



# The Landscape Approach

The landscape approach is a framework for making landscape-level conservation decisions, developed by WWF and IUCN. It contributes to broad-scale approaches to conservation, such as WWF's ecoregion conservation programme and the ecosystem approach promoted by the Convention on Biological Diversity: international agreements like the Bern Convention and World Heritage Convention also recommend landscape-scale actions. The landscape approach helps to reach decisions about the advisability of particular interventions (such as a new road or plantation) and to facilitate the planning, negotiation and implementation of activities across a whole landscape. It integrates top-down planning with bottom up, participatory approaches. There are many definitions of "landscape", here we use: *a contiguous area, intermediate in size between an "ecoregion" and a "site", with a specific set of ecological, cultural and socio-economic characteristics distinct from its neighbours*. Conservationists use biogeographical characteristics to define "functional conservation landscapes": other stakeholders such as farming communities, pastoralists or district officials use different parameters to define their "cultural" or "livelihood" landscapes – it is important to recognise these in large-scale conservation. Highlights of the landscape approach include:

- Defining opportunities and constraints for conservation action within the landscape
- Helping conservationists establish effective ecological networks, securing the integrity of ecosystems and viable populations of species
- Development of rapid assessment systems for landscape scale forest quality (both ecological and social), including identification of High Conservation Value Forests (see separate position paper)
- Setting out a stakeholder negotiation framework for land and resource use decisions and for balancing the trade-offs inherent in such large-scale approaches
- Recognizing and using overlapping cultural, social, and governance "landscapes" within biologically defined areas

**WWF believes** that the landscape approach can help our understanding of and participation in many of the social and ecological processes critical to achieving conservation. In WWF's Ecoregion Action Programmes, "landscape" is usually equivalent to "priority conservation area". Whilst the approach is a flexible and developing framework, the following steps have been identified as being worth considering during its application. These seldom follow a neat sequential order e.g. some implementation may be possible quickly while elsewhere data gathering and negotiation will take far longer.



## Position Paper

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One of a series of position papers produced as WWF's response to the WWF/IUCN Forests for Life strategy and WWF's current five-year target-driven programme on forests

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**Our conservation targets:** Conservationists agree on a vision and approach

**Other expectations:** Stakeholder analyses to find others' expectations for the landscape

**Landscapes:** Identify our "conservation landscape" and other peoples' "landscapes" in the area

**Performance and potential:** Work with stakeholders to assess opportunities, potential and scenarios for how the landscape can address the identified functions

**Reconciliation of options:** Stakeholder negotiation to agree a mosaic of land-uses, approaches, targets and indicators

**Implementation:** Stakeholders implement agreed management actions

**Monitoring and evaluation:** Of targets and the vision with adaptation as needed

**WWF will work with governments, landowners and local communities** to help develop the landscape approach by:

- Implementing the approach in various priority conservation areas within ecoregions, following a multi-stakeholder priority-setting process
- Continuing to develop the concepts and framework with IUCN and other partners
- Promoting policy and advocacy work at regional and national levels to complement stakeholder dialogue in priority landscapes