



UN BIODIVERSITY CONFERENCE

Investing in biodiversity for people and planet



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Protected Areas

A protected area is a clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated and managed through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values. While protecting ecosystems is essential for life, protected areas also support human livelihoods and aspirations. Nearly half of the world's population directly depends on protected areas for its livelihood, and many of the most vulnerable people depend directly on protected areas to fulfil their daily subsistence needs.

Recognizing the critical role of protected areas, the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), in February 2004, committed to a comprehensive and specific set of actions known as the Programme of Work on Protected Areas (PoWPA). Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 encompasses its scope and further expands its vision.

Progress under this programme of work has been significant. Coverage of terrestrial protected areas has increased to 14.9% and 91 Parties now have at least 17% coverage. Coverage of marine protected areas has reached 7.27% for the global ocean, 16.77% for national waters, and 1.8% for areas beyond national jurisdiction (ABNJ). Most of the elements of Target 11, such as ecological representativity, areas important for biodiversity, connectivity/corridors and effective management have also shown progress. If the current trend continues, the implementation of the roadmaps and commitments will help surpass the target and reach 17.7% protection of terrestrial areas, 10.5% of global oceans and 24% of national waters by 2020. ABNJs will also improve to 2%.





Protected Areas at the UN Biodiversity Conference¹

Parties are expected to adopt a definition of “other effective area-based conservation measures” (OECMs). The definition recommended by the twenty-second meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-22) of the Convention is: “a geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in situ conservation of biodiversity, with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio-economic, and other locally relevant values.”

SBSTTA-22 has also recommended that Parties welcome and apply, in a flexible way and on a case-by-case basis, the scientific and technical advice on criteria for identification of OECMs, management approaches and role in achieving Aichi Biodiversity Target 11. They are also expected to welcome and encourage the implementation of the voluntary guidance on integration of protected areas and OECMs into the wider land- and seascapes and on mainstreaming these into sectors; as well as the voluntary guidance on governance and equity. There will also be discussions on efforts to achieve all elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 in marine and coastal areas.

Finally, governments are expected to agree to facilitate mainstreaming of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures into key sectors, such as, inter alia, agriculture, fisheries, forestry, mining, energy, tourism and transportation.

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Important links

- Programme of Work on Protected Areas (PoWPA): www.cbd.int/protected
- Updated Status of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11: CBD/SBSTTA/22/INF/30
www.cbd.int/doc/c/5a93/21ba/d085c6e64dcb8a505f6d49af/sbstta-22-inf-30-en.pdf
- Recommendation SBSTTA 22/5 (on protected areas):
www.cbd.int/doc/recommendations/sbstta-22/sbstta-22-rec-05-en.pdf
- Technical Expert Workshops related to OECMs:
www.cbd.int/meetings/PAEM-2018-01; www.cbd.int/meetings/MCB-EM-2018-01
- UNEP/CBD/COP/13/INF/17-20: www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/cop/cop-13/information/cop-13-inf-17-en.pdf
- Aichi Biodiversity Targets: www.cbd.int/sp/targets
- Global Biodiversity Outlook 4: www.cbd.int/gbo4

¹ Fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity; Ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety; Third meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing; 17-29 November 2018

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