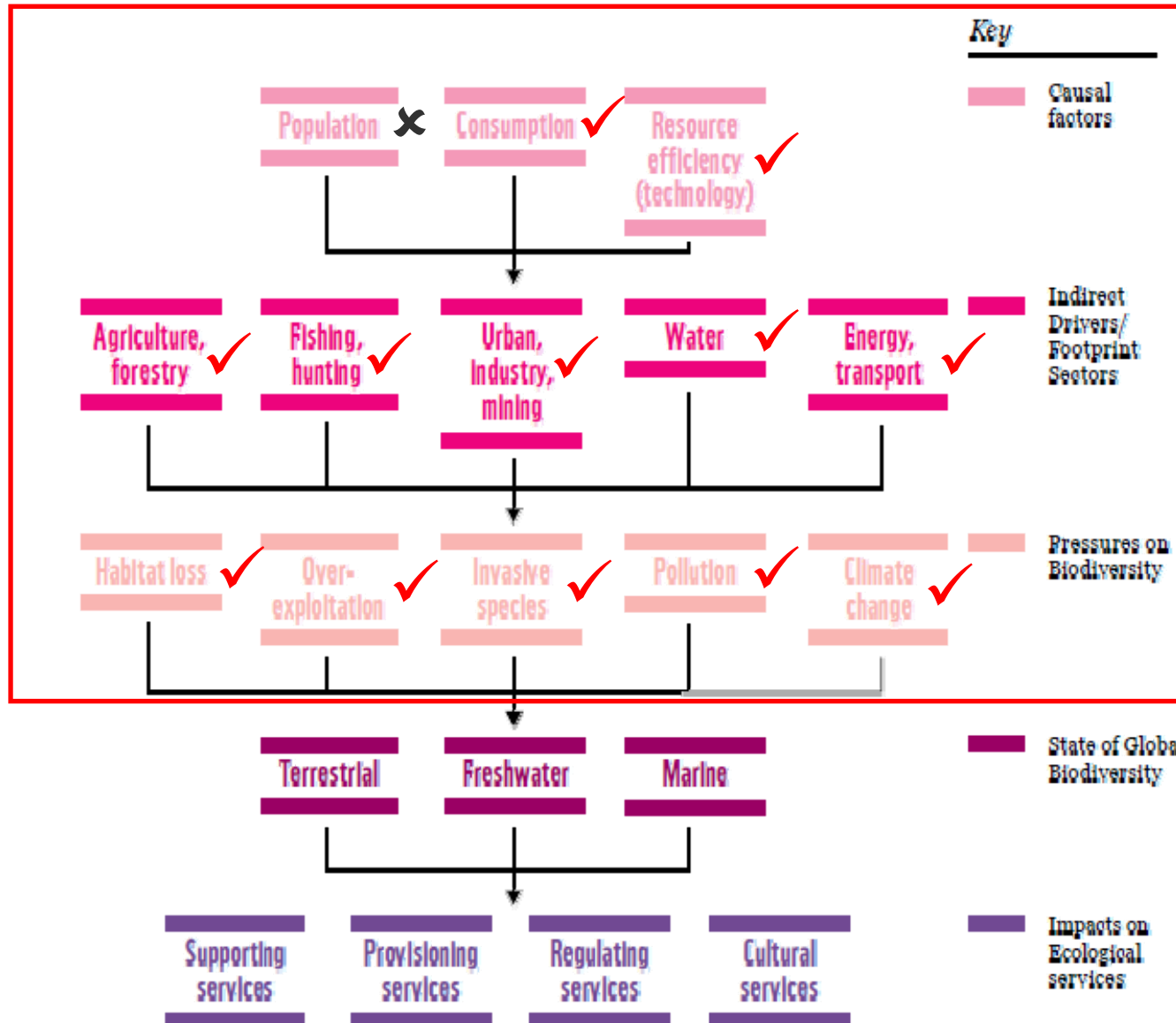


# Review of the biodiversity requirements of standards and certification schemes: A snapshot of current practice

Business, Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (BBES)  
Programme



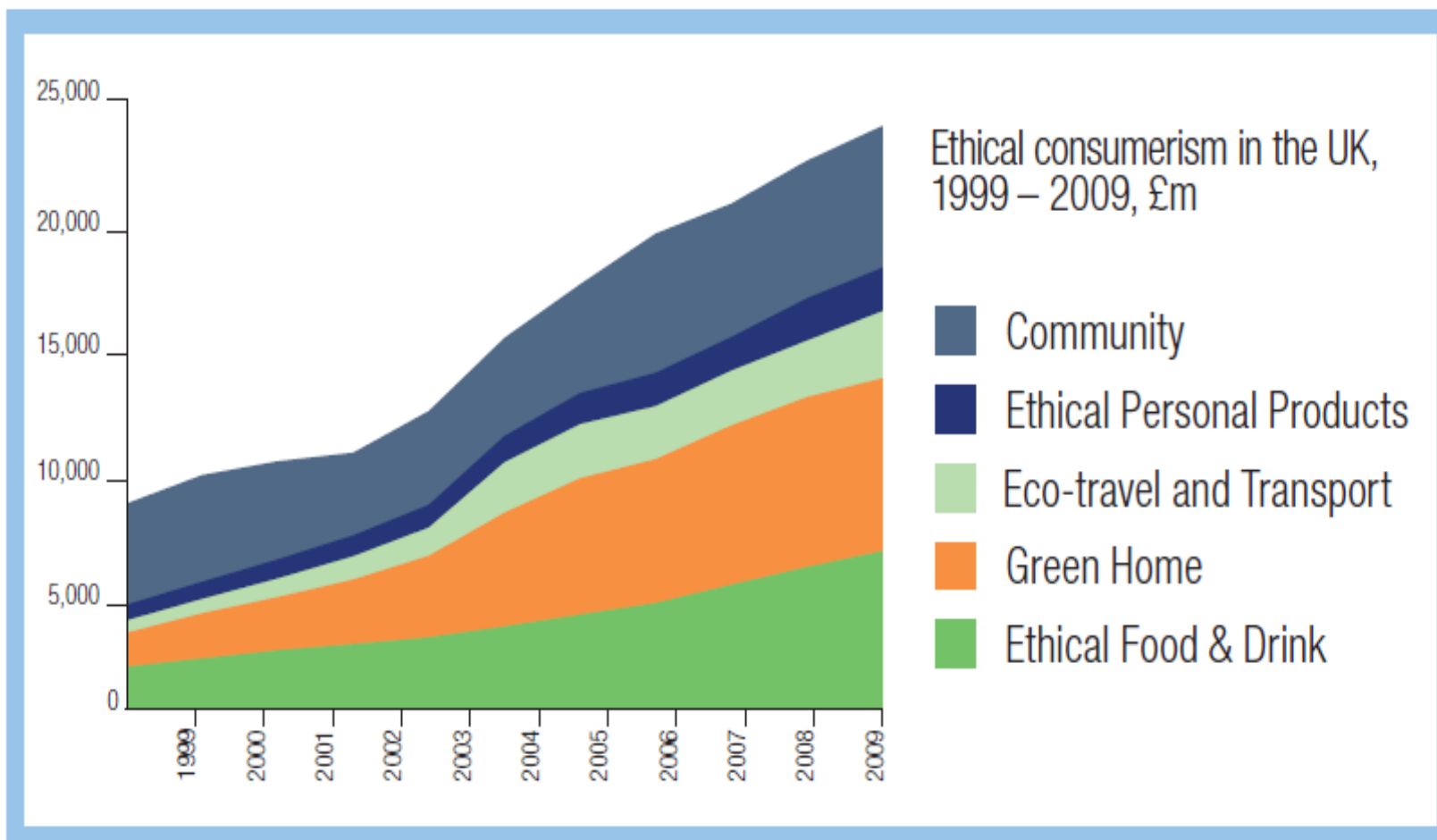
Standards can be defined as:  
*“a set of requirements with which companies are required to comply, and against which they can be audited”*



*Interconnections between people, biodiversity, ecosystem health and provision of ecosystem services.*



Source: WWF Living Planet (2010)



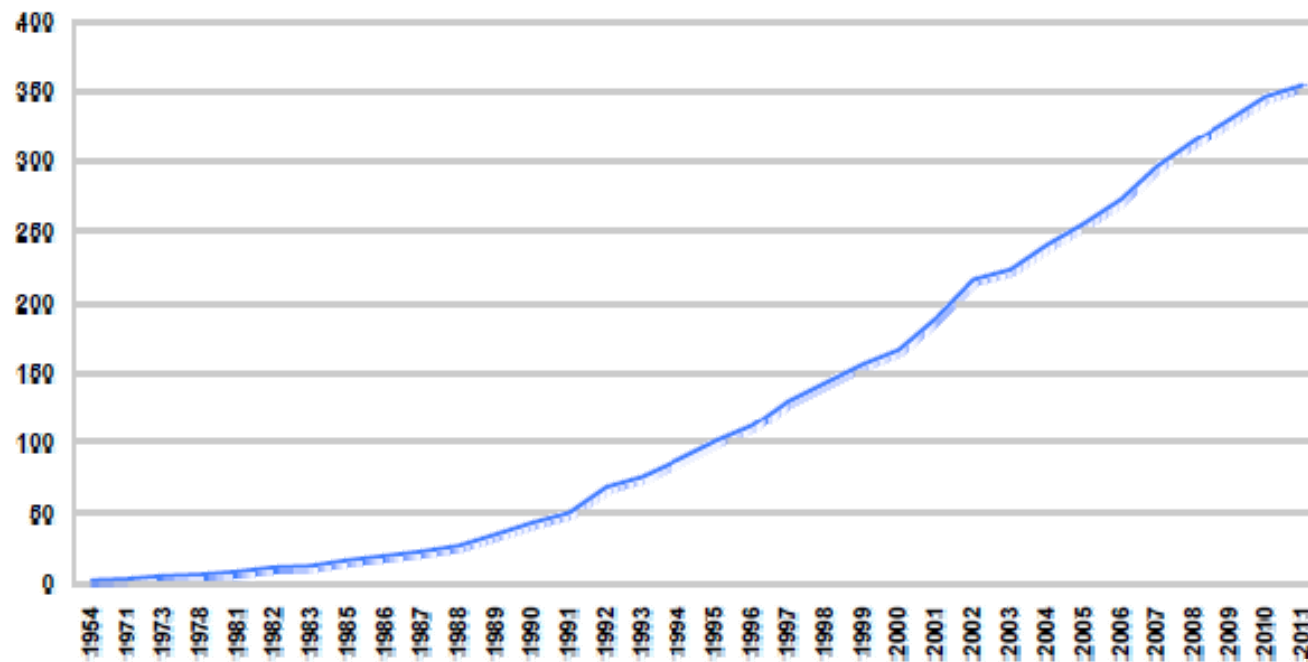
Source: Co-operative Bank Ethical Consumerism Report 2010



# Growth in ecolabels

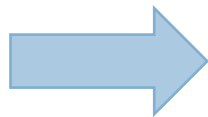
## Total number of ecolabels by year of launch

Source: Ecolabel Index ([www.ecolabelindex.com](http://www.ecolabelindex.com))



# Objectives

- ❖ What terms and approaches are used?
- ❖ What safeguards do environmental standards provide for biodiversity?
- ❖ Are standards aligned with international agreements related to biodiversity?
- ❖ What data are needed to assist with compliance to voluntary standards?



Provide a set of recommendations that, if adopted, would strengthen existing and future standards

# Standards Selection Criteria

- ❖ International in scope
- ❖ Of relevance to multiple companies
- ❖ Presence of biodiversity criteria



**36 environmental standards selected across 8 business sectors:**

Agriculture – 12 standards  
Biotrade – 2 standards  
Carbon – 3 standards  
Finance – 5 standards  
Fisheries – 5 standards  
Forestry – 4 standards  
Mining – 2 standards  
Tourism – 3 standards

# Assessment of Standards' Biodiversity Criteria



## Biodiversity

- Species
- Habitats/Ecosystems

## Areas of Biodiversity Protection

- Protected Areas
- Priority Conservation Areas

## Threats to biodiversity

- Habitat Loss
- Invasive Species
- Overexploitation

## Responses to threats

- Habitat Restoration
- Mitigation Hierarchy
  - No Net Loss
- Net Positive Impact



- ✓ Is it included?
- ✓ How is it defined?
- ✓ How is it managed?



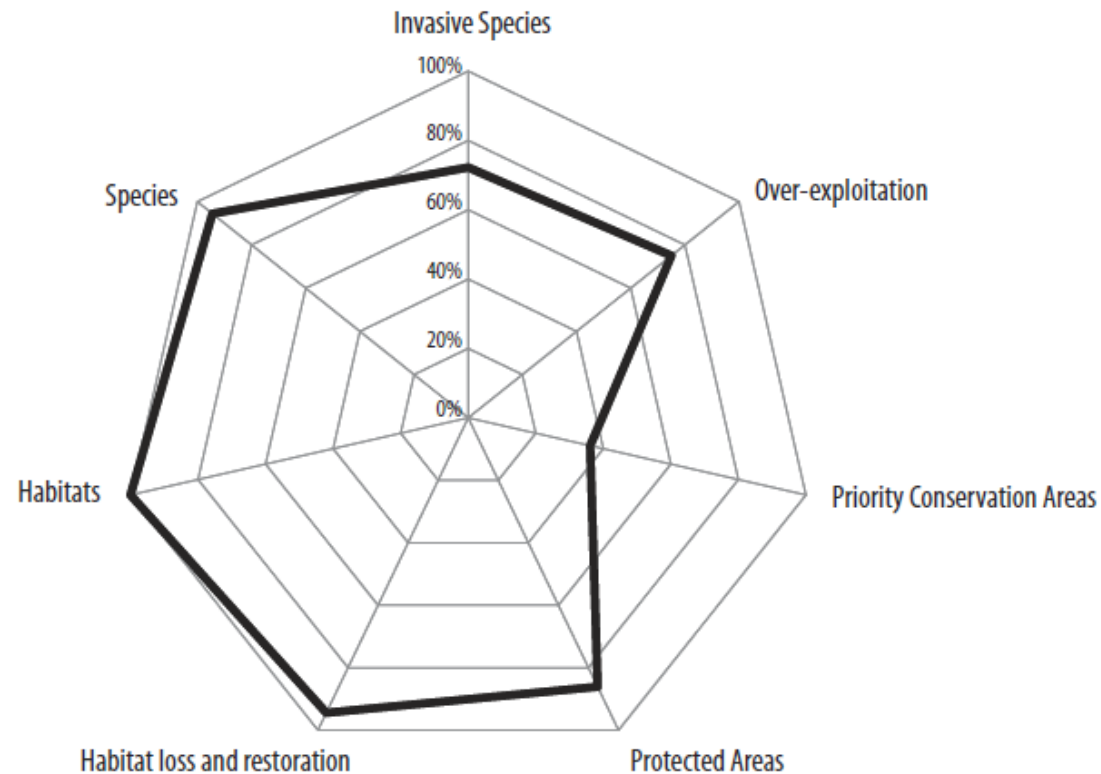
# Some points to bear in mind....

- ❖ This study aims to support standards setting bodies to strengthen biodiversity criteria.
- ❖ This study does **NOT** aim to rank standards for businesses wishing to select a standard.
- ❖ The lack of inclusion of certain biodiversity criteria is not interpreted as a gap or weakness in all cases due the different in purposes of the standards studied.
- ❖ This snapshot review was based on the standards documents available upon beginning the study in 2010 and many standards have since been updated.

# What did we find?



# Habitat and species are frequently included



# Species



Threatened or endangered – 83%

Rare - 28%

Protected – 19%

Migratory /Congregatory – 44%

Endemic – 44%

## Threatened species

Internationally recognised – 64%

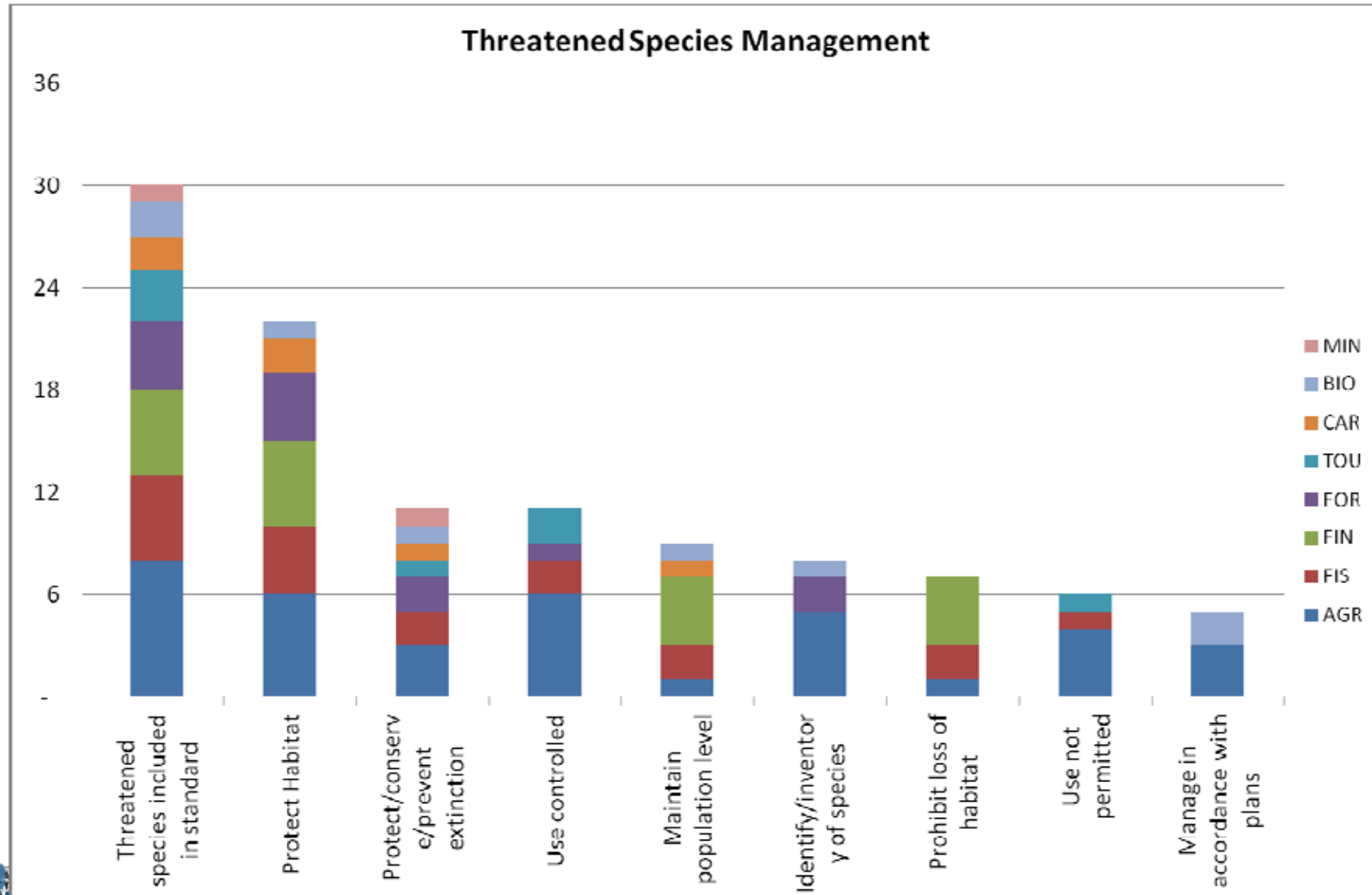
Reference to IUCN red list – 58%

Nationally recognised – 44%



THE IUCN RED LIST  
OF THREATENED SPECIES™

# Threatened species



# Habitats / Ecosystems

## General Habitat Types

- Natural – 86%
- Critical/key/priority – 67%
- Modified – 28%



## Specific Habitat Types

- Forest – 72%
- Aquatic – 64%
- Grassland, savannah and scrubland – 14%
- Peatlands – 14%



# Areas of Biodiversity Protection

## Protected Areas

- Mentioned in **86%** of standards reviewed.
  - Nationally designated – **69%**
  - Internationally recognised (e.g. WHS, Ramsar) – **56%**

## Priority Conservation Areas

- Key Biodiversity Areas – **11%**
- High Conservation Value Areas – **28%**

### Points to consider!

**1.Guidance on operations**

**2.Areas with no legal protection (ICCA's)**

**3.Opportunities to provide net benefits to protected areas**



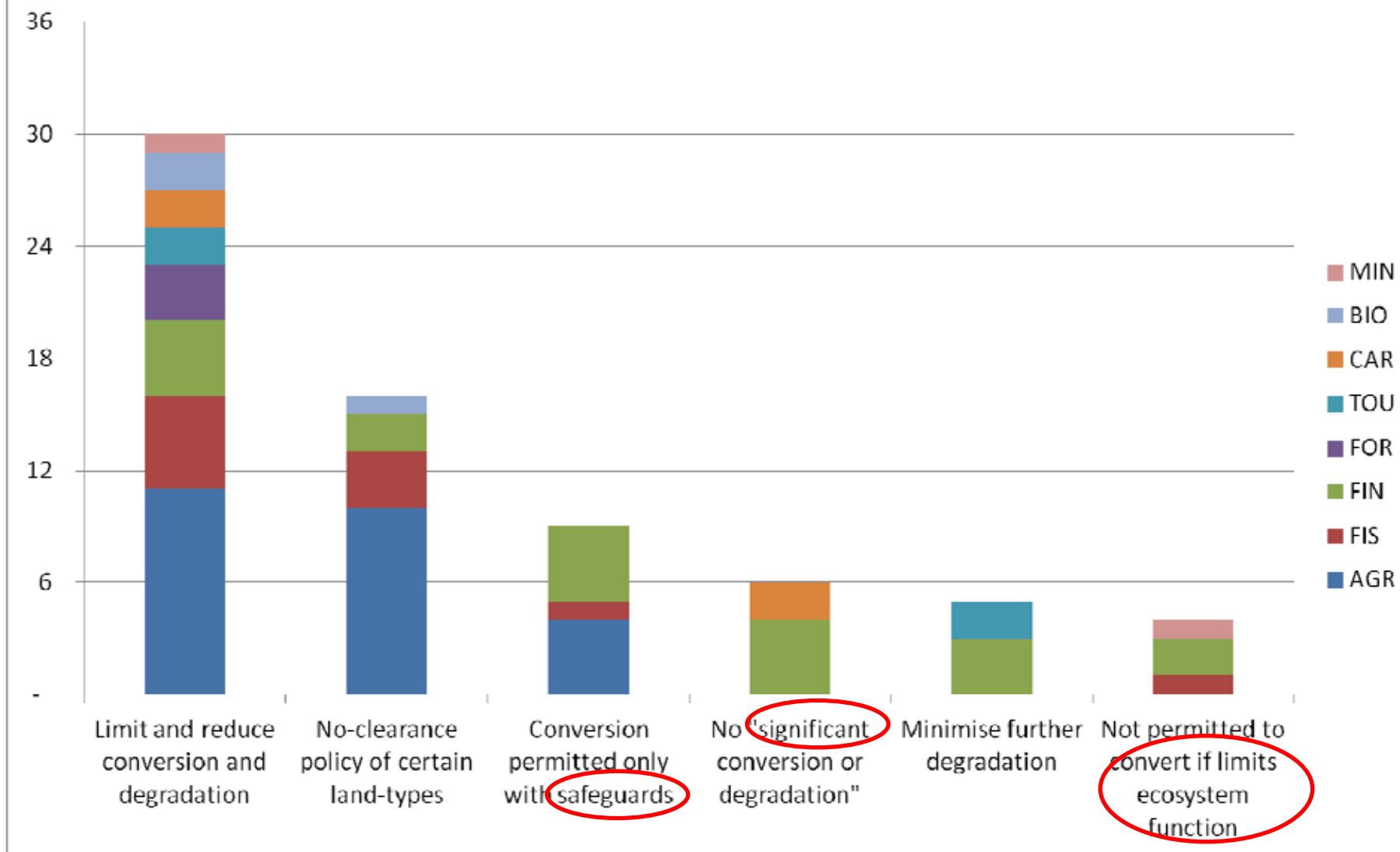
# Threats to Biodiversity

- Habitat loss and degradation – 94%
- Overexploitation – 75%
- Invasive species – 72%





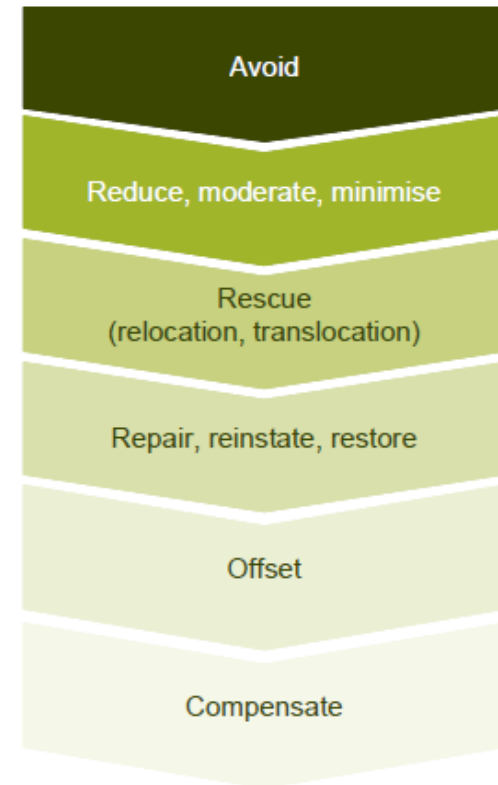
## Habitat Loss Management



# Responses to Threats

## The Mitigation Hierarchy and No Net Loss

- Eluded to in 19% standards
- General references to the balancing of negative and positive impacts – 31%
- No net loss – 17%



BBOP and UNEP-FI 2010

# Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)

- Some reference to MEAs such as the CBD, Ramsar, the WH convention, CITES, CMS
- Most often generically referred to through '*compliance with all relevant international laws and agreements*'
- Standards not aligned to or influenced by MEAs
- Potential to align these efforts in order for standards to act as an ally to MEAs in helping countries achieve targets



# Recommendations

1. **Adopt internationally recognized definitions**
2. **Avoid the displacement of threats**
3. **Include modified habitats**
4. **Provide guidance on operation inside protected areas**
5. **Include specific reference to internationally recognised protected areas**
6. **Recognise Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas**
7. **Safeguard priority conservation areas**
8. **Adopt the mitigation hierarchy and ‘no net loss’ approaches**



# Recommendations (Under Revision)

1. Adopt internationally recognized definitions (Provide reference source. Definition guidance and glossary)
  2. Avoid the displacement (leakage) of threats (Guidance on indirect effects)
  3. Include modified habitats (Provide definition. Use biodiversity value rather than habitat types?)
  4. Provide guidance on operation inside protected areas (Use existing management plans where possible. Support development of management plans where necessary)
  5. Include specific reference to internationally recognised protected areas (Provide links to legal protection status and guidance on operations)
  6. Recognise (areas of customary use, including) Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (Use biodiversity value rather than specific habitat classifications?)
  7. Safeguard priority conservation areas (Use biodiversity value rather than specific habitat classifications?)
  8. Work towards adopt(ing) the mitigation hierarchy (Consider removing 'no net loss' pending further development)
  9. Prior to development, apply checklist that covers the 5 CBD threats to biodiversity
- 
1. Include recommendations on invasive species and overexploitation
  2. Sustainable use to be included
  3. Reference to social issues associated with conservation
  4. Examine the case for including a recommendation on GMO's
  5. Consider how to include a recommendation on reporting



# Prioritising Recommendations

...based on potential biological impact and ease of implementation

1. Adopt internationally recognized definitions (or credible processes for definition selection)
2. Prior to development, apply checklist that covers the 5 CBD threats to biodiversity
3. Work towards adopting the mitigation hierarchy
4. Provide guidance on operating within protected areas and priority conservation areas
5. Adopt value-based assessment and management planning for all habitat types and classes



# Next Steps

- Ecosystems Services
  - Review of standards
  - Online survey of standards setting bodies
- Best practice for setting biodiversity criteria
  - Discussion paper for minimum and optimal criteria
- Final Recommendations
  - Workshops
  - Information paper



# Acknowledgements

Our funding bodies:

Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)

European Investment Bank (EIB)

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)

All the standards bodies that participated

Our advisory panel:

Conservation International (CI)

Forest Trends / Business Biodiversity Offsets Programme (BBOP)

Global Balance

High Conservation Value Resource Network

International Trade Centre

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

Nature Serve

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)

World Wildlife Fund (WWF)

