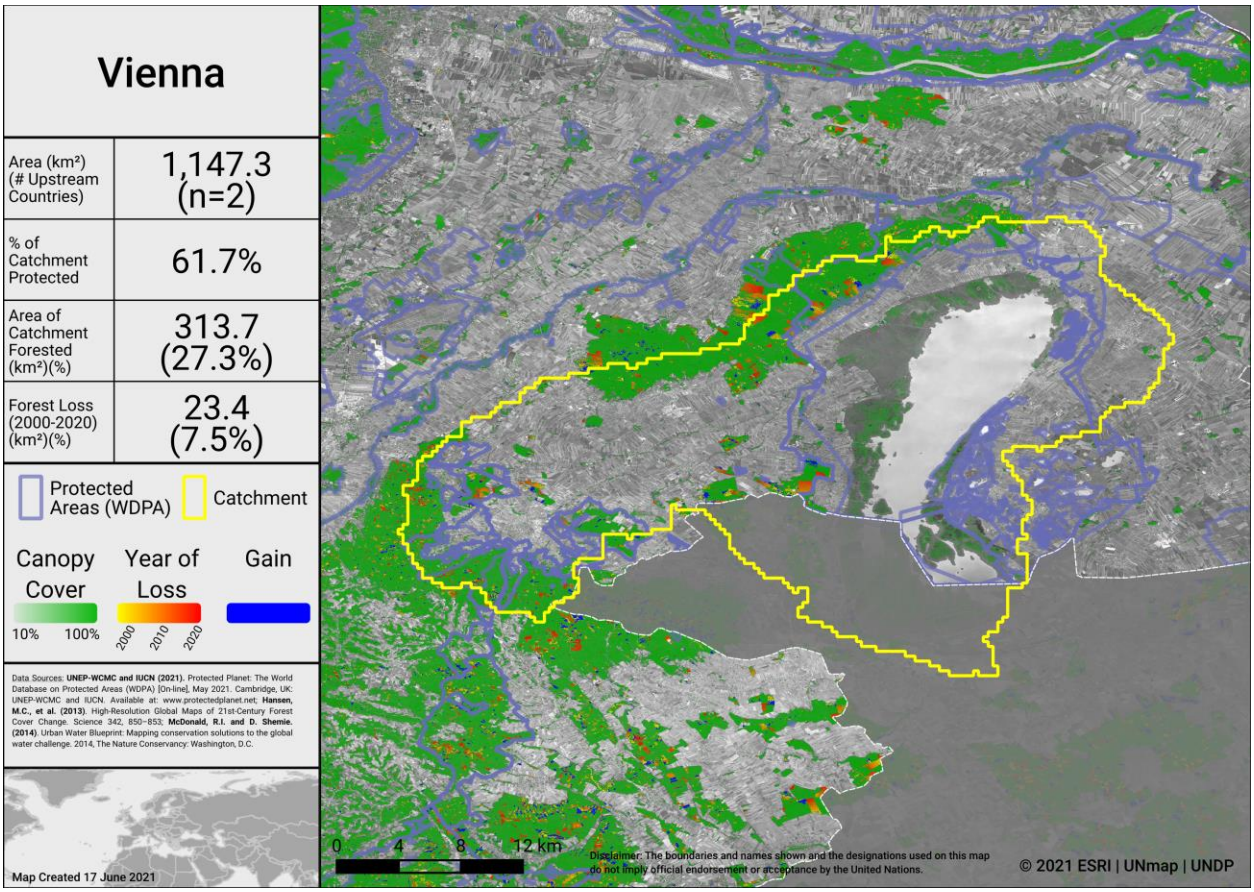

Carbon Stocks in Austria

## Water

Information on the water sources for 534 cities is available via the City Water Map (CWM) and provides details on the catchment area of the watershed that supplies these cities (see McDonald et al., 2014 for details on methodology).

Forests support stormwater management and clean water availability, especially for large urban populations. Research that has examined the role of forests for city drinking water supplies shows that of the world's 105 largest cities, more than 30% (33 cities) rely heavily on the local protected forests, which provide ecosystem services that underpin local drinking water availability and quality (Dudley & Stolton, 2003)

Drinking water supplies for cities in Austria may similarly depend on protected forest areas within and around water catchments. The map below shows the percentage forest cover and the forest loss from 2000-2020 in the most heavily populated water catchment of Austria. Intact catchments can support more consistent water supply and improved water quality.




Water supply area for the city of Vienna

### Opportunities for action

For carbon, there is opportunity for Austria to increase PA and OECM coverage in terrestrial areas with high carbon stocks, as identified in the map above. Protecting areas with high carbon stocks secures the benefits of carbon sequestration in the area.

For water, there is opportunity to increase the area of the water catchment under protection by PAs and OECMs, or in cases where there is high levels of protection, focus on effective management for these areas. Protecting the current area of forested land and potentially reforesting would have benefits for improving water security.

## CONNECTIVITY & INTEGRATION

Two global indicators, the Protected Connected land indicator (ProtConn; EC-JRC, 2021; Saura et al., 2018) and the PARC-Connectedness indicator (CSIRO, 2019), have been proposed for assessing the terrestrial connectivity of PA and OECM networks (to date there is no global indicator for assessing marine connectivity).

### Protected Connected Land Indicator (Prot-Conn)

As of January 2021, as reported in the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission's Digital Observatory for Protected Areas (DOPA) (JRC, 2021), the coverage of protected-connected lands (a measure of the connectivity of terrestrial protected area networks, assessed using the ProtConn indicator) in Austria was 24.9%.

### PARC-Connectedness Index

In 2019, as assessed using the PARC-Connectedness Index (values ranging from 0-1, indicating low to high connectivity), connectivity in Austria is 0.39. This represents a slight increase from 0.38 in 2010.

### Corridor case studies

Below is a list of case studies on corridors and connectivity in Austria:

| Case study title | Type of study region | Greatest threat to connectivity | Approaches to conserving ecological corridors |
|---|---|---|---|
| The ecological corridor Mura-Drava Danube and future five-country biosphere reserve | freshwater, rural | human land-use changes | • transboundary cooperation for harmonised conservation, integrated management and restoration<br>• establishment of a transboundary biosphere reserve |

Further details are available in Hilty et al 2020.

The most important habitat corridors are mapped, but not under legal protection. See: http://www.lebensraumvernetzung.at/en/map

### Opportunities for action

There is opportunity to focus on PA and OECM management for enhancing and maintaining connectivity. Increasing connectivity increases the effectiveness of PAs and OECMs and reduces the impacts of fragmentation.

As well, a range of suggested steps for enhancing and supporting integration are included in the voluntary guidance on the integration of PAs and OECMs into the wider land- and seascapes and mainstreaming across sectors to contribute, inter alia, to the SDGs (Annex I of COP Decision 14/8).

## GOVERNANCE DIVERSITY

There is a lack of comprehensive global data on governance quality and equity in PAs and OECMs. Here, we provide data on the diversity of governance types for reported sites.

Governance and equity lie within the competence of the 9 federal provinces of Austria. with the exception of national parks, for which the relevant provinces and the state share the responsibility. As of May 2021, PAs in Austria reported in the WDPA have the following governance types:

- 98.4% are governed by **governments** (by federal or national ministry or agency)
- 0.0% are under **shared** governance
- 0.0% are under **private** governance
- 0.0% are under **IPLC** governance
- 1.6% **do not** report a governance type
  - (All of which are international designations)

### OECMs

As of May 2021, there are **0** OECMs in Austria reported in the WD-OECM, therefore there is no data available on OECM governance types.

### Privately Protected Areas (PPAs)

There is no data available on PPAs for Austria (see Gloss et al., 2019, and Stolton et al., 2014 for details).

### Territories and areas conserved by Indigenous Peoples and local communities (ICCAs)

There is no data available on ICCAs for Austria (see Kothari et al., 2012 and the ICCA Registry for further details).

### Other Indigenous lands

There is currently no data available on lands managed and/or controlled by Indigenous Peoples in Austria (see Garnett et al 2018 for details).

### Opportunities for action

Explore opportunities for governance types that have lower representation, for Austria this could relate to shared governance, etc.

There is also opportunity for Austria to complete governance and equity assessments, to establish baselines and identify relevant actions for improvement. Examples of existing tools and methodologies include: Governance Assessment for Protected and Conserved Areas (Franks & Brooker, 2018), Social Assessment of Protected Areas (Franks et al 2018), and Site-level assessment of governance and equity (IIED, 2020). As well, a range of suggested actions are included in the voluntary guidance on effective governance models for management of protected areas, including equity (Annex II of COP Decision 14/8).

# PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS

This section provides information on the coverage of PAs and OECMs with completed protected area management effectiveness (PAME) assessments as reported in the global database (GD-PAME). The proportion of terrestrial and marine PAs with completed PAME assessments is also calculated and compared with the 60% target agreed to in COP-10 Decision X/31. Information is also included regarding changes in forest cover nationally within PAs and OECMs.

## Protected area management effectiveness (PAME) assessments

Comprehensive data for PAME assessments are not available for all Austrian protected areas, however, there are some completed assessments for natural heritage sites, national parks, Natura 2000-sites and nature reserves (not all are currently reflected in the GD-PAME).

As of May 2021, Austria has 1,654 PAs reported in the WDPA; of these PAs, 5 (0.2%) have management effectiveness evaluations reported in the global database on protected area management effectiveness (GD-PAME).

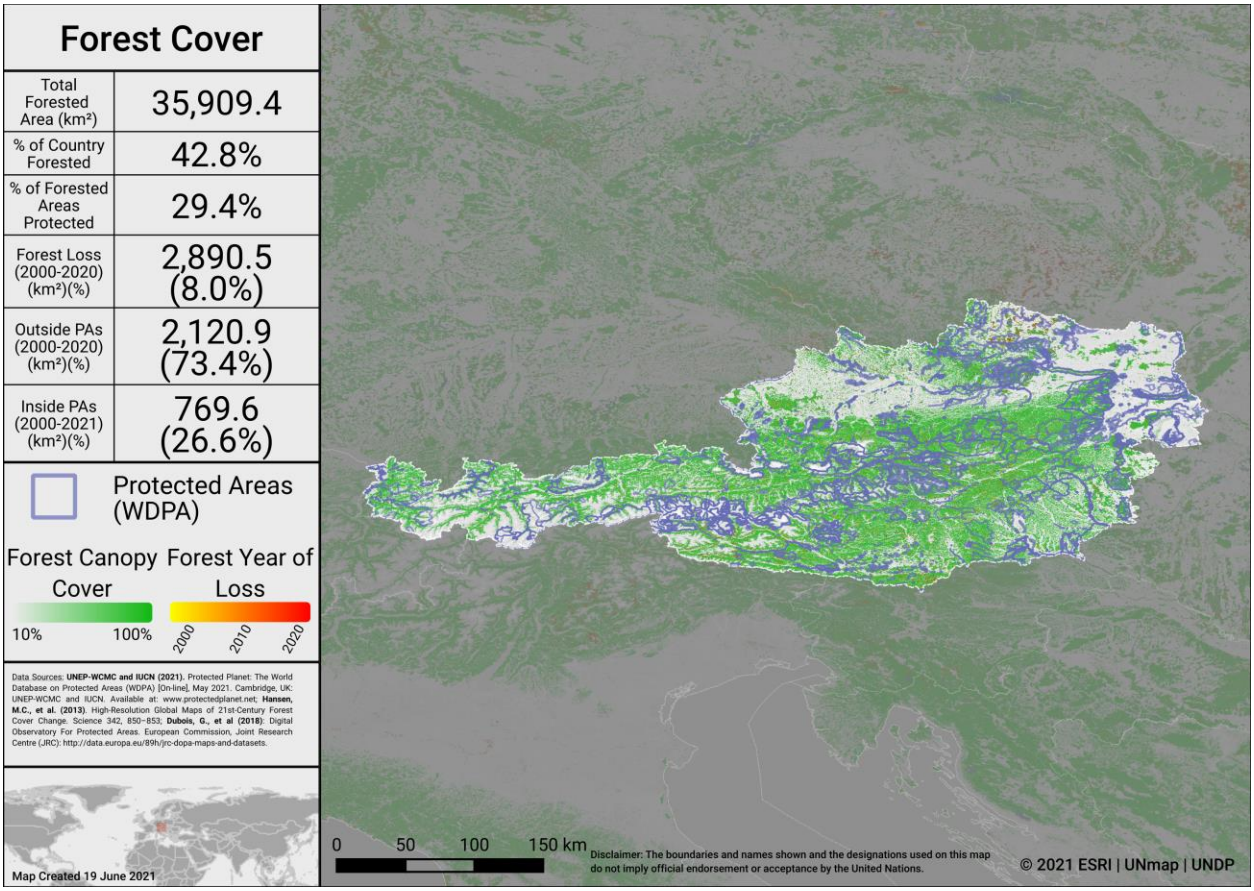
- 0.6% (472 km$^2$) of the terrestrial area of the country is covered by PAs with completed management effectiveness evaluations.
  - 1.9% of the area of terrestrial PAs have completed evaluations.

The 60% target for completed management effectiveness assessments (per COP Decision X/31) **has not** been met for terrestrial PAs.

As of May 2021, there are 0 OECMs in Austria reported in the WD-OECM and no information available on the management effectiveness of potential OECMs.

## Changes in forest cover in protected areas and OECMs

Forested areas in Austria cover approximately 42.8% of the country, an area of 35,909.4 km$^2$. Approximately 29.4% (10,573.8 km$^2$) of this is within the protected area estate of Austria. Over the period 2000-2020 loss of forest cover amounted to over 2,890.5 km$^2$, or 8.0% of forested area, of which 769.6 km$^2$ (26.6%) occurred within protected areas. The map below shows how forest cover has changed in Austria from 2000-2020 both inside and outside of PAs. This can indicate how effective PAs are in reducing forest cover loss.




Forest Cover and Forest Loss in Austria

## Opportunities for action

The 60% target for completed management effectiveness assessments (per COP Decision X/31) **has not** been met for terrestrial PAs, therefore, there is opportunity to report on completed assessments and to increase protected area management effectiveness (PAME) evaluations for terrestrial PAs to achieve the target.

There is also opportunity to implement the results of completed PAME evaluations, to improve the quality of management for existing PAs and OECMs (e.g. through adaptive management and information sharing, increasing the number of sites reporting 'sound management') and to increase reporting of biodiversity outcomes in PAs and OECMs.

# SECTION II: EXISTING PROTECTED AREA AND OECM COMMITMENTS

## NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLANS (NBSAPs)

Austria has submitted an NBSAP during the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (most recent NBSAP is available at: https://www.cbd.int/nbsap/search/).

The Austrian Biodiversity Strategy 2030+ defines 12 targets, target 10 focuses on PAs

*National Target 10: Species and habitats are conserved*

- Prioritisation of species and habitats in view of their protection needs and implementation of the necessary measures taking into account regional conditions including types of utilisation
- Securing and expansion of active and effective nature reserve managements
- Maintenance of nature reserves in accordance with their conservation purpose; creation and periodical updating and implementation of management plans for the areas with management needs, in particular Natura 2000 areas
- Consideration of the effects of climate change in nature conservation-related planning processes, protection concepts and biodiversity guidelines (climate protection adaptation)
- Development of options on how to designate natural areas (non-intervention areas having the character of wilderness) in the framework of existing protected-area concepts by means of contractual nature conservation
- Revision of the existing technical basis and adaption to the current state of scientific knowledge (studies and criteria for favourable conservation status, creation of a manual providing the minimum mapping and corresponding monitoring requirements that comply with the Habitats and Birds Directives)
- Review of representativeness, coherence and connectivity of existing conservation areas and implementation of the results, particularly in the context of existing obligations
- Implementation of the Austrian National Park Strategy and the Austrian Climate Change Adaptation Strategy with a view to biodiversity and ecosystems
- Promotion and support of voluntary measures to create a system of interlinked biotopes
- Strengthening of biotope connectivity by raising the quality of features constituting the biotope, quality-based improvement of the relevant areas and structural features

# OTHER ACTIONS/COMMITMENTS

## Leaders' Pledge for Nature

Austria **has** signed onto the Leaders' Pledge for Nature.

Political leaders participating in the United Nations Summit on Biodiversity in September 2020, representing 84 countries from all regions and the European Union, have committed to reversing biodiversity loss by 2030. By doing so, these leaders are sending a united signal to step up global ambition and encourage others to match their collective ambition for nature, climate, and people with the scale of the crisis at hand.

## High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People

Austria **has** joined the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People.

The High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People (HAC) is an intergovernmental group, co-chaired by France and Costa Rica [currently including 65 countries and the European Commission]. Its objective is to support the adoption of a target aiming to protect 30% of the planet's land and 30% of its oceans by 2030 (30x30 target), within the future global framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) for the protection of biodiversity, which is to be adopted at the next COP in China this autumn.

# ANNEX I

## FULL LIST OF ECOREGIONS

| Ecoregion Name | Area ($km^2$) | % of Global Ecoregion in Country | % of Country in Ecoregion | Area Protected ($km^2$) | % Protected in Country |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alps conifer and mixed forests | 48,642.4 | 32.5 | 58.0 | 17,205.2 | 35.4 |
| Central European mixed forests | 2,212.7 | 0.3 | 2.6 | 911.7 | 41.2 |
| Pannonian mixed forests | 16,001.6 | 5.2 | 19.1 | 4,367.6 | 27.3 |
| Western European broadleaf forests | 17,080.8 | 3.5 | 20.3 | 1,914.7 | 11.2 |

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This document was created using the knitr package with R version 4.0.5.

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