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Agenda item 19

GLOBAL STATUS, GAPS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF PROTECTED AREAS AND OTHER AREA-BASED CONSERVATION MEASURES

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. The fifth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook* (GBO-5) found that progress towards achieving the quantitative elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 were well on track to being achieved (as of August 2020), though only modest progress had been made on the other elements of the target.
2. In November 2021, the Secretariat, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with the engagement of the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), in response to decisions XIII/2 and 14/8 of the Conference of the Parties, published a global report on protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs).¹ The report assessed the global status, gaps and opportunities of protected areas and OECMs, benefits of filling protected areas gaps, and important considerations for more effective and equitable protected areas. It highlighted the results of a stocktaking exercise undertaken to establish an accurate picture of the status of the elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 and has been posted together with individual Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 country dossiers on the website of the Convention.²
3. Key information contained in the report pertaining to progress in achieving the qualitative elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, has been reproduced in the present document for the information of the Conference of the Parties. However, information on the quantitative elements presented below has been updated according to the latest information contained in the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) as of December 2022.³

I. TERRESTRIAL AND MARINE COVERAGE

4. As of December 2022, global protected areas and OECM coverage according to WDPA and the World Database on Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (WD-OECM), is as follows:
 - (a) Terrestrial and inland waters protected area coverage: 15.8% (267,081 protected areas);
 - (b) Terrestrial and inland waters protected area and OECM coverage: 16.98% (267,081 protected areas and 632 OECMs);
 - (c) Marine and coastal areas protected area coverage: 8.16% (18,444 protected areas);
 - (d) Marine and coastal areas protected area and OECM coverage: 8.26% (18,444 protected areas and 195 OECMs).

¹ <https://www.cbd.int/pa/doc/creating-a-nature-positive-future-en.pdf>.

² <https://www.cbd.int/protected/2021globalreport.shtml>.

³ <https://www.protectedplanet.net/en>.

5. Figure 1 below shows the trend in coverage of protected areas and OECMs. It shows the changes after the adoption of the programme of work on protected areas (PoWPA) in 2004 and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2010-2021 and its Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 (2010), and the impacts of the two-phase strategy on protected areas (2015-2022). It also shows the slowdown during the years of the COVID 19 pandemic (since 2020).

6. Of the total coverage of 52,846,850 square kilometres (land, inland water and ocean), 23,586,297 square kilometres or 45% was added since 2010. Further, the most substantial change occurred in the marine realm. Since 1993, while terrestrial protected areas almost doubled, the coverage of marine and coastal areas increased almost 16-fold.

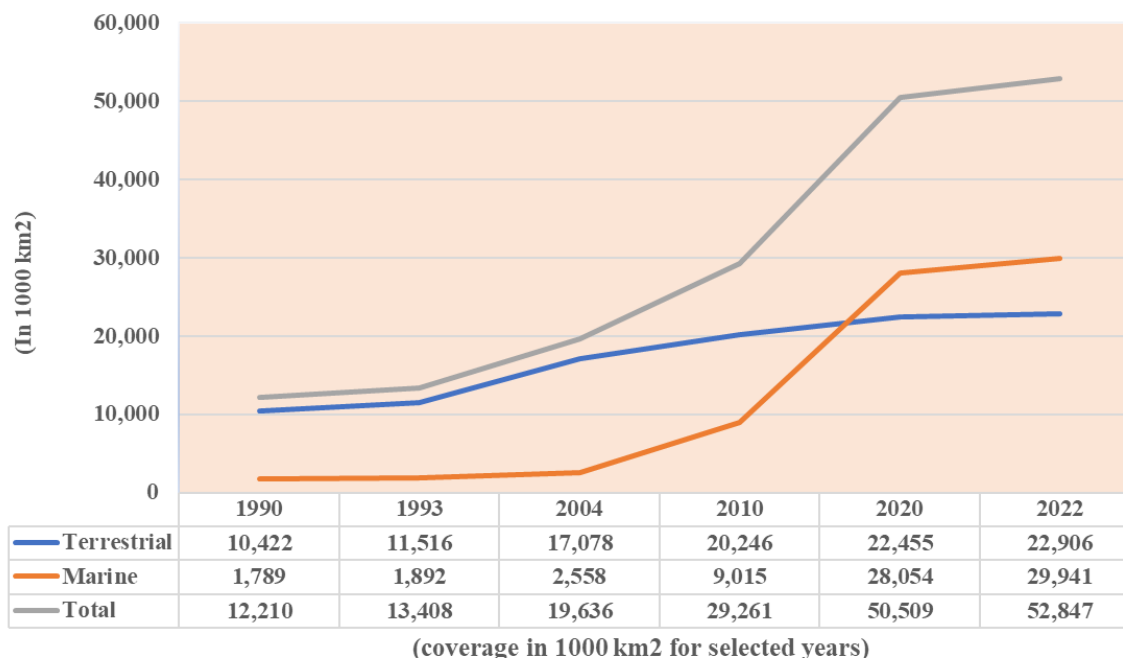


Figure 1. Trends in coverage of protected areas and marine protected areas, including other area-based conservation measures, 1990 to December 2022. Source: Based on data from global statistics of <https://www.protectedplanet.net/en>.

7. The status of the qualitative elements discussed below is taken from the 2021 global report. The increase in protected areas coverage both in the terrestrial and marine realms over the last year will certainly have improved the status of many of the elements.

II. ECOLOGICAL REPRESENTATIVENESS

8. The global report highlighted that ecological representativeness is often assessed based on the coverage of broad-scale biogeographic units, such as ecoregions; in this regard, protected area and OECM coverage in 826 terrestrial ecoregions (excluding Antarctica) is as follows:

- (a) 104 terrestrial ecoregions have 0-3% coverage;
- (b) 164 terrestrial ecoregions have 3-8% coverage;
- (c) 192 terrestrial ecoregions have 8-17% coverage;
- (d) 145 terrestrial ecoregions have 17-30% coverage;
- (e) 221 terrestrial ecoregions have 30-100% coverage.

9. The global report also reports that protected area and OECM coverage in 232 marine ecoregions and 37 pelagic provinces is as follows:

- (a) 77 marine ecoregions and 13 pelagic provinces have 0-3% coverage;
- (b) 36 marine ecoregions and 17 pelagic provinces have 3-8% coverage;
- (c) 36 marine ecoregions and 5 pelagic provinces have 8-17% coverage;
- (d) 30 marine ecoregions and 1 pelagic province have 17-32% coverage;
- (e) 53 marine ecoregions and 1 pelagic province have 32-100% coverage.

10. Globally, 47.4% (110) of marine ecoregions and 10.8% (4) pelagic provinces have at least 10% coverage.

III. AREAS IMPORTANT FOR BIODIVERSITY

11. Key biodiversity areas (KBAs) have been described as sites that make significant contributions to the global persistence of biodiversity (IUCN, 2016). According to the global report, 16,343 KBAs have been identified globally.

- (a) Mean percent coverage of all KBAs by protected areas and OECMs globally is 43.3%;
- (b) 38.54% (6,298) of KBAs have no protection (<2%);
- (c) 10.47% (1,711) of KBAs have 0-25% coverage by protected areas and OECMs;
- (d) 6.88% (1,125) of KBAs have 25-50% coverage;
- (e) 7.94% (1,298) of KBAs have 50-75% coverage;
- (f) 36.17% (5,911) of KBAs have 75-100% coverage.

IV. AREAS IMPORTANT FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

12. The global report assessed two ecosystem services: carbon and water.

13. The report describes the protected area and OECM coverage of global carbon stocks as follows:

- (a) 24.57% (or 70,604.3 Tg C) of 287,398.7 Tg C aboveground biomass (AGB) is located within protected areas;
- (b) 20.86% (or 25,440.6 Tg C) of 121,936.1 Tg C belowground biomass (BGB) is located within protected areas;
- (c) 15.44% (or 107,641.3 Tg C) of 697,236.3 Tg C soil organic carbon (SOC) is located within protected areas;
- (d) 7.07% (or 165,962.3 Tg C) of 2,347,040.7 Tg C from marine sediment carbon within protected areas.

14. The global report examined the average protected area and OECM coverage of watersheds in each global region. In the 19 geographic subregions, protection of watersheds ranged from 2.9% to 56.7%. The average protection of watersheds for all subregions was 21.9%. The table below provides a summary.

The average protection of watershed per region, with the loss of forest cover in the same watershed from 2000-2020. Source: <https://www.cbd.int/pa/doc/creating-a-nature-positive-future-en.pdf>.

Region	Average protection of watersheds (%)	Standard deviation	Loss of forest cover in watershed catchments from 2000-2020 (%)	Total area of forest loss (km ²)
Australia and New Zealand	21.86	9.45	26.97	11755.99
Northern Europe	29.41	31.22	20.04	14639.50
Southern Europe	40.54	27.48	17.19	9117.80
South-Eastern Asia	14.59	10.12	13.56	247519.43
South America	34.04	29.10	13.05	1112781.26
Caribbean	13.59	5.10	12.79	751.14
Eastern Europe	22.14	19.24	10.23	97871.79
Southern Africa	27.43	41.07	9.21	2032.82
Northern America	18.43	27.99	8.28	753211.80
Central America	21.72	21.28	6.88	16551.64
Western Africa	20.68	28.32	6.69	30149.21
Western Europe	31.99	10.40	6.08	13484.30
Middle Africa	8.22	8.02	5.73	822612.61
Eastern Africa	22.51	19.45	5.39	18749.19
Eastern Asia	11.29	16.37	2.93	164338.65
Southern Asia	3.93	14.48	2.35	21400.99
Northern Africa	14.43	20.05	2.12	125939.75
Western Asia	2.86	3.87	1.42	1146.09
Central Asia	56.69	49.09	0.52	1.98

V. CONNECTIVITY AND INTEGRATION

15. The global report found that based on information obtained from the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission’s Digital Observatory for Protected Areas, the authors have mentioned that the global coverage of protected-connected lands is almost 8%.

VI. EQUITABLE GOVERNANCE

16. Using information from WDPA (as of May 2021) the global report found that protected areas have the following governance types (based on the number of sites; UNESCO-MAB Biosphere Reserves and sites with a status of “proposed” or “not reported” are excluded). Figure 2 below provides an overview of governance types by region.

- (a) 84.0% are governed by governments;
- (b) 1.8% are under shared governance;
- (c) 6.8% are under private governance;
- (d) 0.5% are under governance by indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs);
- (e) 6.9% do not report a governance type.

Governance Diversity of PAs Worldwide



Figure 2. The governance types reported in WDPA for protected areas regionally and globally.

Source: <https://www.cbd.int/pa/doc/creating-a-nature-positive-future-en.pdf>.

17. Regarding OECMS, the global report found the following governance types (based on the number of sites) (as of May 2021). Please see figure 3 below:

- (a) 64.4% are governed by governments;
- (b) 21.6% are under shared governance;
- (c) 3.2% are under private governance;
- (d) 1.7% are under governance by indigenous peoples and local communities;
- (e) 9.0% do not report a governance type.

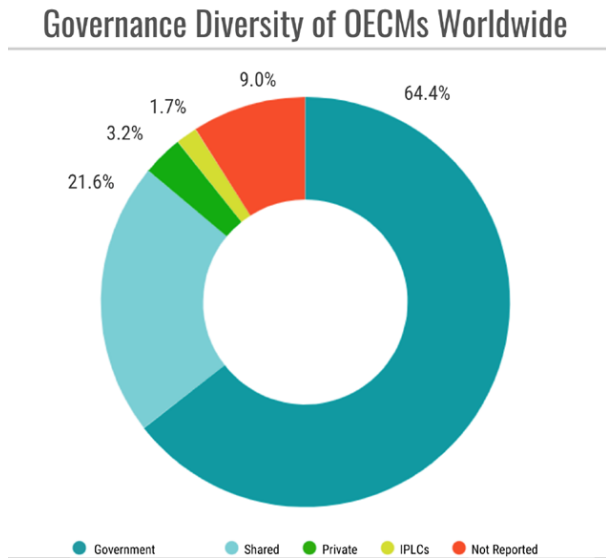


Figure 3. The governance types reported to WDPA for other effective area-based conservation measures globally. Source: <https://www.cbd.int/pa/doc/creating-a-nature-positive-future-en.pdf>.

VII. PROTECTED AREAS MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS

18. The global report contains data provided on completed protected area management effectiveness (PAME) assessments as reported in the global database on PAME. The report stated that as of May 2021, there were 265,941 protected areas reported in WDPA, for which only ~10% had management effectiveness evaluations reported in the global database on protected area management effectiveness (GD-PAME).

19. Four and a half per cent (4.5%; 6,091,398 km²) of the global terrestrial area is covered by protected areas with completed management effectiveness evaluations. 28.8% of the area of terrestrial protected areas have completed evaluations.

20. One per cent (3,527,163 km²) of the ocean (2.5% of marine area under national jurisdiction) is covered by marine protected areas with completed management effectiveness evaluations. 14.0% of the area of marine protected areas within national waters have completed evaluations.
