

Protected areas

Cornerstones of biodiversity conservation

Goal 1.4: To substantially improve site-based protected area planning and management

Target: All protected areas to have effective management in existence by 2012, using participatory and science-based site planning processes that incorporate clear biodiversity objectives, targets, management strategies and monitoring programmes, drawing upon existing methodologies and a long-term management plan with active stakeholder involvement.

Suggested activities of the Parties

1.4.1 Create a highly participatory process, involving indigenous and local communities and relevant stakeholders, as part of site-based planning in accordance with the ecosystem approach, and use relevant ecological and socio-economic data required to develop effective planning processes.

1.4.2 Identify appropriate measurable biodiversity conservation targets for sites, drawing on criteria laid out in Annex I to the Convention on Biological Diversity and other relevant criteria.

1.4.3 Include in the site-planning process an analysis of opportunities for the protected area to contribute to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity at local and regional scales as well as an analysis of threats and means of addressing them.

As appropriate, but no later than 2010, develop or update management plans for protected areas, built on the above process, to better achieve the three objectives of the Convention.

1.4.5 Integrate climate change adaptation measures in protected area planning, management strategies, and in the design of protected area systems.

1.4.6 Ensure that protected areas are effectively managed or supervised through staff that are well-trained and skilled, properly and appropriately equipped, and supported, to carry out their fundamental role in the management and conservation of protected areas.

Suggested supporting activities of the Executive Secretary

1.4.7 Compile and disseminate through the clearing-house mechanism current relevant approaches, frameworks and tools for site planning and promote and facilitate the exchange of experiences and lessons learned in applying and adapting them in different ecological and social settings.

1.4.8 Disseminate information on successful management models of protected areas which serve to further the three objective of the Convention and may also contribute to poverty reduction and the pursuit of sustainable development.

Learn more about Goal 1.4:

Key activities include:

- Create a highly participatory approach to site-based planning
- Identify measurable conservation targets for sites
- Develop or update management plans, and include opportunities for sustainable use of biodiversity
- Integrate climate change adaptation measures in protected area planning and management
- Ensure a well-trained, skilled and well-equipped staff

What is a protected area management plan?

A protected area management plan is a document that sets out the management approach and goals, together with a framework for decision making for the protected area over a given period of time.

Why is a protected area management plan important?

Management planning is an essential step towards ensuring the proper management of protected areas. The plan is an important tool because it sets the long term direction for managing the area. In this way, the benefits provided by the protected area can be assured, and the natural and cultural resources can be safeguarded.

What is a highly participatory approach?

A highly participatory approach is one in which relevant stakeholders – those who stand to benefit from and/or bear the costs of, the protected area – play an active role in defining protected area objectives. When a plan is developed with the input and participation of those affected, it can be a powerful way to secure agreement on how the area will be managed. This includes setting policies to guide the different kinds of uses, and establishing the priority actions.

What are measurable conservation targets for sites?

A measurable conservation target is a specific goal, or desired state, of the status of a species or ecosystem. Usually a measurable target will be quantitative in nature, such as: “A healthy population of 500 elephants” or “20 miles of river shoreline restored”. These conservation targets form the backbone of a protected area management plan.

What are opportunities for sustainable use of biodiversity?

Opportunities for sustainable use include any use of resources within the protected area that will not adversely affect key biodiversity, and is within sustainable harvest limits. For example, local communities might harvest roofing thatch, cattle fodder, medicinal plants and fish as part of an overall protected area management plan that allows for sustainable use.

What elements are typically included in a protected area management plan?

Typically, a protected area management plan includes background information, goals and objectives, strategies and actions, mechanisms for consultation and participation, management programs, and an overview of monitoring. Typically, there are also appendices showing organizational charts, zoning of the protected area, and a summary of annual operational plans.

What does it mean to integrate climate change adaptation measures?

There are several ways to integrate climate change adaptation into management planning. These include assessing the impacts of climate change on protected areas, promoting resilient ecosystems within protected areas to withstand the impacts of climate change, and managing ecosystems within protected areas to minimize and mitigate climate change.

What are some key documents that can help in the implementation of Goal 1.4?

Resources for creating management plans and integrating climate change considerations can be found at <http://www.cbd.int/protected/tools/>