



Biodiversity is life



Biodiversity is our life

Protected Areas

Protected Areas are areas of land and/or sea protected by law, which can have many purposes, including the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Well managed protected areas support healthy ecosystems, which in turn keep people healthy. Globally, protected areas meet the most basic needs of millions of people by providing essentials such as food, fresh water, fuel and medicines. Marine Protected Areas contribute to the conservation of ocean species and habitat, and can help in the development of sustainable fisheries where depleted fish stocks can recover.

Local communities benefit from protected areas which foster rural development, research, conservation, education, recreation, and tourism.

Protected areas can also maintain the environmental stability of surrounding regions, lessening the impacts of environmental disturbances and providing flexibility to adapt to new realities. For example, coral reefs and mangroves in protected areas can buffer the impacts of extreme weather.

Despite the significant monetary and non-monetary values of protected areas, their importance is greatly undervalued. As a result, protected areas often do not receive adequate financing or resources, making their effective management a challenging but necessary task. The LifeWeb Initiative has been created to strengthen financing for protected areas to sustain biodiversity, secure livelihoods and address climate change. LifeWeb advances this goal by providing an electronic clearing-house of funding priorities in developing countries, facilitating cost sharing among private and public donors, as well as recognizing financing for protected area based solutions. A growing set of dedicated donors are considering priorities submitted by recipient partners.



Convention on
Biological Diversity

www.cbd.int/protected



Fast Facts

- ▶ Most countries have protected areas and there are over 100,000 protected sites around the world, covering some 12% of the Earth's land surface
- ▶ The consolidation and expansion of protected-area systems creates essential refuges, and this connectivity of land- and seascapes is one of the best and most economic measures for ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change
- ▶ Protected areas can act as buffers against climate change and poverty
- ▶ Variety is important in the context of climate change: wild relatives of crops such as barley, maize, oats, potatoes, rice and wheat are increasingly cultivated as they can be resistant to environmental changes such as disease, drought, extreme temperatures and salinity
- ▶ Marine protected areas cover less than 1% of the planet, with only a small portion of that effectively protected. Vast areas such as the High Seas are largely unprotected leaving them unregulated and open to exploitation
- ▶ It is estimated that protected coral reef ecosystems provide coastal protection services worth \$9 billion per year
- ▶ Protected areas provide us with necessary goods and services
- ▶ Protected areas are reservoirs of biological richness for present and future generations.
- ▶ During an 8 month period from July 2009 to February 2010, approximately US\$260 million of funding requests have been profiled by developing countries through the LifeWeb Initiative, most of which are directly based on national planning priorities to ensure the provision of life sustaining ecosystem services.

Learn More

World Database on Protected Areas ▶ www.wdpa.org

IUCN-World Commission on Protected Areas

▶ www.iucn.org/about/union/commissions/wcpa/

UNESCO World Heritage Sites ▶ <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list>

UNESCO – The Man and the Biosphere Programme

▶ www.unesco.org/mabdb/bios1-2.htm

For further information on the LifeWeb Initiative, please visit ▶ www.cbd.int/lifeweb

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