



**Response to CBD Notification 2019-008:
“Initial discussion document on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework”**

Submitted by: Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS)
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Key messages

- WCS supports increased ambition in both the scale and means of implementation of a post-2020 framework under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). WCS supports building on existing multilateral agreements, including elements of the current CBD Strategic Plan and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, we believe that the Aichi Targets must be revised, simplified and re-organized so that they are fewer in number, quantifiable and/or measurable, outcome-oriented, and focused on achieving the mission of the CBD.
- WCS recommends that the Aichi Targets related to natural habitat degradation, fragmentation and loss should be refined, clearly articulated and elevated in importance in a post-2020 framework. Parties should establish a measurable, ambitious, global target for retaining Earth's remaining intact ecosystems (marine and terrestrial) for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. This will help galvanize action by stakeholders around one clear and communicable goal that can be understood by all audiences.
- WCS recognizes that area-based conservation targets have played an important role in driving the designation of protected areas in some countries. However, the insufficient attention given to identifying the most important areas to conserve, combined with inadequate investment in implementation at national, regional, and global scales, have limited success in achieving key conservation goals. A target to improve the management effectiveness of existing protected areas and other conserved spaces is critically important, particularly for places of exceptional importance for biodiversity and intact ecosystems that should benefit from high levels of protection and/or sustained management.
- There is increasing evidence that greater ambition is needed to achieve collective goals under the CBD. WCS therefore supports a growing call for a minimum of 30% of terrestrial and marine habitat to be effectively conserved through context-appropriate, area-based conservation measures by 2030, as long as the focus is on identifying, conserving and monitoring those sites/habitats most critical to the persistence of biodiversity, such as Key Biodiversity Areas.
- WCS supports additional targets or other considerations that relate to connectivity in the post-2020 framework, noting that retaining large, intact ecosystems and maintaining or restoring connectivity in fragmented landscapes will be necessary to keep ecological processes intact under increasing anthropogenic pressures.

WCS response to Co-Chairs' discussion document

The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) submitted extensive comments on the post-2020 framework to the CBD Secretariat in December 2018 (see [here](#)). In January 2019, the CBD Secretariat, on behalf of the Co-Chairs of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG), issued the first CBD post-2020 "[discussion document](#)." This submission contains WCS's responses to the questions raised in that document, with annexes providing additional technical detail.

"What could constitute an effective structure for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, what should its different elements be, and how should they be organized?"

The existing framework must be re-organized to identify gaps in policy design and facilitate more effective, measurable implementation.

The content of the current CBD Strategic Plan and its Aichi Targets, while comprehensive and ambitious, would benefit from a simpler and more organized structure -- particularly to highlight linkages between targets that are outcome-oriented and those that are action- or output-oriented. For example, Aichi Targets 5 and 12 are focused on wide-reaching outcomes related to conservation of species and ecosystems, whereas other Targets, such as 11, relate to the actions that are necessary to contribute directly to the outcomes in Targets 5 and 12. Overall, a smaller number of quantifiable targets, better organized, will incentivize action and facilitate implementation.

WCS believes that many of the elements in the existing framework can be revised thoughtfully to achieve these goals. We welcome [IUCN's proposal](#) to restructure existing goals and targets into a pyramid structure, which is generally aligned with [a submission](#) we co-signed with other conservation NGOs in December 2018 (see Figure 1). A layered structure can help organize related targets of differing specificity, such as sub-targets on specific ecosystems (e.g. forests or coral reefs) nested under a broader target on ecosystem integrity, or area-based conservation measures. A logical structure will also help Parties identify gaps in implementation, and areas for potential international cooperation.

As part of the pyramid structure WCS proposed with other NGOs, we believe the post-2020 framework should unite Parties and non-State actors under a shared, ambitious, and measurable apex target that is explicitly reflected in a 2030 Mission (see below). A global apex target will allow Parties to generate the necessary measurable and verifiable outcome- or high-level targets, from preventing species extinction, to halting species decline and ecosystem degradation and loss, to conserving and protecting those intact ecosystems that still exist. This will lead to achievement of the mission of the CBD and help ensure that UN SDGs are met. These outcome-based targets should be quantitative and measurable, including, critically, a dedicated target on preserving ecological integrity (see below).

We agree with many Parties that NBSAPs should remain the primary instrument through which post-2020 global targets are disaggregated and implemented at the national level by Parties, but NBSAPs must speak to a global conservation agenda. Parties must work collaboratively both within and beyond national boundaries to achieve global objectives, in accordance with the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.¹ This means that NBSAPs should be similarly global in scope, and capture and measure the impacts of Parties and other actors beyond national boundaries (positive or negative).

¹ Principle 7 in the 1992 [Rio Declaration on Environment and Development](#): "States shall cooperate in a spirit of global partnership to conserve, protect and restore the health and integrity of the Earth's ecosystem"

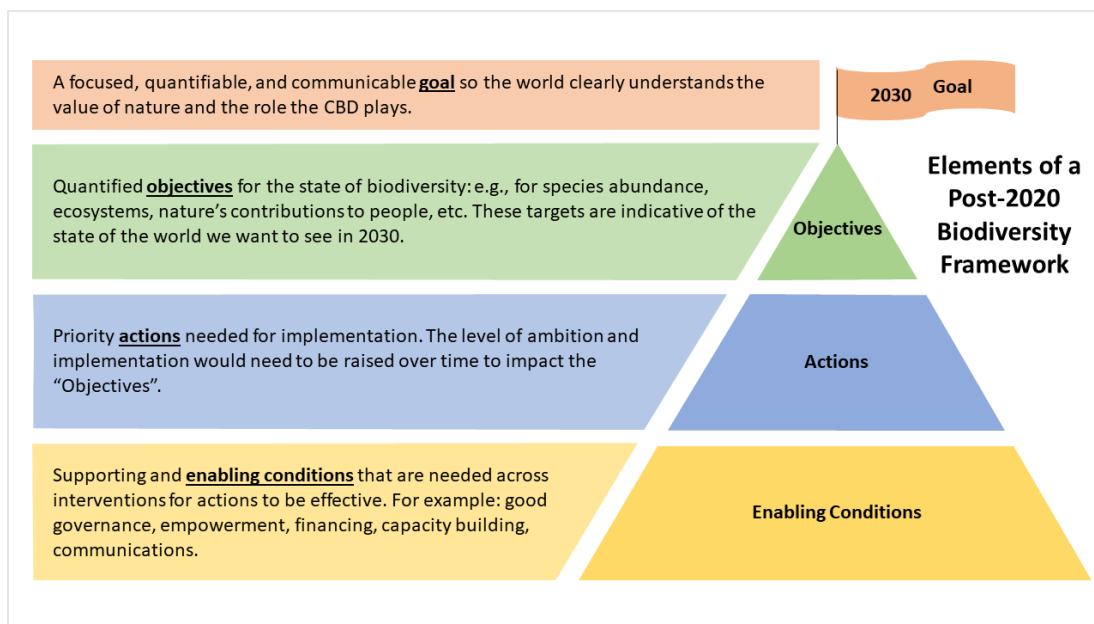


Figure 1. Elements of a Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework.

[“What would be the elements and content of an actionable 2030 mission statement for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework?”](#)

A 2030 mission for the CBD should focus on, or be inclusive of, a measurable and communicable “apex target” to retain our planet’s remaining natural ecosystems.

WCS supports the creation of an “inspirational and motivating 2030 mission as a stepping stone towards the 2050 Vision,” as [decided](#) by Parties at CoP14. We agree with that this mission should be formulated as an evidence-based, ambitious apex target (analogous to the 1.5/2-degree global target in the Paris Agreement). We look forward to future consultations with Parties and other stakeholders on determining this target.

WCS recognizes that protected area targets alone, regardless of their ambition or implementation, will never be large enough to achieve the full suite of nature conservation goals at a global scale. Protected areas are of course critical tools for the persistence of biodiversity. However, outside of protected areas, destruction of the natural world continues,² extinguishing options for further conservation and eroding ecosystem service provisions in the face of expansion and intensification of the human footprint.³ Moreover, even if a politically bold protected area goal is set (such as 30%), it leaves 70% of the land and of the ocean either *not* effectively conserved, or without a target or guidance on sustainable management of these areas. Most parts of most species’ ranges and most evolutionary processes, ecological functions and biota will always be beyond the boundaries of nationally or sub-nationally established protected areas (either established and managed by governments, or indigenous peoples and local communities). As a consequence, most of the ecosystem services and biodiversity values upon which humanity relies and to which the CBD is dedicated, will predominantly be provided by terrestrial and marine areas that remain unprotected and often subject to intense development or exploitation. Achieving the mission of the CBD and the SDGs depends heavily on the condition of these unprotected

² Watson, J.E.M. et al. 2016. “[Persistent Disparities between Recent Rates of Habitat Conversion and Protection and Implications for Future Global Conservation Targets.](#)” *Conservation Letters*, 9(6): 414-421.

³ Venter, O. et al. 2016. “[Sixteen years of change in the global terrestrial human footprint and implications for biodiversity conservation.](#)” *Nature Communications* 7, Article number: 12558.

lands and waters, and therefore the 2030 mission will necessarily be broader than a protected area or conserved space target.

WCS believes that a 2030 Mission should encompass ambitious targets for the retention – not just legal protection - of nature to maintain critical ecosystem services for humanity, retain biodiversity, and address the needs of indigenous peoples, while also making room for growth in those activities essential for biodiversity conservation. A post-2020 global framework needs measurable area-based and quality-based targets linked to the many goals of nature conservation and ecosystem service provision to avoid an irreversibly impoverished natural world.

We therefore propose that a global goal for nature retention be derived from an analysis of the total extent of natural ecosystems, of appropriate quality and in appropriate locations, that humanity needs to fulfill all the functions of nature that have been identified as essential (taking into account the capacity of some areas to serve more than one function).⁴ A 2030 global goal for nature retention would necessarily be broad, but could be operationalized through rigorous scientific analysis. A proposal for wording the broader target would be:

“By 2030, all essential components of nature are identified and effectively conserved or managed to ensure their contribution to the long-term integrity of the biosphere and the services needed for humanity.”

This approach is not contradictory to those ideas being put forward around “bending the curve,”⁵ which is species-focused (and hence just one element of biodiversity). We believe that the ideas of bending the curve for species fit, as one sub-target, within a global nature retention goal. However, we believe that this retention agenda needs to build upon other important biodiversity targets around preserving ecosystem quality and extent, and address the global environmental agenda, including those nature-based activities needed to halt dangerous climate change and achieve the SDGs.

[“How should the set of targets in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework relate to existing Aichi Biodiversity Targets? How should the set of targets in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework align with other global targets, including those adopted under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development?”](#)

The post-2020 framework should build on the elements contained in the existing Aichi Targets, but they should be revised and re-organized, based on what has been learned in the last 10 years, to be more effective.

WCS notes that most Parties, in their December 2018 submissions and interventions at CBD CoP14, expressed interest in building on the existing framework, including the Strategic Goals and Aichi Targets. However, many Parties and other stakeholders expressed that all targets should be simpler and more “SMART” (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound) than the Aichi Targets to stimulate conservation action, improve communication, and facilitate review of implementation. WCS agrees that many, if not all, existing targets will require significant revision beyond an overall restructure; we consider that particularly important for the targets related to ecosystem degradation and loss (Target 5), climate-vulnerable ecosystems, such as coral reefs (Target 10), and protected areas and other area-based conservation measures (Target 11).

As discussed above, Aichi Targets 5 and 12 are unique in their wide-reaching outcomes related to conservation of ecosystems and species, whereas other Targets, such as 11, are focused on actions that contribute to achieving these outcomes. WCS believes that the post-2020 structure should reflect this,

⁴ Maron, M. et al. 2018. [“Bold nature retention targets are essential for the global environment agenda.”](#) *Nature Ecology & Evolution*, 2: 1194–1195.

⁵ Mace, G. M., et al. 2018. [Aiming higher to bend the curve of biodiversity loss.](#) *Nature Sustainability*, 1: 448–451.

including organizing targets to reflect their linkages and contributions towards the 2030 Mission. WCS contends that all targets that are outcome-oriented⁶ should meet two criteria: 1) they should relate to a quantified target *state*, not a target *rate of change*; and 2) they should work in conjunction under a framework designed to enable and support the achievement of multiple targets aimed at securing the full range of different goals for nature and human wellbeing. There would therefore necessarily be a small number of high-level outcome targets, with a series of action-oriented (and output-oriented) targets) that would contribute to achieving these outcomes.

Finally, we agree with many Parties that indicators for post-2020 targets should generally be adopted at CoP15 in 2020, though Parties must be able to review and adopt additional indicators in the future as needed. We strongly encourage indicators to be discussed by Parties and other stakeholders alongside post-2020 targets at relevant meetings, including those hosted by the CBD Secretariat and other relevant organizations.

The post-2020 framework must include an explicit outcome target on ecosystem integrity, through which Parties commit to effectively conserve the quality and extent of highly intact ecosystems.

Ecosystem integrity, or intactness, refers to the presence of ecologically functional species populations within sufficient quality and extent of habitat. This concept, which exists at a scale along a gradient of human disturbance, underpins not only biodiversity conservation, but also other environmental values including carbon storage and sequestration, and fisheries replenishment. Ecosystem intactness is also a critical value for the livelihoods and cultural expression of many indigenous peoples, many of which reside in and are dependent on the retention of intact ecosystems. The broad concept of ecological integrity is already included within soft law (e.g. the 1992 Rio Declaration), national law (e.g., Canada National Parks Act) and international agreements (e.g. the Paris Agreement under the UNFCCC). Parties to CBD have agreed on the value of ecosystem integrity to ecosystem-based solutions to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, including the [adoption of relevant guidance](#) on climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction at CoP14. Furthermore, ecosystem integrity is already mentioned in Aichi Target 10 on climate-vulnerable ecosystems and recognized as an explicit criterion of the [Key Biodiversity Areas Standard](#). December 2018 submissions to the CBD from several Parties, IGOs, and NGOs highlighted the importance of conserving intact ecosystems through protection and other measures (such as effective spatial planning).

IUCN and others have noted that ecosystem degradation, fragmentation and loss --the “flip-side” or primary threat to ecosystem intactness or integrity -- is addressed under Aichi Target 5. WCS strongly agrees that measuring the prevention of habitat degradation, fragmentation and loss is critical to achieving the objectives of the CBD. However, without a clear, actionable global target for ecosystem integrity, the implementation of this target will often default to managing fragmentation in a piecemeal manner at inappropriate scales. Hence, the articulation of Target 5 must be improved significantly in a post-2020 framework, and used as one of several key outcome-level targets under a 2030 Mission’s apex target. Halting habitat degradation, fragmentation and loss should be one of a few key goals, akin to halting species loss (Target 12), while other targets related to actions or outputs (e.g. spatial tools such as protected areas) should contribute to their achievement.

We urge governments to ensure that any new framework, building on Aichi Target 5, include an explicit, measurable target on the protection of intactness for ecosystems of all types, at relevant scales. There may also need to be biome-specific goals on integrity/functioning and area-based conservation tools to which Parties commit. Please refer to [Annex I](#) to this document for more detailed recommendations on how to incorporate ecosystem integrity or intactness as an outcome level target in the post-2020

⁶ Visconti, P., et al. In press. “[Protected area targets post-2020.](#)” *Science*.

framework. For recommendations on how to address ecosystem-specific considerations of ecosystem integrity, through a proposed target that is specific to coral reef integrity and function, see [Annex II](#).

Area-based targets should be ambitious, but must also be based on scientific evidence, flexible enough to adapt to local contexts, and designed to measure and evaluate success based on conservation outcomes.

WCS commends the work of Parties to achieve elements of the existing Aichi Targets, particularly progress towards the area-based protected area goals (marine and terrestrial) under Target 11. We also welcome the ongoing efforts to define and develop guidance for other elements of Target 11 that have been overlooked, such as Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs), and the recognition of the need to better address other elements (e.g. “equitably and effectively managed”).

WCS notes that simple percentage-area targets, such as those in Target 11, will always be insufficient (on their own) to effectively conserve biodiversity (and halt its loss).⁷ A drive to achieve percentage-based targets for protected areas, while laudable, can reduce the focus on the quality of what is being represented, with degraded ecosystems given the same value as those that are still functionally intact (and therefore far more valuable from a conservation perspective).⁸

A growing number of conservation organizations are advocating that 30% or more of Earth’s terrestrial and marine habitats, prioritizing the most intact and biologically important areas (e.g. Key Biodiversity Areas, Ecologically and Biologically Significant Areas, other important areas with high ecosystem integrity), be conserved through protected areas and other area-based designations (e.g. through OECMs) by 2030. WCS has [co-signed a joint statement](#) with 14 other conservation organizations supporting such an ambitious goal, and scientific research is increasingly providing scientific support for *at least* this level of global ambition.⁹

However, we also urge Parties to think beyond simple percentage-based spatial targets when setting area-based conservation targets in the post-2020 framework, recognizing that while such targets do have value, they can create perverse incentives in the allocation of resources and political will, and can lead to failure to achieve the critical biodiversity outcomes that are needed. Any new or revised spatial target(s) must:

- 1) be based on science and framed on the needs of biodiversity;
- 2) effectively set guidance on establishment of protected areas and OECMs based on their importance for biodiversity, representation and management effectiveness (including plans to quantify and mobilize resources sufficient to achieve management objectives);
- 3) be complementary to other targets that address overarching ecosystem integrity and representation; and
- 4) feed into a broader nature retention goal.

Targets to expand the area under conservation management (Protected Areas or OECMs) should not neglect that those areas also have to be effectively managed, resourced and governed, and be delivering conservation outcomes.

⁷ Maron, M. et al. 2018. “[Bold nature retention targets are essential for the global environment agenda.](#)” *Nature Ecology & Evolution*, 2: 1194–1195.

⁸ Venter, O. et al. 2018. “[Bias in protected-area location and its effects on long-term aspirations of biodiversity conventions.](#)” *Conservation Biology*, 32(1): 127-134.

⁹ Butchart, S.H.M. et al. 2015. “[Shortfalls and Solutions for Meeting National and Global Conservation Area Targets.](#)” *Conservation Letters*, 8(5): 329–337.

WCS supports a target (or targets) for area-based conservation that encourages effective conservation of all sites of documented global significance for the persistence of biodiversity.¹⁰ Please see [Annex III](#) for more detailed recommendations on area-based conservation targets.

WCS welcomes the significant efforts Parties have made over the past decade to expand the area under protected areas (terrestrial, freshwater, and marine). The newest Protected Planet report showed that 15% of land and 7% of the oceans are currently covered by protected areas and confirms that the world is on track to reach the coverage element of Aichi Target 11 by 2020 (although there are concerns that some countries have reported protected area coverage in areas that do not qualify as a protected area, as defined by IUCN). This is likely to be the only element of the Aichi Targets that is achieved. However, the primary focus on coverage has also led to a debate on whether the pursuit of increased coverage has replaced the aim of protecting and maintaining biodiversity. Aichi Target 11 unequivocally states that protected areas should be ‘effectively and equitably managed’. This aspect of Aichi Target 11 has been widely neglected, and available global data suggest that perhaps only 25% of protected areas have sufficient levels of resources for effective management; the remainder are ‘paper parks’ which may not be effective at conserving species or habitats (though it has been argued that a paper park that may garner support for effective management in the future is better than no declaration at all).

Spatial targets should ensure that sites of high ecological integrity and high biodiversity importance are reflected with a quantitative rationale for their biodiversity significance. To support implementation, areas that contribute to global spatial targets should require quantified investment or a resource mobilization plan that is commensurate to the scale of the conservation value of the site and its challenges.

WCS contends that it is critical that in the revision of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, the post-2020 biodiversity framework includes: (i) an expectation that protected areas are effectively managed and resourced; and (ii) that mechanisms are put in place to monitor how effectively the global protected area estate is managed and to report on management effectiveness. Better information on management effectiveness will allow us to measure the contributions of protected areas in halting the loss of biodiversity and ensure that resources are invested most effectively.

A holistic target, or set of targets, on conservation finance will be integral to achievement of a post-2020 framework’s objectives.

WCS welcomes the ongoing financial and technical support of Parties, non-Parties, IGOs, NGOs, and private philanthropy for the implementation of the current Strategic Plan. However, the current level of financial resources mobilized for biodiversity conservation has been insufficient to achieve agreed global objectives. Aichi Target 20, which addresses resource mobilization for implementation (recognized as Overseas Development Assistance, or ODA, and other sources), has been further articulated through a series of additional resource mobilization targets, adopted at CoP13. However, these targets have not been met to date.¹¹ Furthermore, ODA and other international efforts have been regularly outweighed by significant amounts of harmful subsidies and other financial flows that are detrimental to the conservation of biodiversity.¹²

A post-2020 framework will require updated, holistic targets on finance that take into account the ambition of a post-2020 framework, including the resources required and, critically, all relevant financial flows (ensuring complementarity with existing work to achieve Aichi Target 3 on the elimination of harmful subsidies and incentives). WCS recommends clear, integrated sub-targets on ODA and other

¹⁰ Visconti, P., et al. In press. “[Protected area targets post-2020.](#)” *Science*.

¹¹ CBD. 2018. “[Document CBD/SBSTTA/22/INF/10: Updated scientific assessment of progress towards selected Aichi biodiversity targets and options to accelerate progress.](#)”

¹² Centre d’analyse stratégique. 2012. “[Public incentives that harm biodiversity that harm biodiversity: Summary.](#)”

types of finance, including blended and private finance. This target, or set of targets, must address in particular the contribution of developed countries and emerging economies to the global efforts to conserve biodiversity, including the critical role that harmful subsidies and non-State actors play in undermining investments in biodiversity conservation both within and beyond national borders.

The EU 'Larger than Elephants' strategic guidance document for wildlife conservation in Africa, for example, estimates that financing protected areas located within Key Landscapes for Conservation (KLC's) would cost around EUR531 million per year, and financing KLCs and community conservation programs would cost in the region of EUR6 billion over 10 years, for Africa alone.¹³ Current donor commitments fall well short of the financing needed within Africa and other global regions and a new quantified global target (or set of regional targets) is therefore needed to stimulate new donor partnerships, financing mechanisms and commitments.

WCS anticipates that further information on these issues will be submitted in response to this Notification or subsequent opportunities for comment by the Conservation Finance Alliance (CFA), of which we are a founding member.

[“How could a post-2020 global biodiversity framework help to ensure coherence, integration and a holistic approach to biodiversity governance and what are the implications for the scope and content of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework?”](#)

Earth's ecological integrity depends on both large intact ecosystems and connectivity between them, and therefore connectivity and migration must be addressed through the new framework.

WCS is a member of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) Working Group on the post-2020 framework for biodiversity, and we strongly support the recommendation of CMS and several Parties to include connectivity as a key element of a post-2020 framework. The most important way to achieve connectivity is to conserve all intact ecosystems, before they lose connectivity.¹⁴ In fragmented systems, special attention to maintaining and especially restoring connectivity will be required. We urge Parties to acknowledge, however, that ecological corridors alone will not be able to save biodiversity without complementary highly intact (i.e. undisturbed and/or functional) ecosystems along their migratory routes where species can exist in functional populations or undertake critical life-cycle actions at ecologically relevant scales (i.e. corridors exist to support the functioning of intact ecosystems). We note that: a) large, highly intact ecosystems provide the best forms of connectivity, and b) corridors without intact ecosystems between them will not be able to meet conservation objectives.

World Heritage sites and other multilaterally designated places should be incorporated into the framework under relevant spatial targets.

WCS works in more than 30 natural and mixed World Heritage sites. We support the recommendations in the December submissions from UNESCO and IUCN to include representation and management target(s) on World Heritage within the post-2020 framework, and we encourage Parties to adopt relevant targets that can be disaggregated at the regional and local levels. Any targets should address both the management effectiveness and conservation outlook of existing natural World Heritage sites. However, we stress that such targets will be intrinsically linked to spatial targets on protected areas (and effective management), and we encourage Parties to ensure that any such World Heritage target is nested under a relevant spatial/protected area target.

¹³ European Commission, 2015. [Larger than Elephants: Inputs for an EU strategic approach to wildlife conservation in Africa, Synthesis](#), page 85.

¹⁴ Watson, J.E.M. et al. 2017. [“Protect the Last of the Wild.”](#) *Nature*: 563, 27-30.

“What indicators, in addition to those already identified in decision XIII/28, are needed to monitor progress in the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework at the national, regional and global scales?”

WCS encourages Parties to adopt a new outcome-level target for ecosystem intactness to address habitat degradation, designation and implementation of spatial conservation tools, and the ecosystem services critical to achieving the SDGs. Intact ecosystems, or ecosystem integrity, can be identified using standardized measures of ecosystem loss, degree of human pressure, and degree of fragmentation and connectivity. Baselines exist from satellite data for many ecosystem types, but measurement will need to be context-specific, based on the type of ecosystem and its location. WCS and our conservation partners are currently working to generate relevant metrics for forests (e.g. a global intact forest quality metric, Red List of Ecosystems, protected areas management effectiveness reporting) and metrics exist for coral reefs. We will present these at future intersessional meetings, between now and CBD CoP15.

Annex I. Ecosystem integrity or intactness as a high-level target

Earth is losing its critical intact ecosystems

The expansion of humanity's footprint across both the terrestrial and marine realms is dramatic and ever-increasing,^{15,16} and, as a consequence, the areal extent of terrestrial and marine ecosystems that can still be considered intact and ecologically functional is dwindling.¹⁷ The consequences for biodiversity are clear – ever increasing numbers of species are facing decline and extinction, and there is ongoing degradation of the critical ecosystem services that underpin the health of our planet and our own well-being.¹⁸ With the advent of anthropogenic climate change, we are moving from a serious erosion of biodiversity to a serious ecological crisis – species have to survive both the destruction of critical habitat, as well as fundamental changes to the climatic environments in which they evolved. The impacts are also devastating for indigenous peoples and local communities, many of which depend on intact ecosystems for their food security, livelihoods, and cultural identification.

There is clear evidence that highly intact ecosystems are Earth's remaining strongholds for biodiversity, and are increasingly critical in a time of climate change because of their higher levels of resilience.¹⁹ They are also ecosystems that provide enhanced services for human wellbeing. For example, the planet's remaining intact forest ecosystems support a much higher confluence of globally critical environmental values than degraded forests, such as carbon sequestration and storage, water provision, refuges for imperiled species, protection of indigenous cultures, and the maintenance of human health.^{20,21}

Ample experience demonstrates that once intact ecosystems are degraded it is generally impossible to restore them to full functionality. In addition, while it is customary to act only when considerable degradation has occurred, management-intensive restoration activities are enormously expensive. Therefore, the best way to secure these systems in the best condition it is to conserve them proactively before anthropogenic impacts start to seriously erode their quality. Retaining the integrity of dwindling intact ecosystems should be an urgent priority for global efforts to not only halt the ongoing biodiversity crisis, but to adapt to the impacts of rapid climate change and achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2030.

Ecosystem integrity or intactness must be front and center in the post-2020 framework

Ecosystem integrity, or "intactness" is critically important for ecosystem health and resilience and is addressed in the Rio Declaration²² and other multilateral agreements with wide adoption, including the Paris Agreement under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Therefore, a key

¹⁵ Venter, O. et al. 2017. "Sixteen years of change in the global terrestrial human footprint and implications for biodiversity conservation." *Nature Communications*, 7, Article Number: 12558.

¹⁶ Jones, K.R. et al. 2018. "The Location and Protection Status of Earth's Diminishing Marine Wilderness." *Current Biology*, 28: 2506–2512.

¹⁷ Potapov, P. et al. 2017. "The last frontiers of wilderness: Tracking loss of intact forest landscapes from 2000 to 2013." *Science Advances*, 3(1).

¹⁸ Watson, J.E.M. et al. 2016. "Catastrophic Declines in Wilderness Areas Undermine Global Environment Targets." *Current Biology*, 26(21): 2929-2934.

¹⁹ Martin, T.G. and J.E.M. Watson. 2016. "Intact ecosystems provide best defence against climate change." *Nature Climate Change*, 6: 122-124.

²⁰ Watson, J.E.M. et al. 2018. "The exceptional value of intact forest ecosystems." *Nature Ecology & Evolution*, 2: 599–610.

²¹ Myers, S. S., Gaffikin, L., Golden, C. D., Ostfeld, R. S., H Redford, K., H Ricketts, T., et al. 2013. "Human health impacts of ecosystem alteration." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 110(47): 18753–18760.

²² Principle 7 in the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development: "States shall cooperate in a spirit of global partnership to conserve, protect and restore the health and integrity of the Earth's ecosystem"

recommendation for Parties negotiating the post-2020 framework is that the new set of targets must, among other elements, prioritize the need to secure a sufficient extent of the last remaining highly intact ecosystems on the planet (marine and terrestrial). Whilst wholly intact areas are exceptionally important, where levels of intactness are already at low or intermediate levels due to degradation, they should also be protected from further loss, and where possible increased via targeted restoration.

Ecosystem degradation, fragmentation and loss can be seen as the flip side or primary threat to intactness or integrity, and is already addressed for all habitats, under Aichi Target 5. WCS agrees that while it is critical to measure efforts to prevent habitat degradation, fragmentation and loss in achieving the objectives of the CBD, the existing target must be improved significantly in a post-2020 framework, and used as one of several key outcome-level targets underneath a 2030 Mission. Halting habitat degradation, fragmentation and loss should be one of a few key goals, akin to halting species loss, while other targets related to actions (e.g. spatial tools such as protected areas and OECMs) should contribute to their achievement.

We urge governments to ensure that any new framework, building on the existing Target 5, include an explicit, measurable target on the protection of intactness for ecosystems of all types, at relevant scales, potentially with biome-specific goals on integrity/functioning.

A new target that addresses intactness could be something along these lines:

“By 2030, the value of ecosystem integrity is prioritized, and, at a minimum, 2020 levels of ecological intactness are maintained or enhanced across all ecosystems, with a particular emphasis on maintaining the most intact areas.”

Intact ecosystems can be identified using standardized measures of ecosystem loss, degree of human pressure, and degree of fragmentation and connectivity. Baselines exist for this target from satellite data for many ecosystem types, but measurement will need to be context-specific, based on the type of ecosystem and its location. WCS and our conservation partners are currently working to generate relevant metrics (e.g. a global intact forest quality metric, Red List of Ecosystems).

WCS is leading research on ecosystem intactness and integrity

WCS is leading global efforts, with partners, to study and protect highly intact terrestrial and marine ecosystems, including work with the Parties to the CBD on:

- *Forests:* WCS works to conserve some of the world’s most intact tropical and boreal forest landscapes, with government partners, local communities, and indigenous peoples. WCS has been working with a scientific consortium that includes the Universities of Queensland, Oxford and Maryland, and the World Resources Institute and WWF, to develop a global framework metric for measuring forest intactness based on ecosystem spatial and structural integrity, integrating measures of faunal integrity. This *“forest intactness metric”* will be a direct measure of the condition of a forest ecosystem, relative to the natural, undisturbed state in a given locality, and will present a holistic indicator of the degree to which a forest ecosystem has or has not been degraded by human action.
- *Coral reefs:* For decades, WCS has worked to deliver locally relevant solutions for coral reef conservation in key geographies by rebuilding reef fisheries to sustainable levels, protecting healthy coral reefs within MPAs and reserves, developing ridge-to-reef management to lessen land-based impacts, and strengthening local governance. WCS is currently leading a major research effort around securing the future for the most intact, and resilient, coral reef ecosystems, and we have helped researchers to identify some of the most spectacular coral reefs with the greatest chance of surviving climate change, natural disasters and other

disturbances.²³ It is critical that the post-2020 conservation agenda include a focus on these resilient coral reef ecosystems, which protect marine biodiversity, provide livelihoods and food security for millions, and, importantly, stand the greatest chance of surviving climate change. For more on WCS's advice on setting a global target on coral reef ecosystem integrity, please see [Annex II](#).

- *Other ecosystem types:* WCS works in many different ecoregions and habitat types, including, for example, large grassland ecosystems in North and South America, Africa and Asia. We also work in coastal and shallow marine habitats, which are critical for breeding and feeding for cetaceans, sharks, rays, and other globally important taxa, and in coastal upwelling zones – highly productive areas that are critical for biodiversity, food security, and local livelihoods. We are expanding our work on intactness into these habitat types to ensure that the critical role of these ecosystem types is recognized and that the most intact areas with the highest degrees of ecosystem function and resilience are clearly delineated and consequently protected from degradation using appropriate measures.

WCS is also contributing our expertise to the *Three Conditions* analysis, cited by CCICED and IUCN in their December 2018 submissions, which suggests that areas of low human disturbance, which cover roughly 30% of the terrestrial area of the planet according to IUCN, should be retained (i.e. fully protected or left intact). WCS supports the retention of remaining intact ecosystems for the critical values they provide, but also recognizes that these maps are not necessarily ecologically representative and may not capture the fragile, fragmented, though relatively functional (or restorable) ecosystems across different biomes. However, the ideas behind these maps can be applied in any context, including at national or regional scales.

²³ Beyer, H.L. et al. 2018. "Risk-sensitive planning for conserving coral reefs under rapid climate change." *Conservation Letters*. In print.

Annex II. A measurable target for coral reef integrity

The need for an improved coral reef target

Coral reef ecosystems remain uniquely imperiled from myriad threats, both at local scales (overexploitation and destructive fishing practices, pollution and runoff, coastal and industrial development), and at global/transboundary scales (climate change through mass coral bleaching, ocean acidification and sea level rise). These threats imperil the hyperdiversity of coral reef ecosystems, the ~25% of marine biodiversity they support, and the livelihoods, food security, and cultural practices of millions of people. Counteracting these threats is critical to achieving the objectives of the CBD.

Coral reef conservation has been supported by ongoing efforts within the CBD, including: the adoption of the [Jakarta Mandate](#) in 1995; the establishment of a [program of work for marine and coastal issues](#) in 1998; and recent [decisions on priority actions for Parties](#) to conserve coral reef and other marine and coastal ecosystems in 2012. At CBD CoP10, Parties adopted the Aichi Targets. Although several targets address global environmental pressures relevant to coral reef ecosystems, such as fishing subsidies, environmental education, etc., only Target 10 addresses coral reef ecosystems explicitly. In the most recent assessment by Parties, it was concluded that the international community has not met Target 10, three years *after* the ambitious five-year “deadline,” and that most indicators used to track coral reefs (such as coral cover) are still trending negative.²⁴

A recent UN Environment Program analysis²⁵ of policy instruments related to coral reefs suggests, as one possible course of action, that existing governance mechanisms be strengthened through, for example, “a new global coral reef target, that would be quantifiable and ambitious...as part of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework...” Also in response to CBD negotiations, the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) formed a working group – of which WCS is a member-- to develop “a draft recommendation for a coral reef target and an appropriate alternative” that are “quantifiable and have an ambitious but realistic timeframe with a holistic view of coral reefs [and] the broader sustainable development agenda...” WCS urges Parties to strongly support these efforts.

WCS recommendations on a post-2020 coral reef target

Target 10 is particularly challenging for Parties to interpret and report on.²⁶ It is imperative that any successor to Target 10, wherever it falls within a post-2020 framework, be clear with respect to Parties’ obligations and commitments, and how progress should be measured. A post-2020 target for coral reefs must refine the existing target’s language to provide clearer direction and more effective and measurable implementation and review. A coral reef target will also need to go beyond, but be complementary to, any post-2020 marine, spatial or other targets – including those related to key threats such as climate change, unsustainable and/or illegal fisheries, and other threats.

WCS has worked for decades to deliver locally relevant solutions for coral reef conservation in key geographies by rebuilding reef fisheries to sustainable levels, protecting healthy coral reefs within MPAs and reserves, developing ridge-to-reef management to lessen land-based impacts, and strengthening local governance. Coral reefs exist under different ecological and socio-economic conditions, and that they are often critical to food and economic security for local communities. WCS believes that a post-2020 coral reef-specific target under CBD can and must prioritize the conservation of the most intact

²⁴ CBD. 2018. “[Document CBD/SBSTTA/22/INF/10: Updated scientific assessment of progress towards selected Aichi biodiversity targets and options to accelerate progress.](#)”

²⁵ UN Environment Programme. 2019. “[Document UNEP/EA.4/INF.6: Analysis of global and regional policy instruments and governance mechanisms related to the protection and sustainable management of coral reefs.](#)”

²⁶ Butchart, S.H.M. et al. 2016. “[Formulating Smart Commitments on Biodiversity: Lessons from the Aichi Targets.](#)” *Conservation Letters*, 9(6): 457-468

and functioning coral reef ecosystems, enabling Parties and stakeholders to prioritize local interventions and mitigate threats accordingly.

We therefore believe that underneath overarching goals related to ecological integrity and function (see [Annex I](#)), there can be ecosystem-specific targets that provide clear guidance for Parties with respect to specific habitats – including in particular coral reefs. This target should be outcome focused, and agnostic as to the area-based or other mechanism used to achieve these objectives.

In formulating a global target to help maintain ecological integrity of coral reef ecosystems, for inclusion in a post-2020 CBD framework, we urge Parties to take into account the following recommendations:

Create a SMART global target for coral reef ecosystem management that aligns with and contributes to broader policy objectives.

- *Create at least one global target for 2030 that is dedicated to coral reefs.* The CBD post-2020 framework and the 2030 UN SDGs both consider 2030 a key deadline. Other multilateral fora such as the UN Ocean Conferences or the Our Ocean Conferences are helping to build momentum towards achieving global targets under CBD and the SDGs through voluntary commitments from the public and private sectors. While there is some utility in voluntary commitments, it is vital to create a standardized coral reef target for 2030 under both the CBD and the UN SDGs (which lacks one), to which Parties commit and are accountable.
- *Ensure that a coral reef target is complementary to other post-2020 targets.* Other post-2020 targets will indirectly address coral reef ecosystems through broader objectives around climate change, mainstreaming, habitat degradation, or area-based conservation tools (i.e. protected areas and OECMs). To avoid duplication, any coral reef-specific target should focus on the integrity of coral reef ecosystems and the ability of governance to address key threats, using metrics specific to coral reefs rather than duplicating other targets. This could result in a target underneath an overarching target related to ecosystem integrity. However, coral reefs should also be reflected in spatial targets as priority ecosystems to protect for their outstanding biodiversity and social values, which are jeopardized by urgent threats across multiple scales.

Focus on conservation outcomes, by maintaining the integrity and resilience of coral reef ecosystems using proven quantitative thresholds.

- *Retain or restore sufficient (at least 10%) live coral cover to ensure coral reef growth.* Previous studies have identified 10% live hard coral cover as a minimum threshold for carbonate accretion on Caribbean²⁷ and Indo-Pacific^{28,29} reefs, where reefs around this threshold (or 'boundary point') are more likely to have a neutral carbonate budget and may succumb to reef submergence with rising sea levels.³⁰ Parties must set and monitor firm targets for maintaining and increasing live coral cover above these minimum functioning thresholds by 2030. Parties must also establish and fund national institutions to collect and share coral reef monitoring information to track progress towards targets.
- *Retain or restore sufficient (at least 500kg/ha) biomass for functional and diverse ecosystems.* Reefs that maintain total reef fish biomass above ~500-600 kilograms per hectare are expected

²⁷ Perry C.T. et al. 2013. "[Caribbean-wide decline in carbonate production threatens coral reef growth.](#)" *Nature Communications* 4(1402).

²⁸ Perry, C.T. et al. 2016. "[Remote coral reefs can sustain high growth potential and may match future sea-level trends.](#)" *Scientific Reports* 5:18289.

²⁹ Januchowski-Hartley F.A., et al. 2017. "[Drivers and predictions of coral reef carbonate budget trajectories.](#)" *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 284:20162533.

³⁰ Perry, C.T., et al. 2018. "[Loss of coral reef growth capacity to track future increases in sea level.](#)" *Nature* 558:396–400.

to maintain fisheries productivity and ecosystem function.^{31, 32} Other studies have demonstrated that biomass is positively correlated with species diversity up to 500 kilograms per hectare,³³ indicating that reef fish biomass is an effective proxy for conserving species diversity. Therefore, reef ecosystems with at least 500kg/ha of fishable biomass should be proactively conserved, and biomass levels must be retained to ensure functionality and resilience, and conservation of biodiversity.

Design an ecosystem management target for coral reefs with implementation and review in mind.

- *Improve collaborative efforts on implementation.* An ambitious global target for coral reef ecosystems will require adequate political will to set relevant national targets, and create and enforce laws related to marine protected areas and fisheries management. It will also require the cooperation among the international community to identify and channel resources towards a portfolio of the most critically important and resilient reef ecosystems, regardless of where they exist. This may not need to be specified within a target, but it is critical to ensure that the international community has wide agreement on a target's utility and recognizes any post-2020 targets as only a starting point in multilateral efforts.
- *Develop and/or refine a robust, feasible set of indicators to measure progress.* Some possible indicators include:
 - Presence of national coral reef monitoring institutions funded to collect necessary ecological data on coral reefs;
 - Distribution of live hard coral cover across a country's reefs; % of national reefs above 10% live coral cover thresholds;
 - Distribution of total reef fish biomass across a country's reefs; % of national reefs above 500 kg/ha total reef fish biomass; effectiveness of management at maintaining total reef fish biomass above 500kg/ha;
 - Fisheries that are shown to be diverse and sustainable over many years; and
 - Status of the populations of threatened rare, endemic, and commercial species.

WCS recognizes the limits inherent to global targets, which must be broad enough for disaggregation and implementation at the national and local level. One way to integrate the above considerations into language that should be considered as part of a 2030 target for coral reef ecosystems is presented below for consideration.

"By 2030, Parties have established and implemented, or supported the establishment and implementation of, plans to demonstrably maintain the function and integrity of the planet's most irreplaceable, intact and functional coral reef ecosystems by retaining at least 10% live coral cover and at least 500kg/ha reef fish biomass."

We invite comments and further dialogue from Parties, technical experts and other stakeholders contributing to these discussions on this proposed wording.

³¹ MacNeil, M.A., et al. 2015. "Recovery potential of the world's coral reef fishes." *Nature*, 520: 341–344.

³² McClanahan, T.R. et al. 2011. "Critical thresholds and tangible targets for ecosystem-based management of coral reef fisheries." *PNAS*, 108 (41): 17230-17233.

³³ McClanahan, T.R., and Jadot, C. 2017. "Managing coral reef fish community biomass is a priority for biodiversity conservation in Madagascar." *Marine Ecology Progress Series*, 580: 169-190.

Annex III. Area-based conservation targets in the post-2020 framework

Implementation of Aichi Target 11

WCS scientific research and conservation experience have demonstrated that protected areas play a critical role in conserving both species and ecosystems, including highly intact ecosystems, when they are sited and established based on sound science and stakeholder consultation, are sufficiently large, and are adequately resourced and effectively managed.

The IUCN/UNEP [Protected Planet](#) report published for CBD CoP14 (November 2018) showed that 15% of land and 7% of the oceans are currently covered by one of six IUCN protected area categories, and suggested that the world is on track to reach the coverage element of Aichi Target 11 by 2020. This is positive news, even if there is some controversy that not all of the protected areas included in this tally meet IUCN guidelines for protected area designation. This areal aspect of Target 11 is, however, likely to be the only element of Aichi Target 11 that will demonstrably be achieved by 2020, and not by all countries.

Aichi Target 11 states that protected areas and OECMs should ‘especially [conserve] areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services’, without specifying how this should be done. Traditionally, siting protected areas has been predominantly undertaken through the selection of representative areas, or places of least conflict with human interests (e.g. relatively unproductive, high-elevation areas). However, the development in recent years of a comprehensive [Key Biodiversity Areas \(KBA\) Standard](#) and [KBA Program](#) makes it possible for the post-2020 framework to be more explicit about prioritizing the qualitative aspect of protected areas, as is discussed in greater detail below.

Aichi Target 11 also unequivocally states that protected areas should be ‘effectively and equitably managed.’ However, this aspect of Aichi Target 11 has been widely neglected, and available global data suggest that perhaps only 25% of protected areas have sufficient levels of resources for effective management.³⁴ The remainder are ‘paper parks,’ which may not be effective at conserving species or habitats. There is strong scientific evidence that the document protected area estate is not uniformly capable of preventing anthropogenic disturbance.

The international focus on spatial extent of the protected area estate has also led to a debate on whether the pursuit of increased coverage has replaced the aim of protecting and maintaining biodiversity. With competing demands for public and private resources, and political will, there is a perception that the failure to effectively implement and manage the current extent of the protected area estate is a due to the objective and drive to meet explicit spatial targets.

Spatial targets in a post-2020 framework

A growing number of conservation organizations and governments are advocating that 30% or more of the planet’s terrestrial and marine habitats, prioritizing the most intact and biologically important areas (e.g., Key Biodiversity Areas, Ecologically and Biologically Significant Areas, intact ecosystems), should be highly protected or otherwise effectively conserved through area-based measures (e.g. protected areas and OECMs) as a key goal for 2030. WCS has [co-signed a joint statement](#) with 14 other conservation organizations supporting this ambitious goal, and we are contributing to forthcoming spatial analyses that provide scientific support for this scale of global ambition. We note IUCN members overwhelmingly adopted a Resolution at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in 2016 calling for 30% of marine habitats to be protected from extractive use.

³⁴ Jones, K.R. et al. 2018. “One-third of global protected land is under intense human pressure.” *Science*, 360(6390): 788-791.

However, WCS notes that there are several existing challenges with implementation of Target 11, including that numerical targets for protected areas alone will always be insufficient (on their own) for conserving biodiversity or halting its loss. While we support increased ambition for identifying and conserving important spaces for biodiversity, we also urge Parties to think beyond simple percentage-based targets when setting goals for 2030. We recognize that area-based designations represent only some of the available conservation tools, and that they can, in some cases, create perverse incentives for allocation of resources and political will. As such, any new or revised spatial target(s) must:

- 1) be based on science (i.e. what is needed to halt biodiversity loss *and* achieve the SDGs, on a global scale);
- 2) effectively set guidance on establishment of protected areas and OECMs based on their importance for biodiversity, representation and management effectiveness (including plans to quantify and mobilize resources sufficient to achieve management objectives);
- 3) be complementary to other targets that address overarching ecosystem integrity and representation (as detailed in Annex I); and
- 4) feed into a broader nature retention goal.

‘Other effective area-based conservation measures’ and ‘conserved spaces’

As noted in our December 2018 submission, biodiversity conservation at a global scale will always rely on areas that are not legally protected or managed primarily for biodiversity conservation outcomes. Protected areas are part of broader landscapes and seascapes, within a complex matrix that also includes indigenous- or community-managed areas and many other forms of public and private use. Indeed, IUCN Category V or VI protected areas aim to maintain some level of community and human activity in sites that are important for biodiversity, particularly large landscapes. To secure sufficient biodiversity through a post-2020 framework, there needs to be a recognition that a high proportion of the planet will need to be ‘conserved’ in some way rather than formally and strictly ‘protected’ through legislation or regulations. No global goal or target that addresses only the areal extent of protected areas is going to be large enough or sufficient to achieve a global conservation agenda that includes a critical focus on the intactness (and connectivity) of ecosystems.

Aichi Target 11 requires Parties to designate “systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures,” and intersessional progress has been made on defining “other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs) and creating guidelines for integrating these spaces into reporting under Aichi Target 11. WCS staff have been on the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas OECM Task Force, and have contributed to the development of forthcoming guidelines on how to deploy OECMs as a tool to understand and include locally relevant conservation approaches, such as Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs), into the accounting against spatial targets. We particularly support and encourage the recognition of the contribution to biodiversity of areas managed by indigenous peoples.

Identifying and conserving Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) and other priority sites for biodiversity

WCS is a member of the [Key Biodiversity Areas \(KBA\) Partnership](#), and we welcome the role of the KBA Partnership and *Global Standard for the Identification of Key Biodiversity Areas*. The *Global Standard* harmonizes existing approaches and provides a common currency for the identification and safeguarding of sites important for the persistence of biodiversity: threatened biodiversity, geographically restricted biodiversity, ecological integrity (or ecosystem intactness), biological processes, and irreplaceability in terrestrial, inland water, and marine environments. KBAs, particularly sites that are designated under Criteria A and B of the *Standard*, will be critically important to protect areas relied upon by endangered species as one means of preventing extinction – a key goal of the Convention and one that is clearly articulated in Aichi Target 11.

On siting of area-based conservation measures, KBAs will be critical in this effort (including in particular those that meet Criterion C on ecological integrity). Therefore, targets related to KBA identification and conservation should be included in the post-2020 framework. However, KBAs are meant to be representative, and KBAs alone will be necessary but not sufficient to conserve all biodiversity. Therefore, we urge Parties to look beyond KBAs in an overarching spatial target, and develop a sub-target for KBAs.

Identifying KBAs is critically important for helping to achieve qualitative objectives when establishing new protected areas or OECMs, by ensuring that they are sited in areas that will actually be effective in conserving biodiversity. The utility of the KBA concept is considerably broader than this, however, since KBA designation can inform land use planning and environmental assessment decisions outside of protected areas. However, the tool cannot be used until and unless there has been at least a preliminary identification of KBAs made in a particular region. The KBA Standard was approved in 2016, and the process of identifying KBAs is underway in several countries, which we strongly encourage and urge Parties to support.

Annex IV. About WCS

The [Wildlife Conservation Society \(WCS\)](#) is a non-profit, international non-governmental organization (NGO) that has been working across the globe for more than 120 years to save wildlife and wild places. We have conservation programs on the ground in more than 60 countries across Asia, Africa, the Pacific and the Americas that work in partnership with governments, indigenous peoples and local communities, and other partners. We focus *in-situ* conservation efforts on critical wildlife habitat nested within the world's most intact and biologically diverse terrestrial and marine ecosystems — the landscapes and seascapes with the greatest chance of conserving species and ecosystems in the face of ongoing threats and increasing global change.

Our approach relies on generating and using the best science, as well as a recognition that conservation is a long-term investment that relies on partnerships. We work closely with government partners and indigenous rights holders, as well as local communities and many other stakeholders on conservation efforts, including the implementation of legal obligations under international treaties such as the CBD. This has included support in developing and implementing National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), and other efforts to achieve the Aichi Targets. One example is Aichi Target 11 – WCS has worked with governments, indigenous groups and other stakeholders to help establish more than 270 protected areas, and we currently manage, co-manage, or assist with the conservation and management of more protected areas than any other conservation NGO (more than 470 sites). We also work across the globe in a range of other conserved areas, notably Indigenous Territories, from the Canadian Boreal to the islands of the Pacific.

We leverage our experience at the landscape and seascape scale to address regional and global conservation issues, including natural resource governance, illegal and/or unsustainable hunting, fishing, and wildlife trade, the impacts of climate change, the relationship between food security and conservation, sustainable wildlife-based livelihoods, industrial development, and the relationship between wildlife, human, and livestock health.³⁵ We also look at the cumulative impacts of these issues across broader geographies. To complement our work with local, regional and national authorities, we also work closely with intergovernmental organizations to inform global conservation policy and action, as well as sector-specific initiatives that contribute to biodiversity mainstreaming. This provides us with a unique perspective that our experience demonstrates can help Parties negotiate a meaningful post-2020 framework for the CBD.

³⁵ Wildlife Conservation Society. 2004. [12 Manhattan Principles](#).