

Durban Accord Outcome 3: A global system of protected areas, with links to surrounding landscapes and seascapes, is in place

There are now many more protected areas than at the time of the IVth World Parks Congress, covering 11.5% of the world's land area. This is a significant achievement by governments and others throughout the world. Much of this is due to global treaties and programmes (notably the CBD, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Bonn Convention on Migratory Species, the World Heritage Convention and UNESCO's Man and Biosphere Programme), and regional agreements and action programmes. Nevertheless, there are still many gaps in the network. Many species and key ecosystems are inadequately represented, and too many protected areas lack a strong legal basis, political support and/or effective implementation.

A particular concern arises over the lack of protection for marine systems, in both sovereign and international waters. Less than 1% of the ocean is protected. There has been a worldwide collapse in fisheries and attendant environmental damage and disruption to ecosystem structure and function. The WSSD and the WPC have both issued a call to action to create many more Marine Protected Areas (MPAs).⁶

Main target 4 has been developed to address the challenge of developing a fully representative global network of protected areas.⁷

Main target 4: A system of protected areas representing all the world's ecosystems is in place by the time of the next World Parks Congress

This target should ensure that all the individual components - ecosystems, species, habitats and landscapes - are also protected, using the detailed ecosystem- and species-related **targets** set out in Box 3 above.

But even if this target is achieved, the effective conservation of biodiversity cannot be sustained only in isolated areas of protection. Many important ecosystems and valued species will still be found outside strictly protected areas (Categories I-IV), some in Category V and VI protected areas, but mostly in partly transformed environments without any formal protection. Furthermore, few protected areas will ever be large enough to include entire ecosystems, and all protected areas - however big - will be affected by developments beyond their borders. The areas of land and water that adjoin - and are functionally-linked with - protected areas often occur across national boundaries with different legal systems and governance.

Yet many protected areas are cut off from the surrounding environment, where land uses and economic activities are planned without regard to the effect on the protected area, ignoring the movement of species, nutrients and other environmental flows across the its boundary. To address this, an ecosystem or landscape-scale approach to protected-areas planning is needed. This requires a conceptual move from protected areas as 'islands' to protected areas as parts of 'networks'. It also means setting protected areas within a wider matrix of ecosystem-based, environmentally sensitive land and water management, supported by the mainstreaming of environmental considerations into various areas of public policy. This is the ecosystem approach advocated under the CBD. There are many good regional and national examples of such initiatives. These can be used as models of good practice when building new links and improving existing ones.⁸

Main Target 5: All protected areas are linked into wider ecological/environmental systems of resource management and protection on land and at sea by the time of the next World Parks Congress

Achieving main targets 4 and 5 requires a systematic, scientifically based approach to defining spatial units (ecosystems, ecoregions and bioregions) and identifying key factors (e.g. scarcity, rarity, vulnerability and threat levels). It also needs to take account of the disruptive effect of climate change and its consequences. These will affect the ecological character of many protected areas, rendering some of them ineffective, and requiring adaptive management actions (such as supplementary and substitute areas, and transfer and translocation of species and habitats).

The following actions are designed to achieve both main targets 4 and 5.

International action

- Foster an integrated approach to planning systems of protected areas. This should use the full range of IUCN protected-area management categories, provide for *in situ* conservation of species and habitats at all scales, promote linkages among terrestrial, coastal and marine areas where possible, and recognize the importance of all stakeholders in meeting this challenge.
- Stimulate intergovernmental action across all continents and oceans for establishing protected areas in places of highest biodiversity, focusing on those species and habitats that are poorly represented in current protected areas, those that face the greatest threat, and those that contribute to performing particularly important ecosystem functions.
- Give priority to freshwater systems, grasslands, tropical dry forests, regional seas, polar regions and the High Seas. Species groups requiring particular attention are plants (including lower plants, lichens and fungi) and fish (including sharks).
- Use and link intergovernmental accords, treaties, conventions and other international instruments, for example the World Heritage Convention and the CBD. In the context of the marine environment, use the Jakarta Mandate of the CBD and appropriate elements of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the United Nations Fish Stocks Agreement (UN-FSA) and measures under the Antarctic treaty system.
- Develop a linked, coordinated and consistent system of management on the High Seas, including protected areas, involving international collaboration amongst Regional Fisheries Management Organizations. This should be developed with parallel and complementary initiatives in coastal waters and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) seas.
- Assess the global, regional and national impacts of climate change on protected areas, so as to identify the appropriate location, size and design of protected areas in a warmer world.
- Create new - and promote existing - transboundary protected areas for communities separated by national borders, including corridors of connectivity for mobile indigenous peoples who have traditionally migrated across borders.

Regional action

- **Supporting target:** agree and establish by 2010, within the framework of regional environmental conventions and protocols and under the jurisdiction of the authorities responsible for implementing these agreements, representative systems of protected areas (taking account of the ecosystem- and species-related targets in Box 3 above).
- Consider the establishment of new agreements to provide frameworks for international environmental cooperation among countries where there are no existing regional environmental conventions/protocols, giving priority to transboundary cooperation in the case of regional seas, mountain chains and shared watersheds/river basins.
- Take intergovernmental action to develop major linkages, strategies and actions across international boundaries, to link protected areas with the surrounding land and sea, and to designate networks of sites used by migratory species. Priority should be given to major natural systems such as river basins and corridors, mountain chains, coastal zones, shelf seas, the High Seas and polar regions; as well as to those wide-ranging migratory species for which protected-area measures alone will not suffice.
- Link terrestrial and/or marine protected areas across international and intra-national boundaries to achieve complementary aims and management actions.
- Support regional integration actions that will promote the harmonization of national policies and legislation in the management of protected areas.

National and local action

Each authority with relevant jurisdiction at national and sub-national level should:

- Develop an overall plan for its protected areas, within a framework that is based on biogeographical regions and in consultation with all relevant constituencies. The **supporting target** should be to fill gaps (including biodiversity hotspots and under-represented bioregions) in a representative national system of protected areas by 2010.
- Taking account of environmental, social, cultural and economic linkages, and in consultation with all relevant constituencies including adjacent jurisdictions, review:
 - the scope and need for boundary changes, including the expansion of protected areas beyond existing boundaries;
 - zoning measures within and on the edge of protected areas; and
 - frameworks for connectivity, such as ecological and social networks, ecological corridors and freshwater flows.
- Restore ecological processes in degraded areas, both within protected areas and in their surrounding landscapes, so as to ensure the ecological integrity of protected areas.

- In partnership with stakeholders (particularly indigenous and local communities affected by, or interested in conservation initiatives) examine how innovative, traditional/customary and other types of governance can be recognized, harmonized and connected within an overall protected area system.
- Adopt a policy framework and incentives that encourage the active participation of local communities in biodiversity stewardship.
- Adapt protected area and community conserved area management to the special needs of mobile communities, including protecting their seasonal or temporary use rights, preserving the integrity of their migratory routes or corridors, and supporting mobile use where it can achieve conservation objectives.
- Coordinate the above with national adaptation plans under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), so as to ensure that adaptation plans for protected areas are in place.

IUCN-led action on completing the system

Action: agree a revised global scheme of biogeographical subdivisions as a basis for reviewing gaps in the coverage of protected areas (including World Heritage Sites).

Lead: World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) Building the Global System Theme.

Action: establish a task force within WCPA on conservation planning to guide countries in the achievement of protected area targets.

Lead: IUCN WCPA Global Steering Committee.

Action: provide assessments of the significance of major global changes, including climate, on the identification and management of protected areas.

Lead: WCPA.

Action: assist local and regional institutions to understand and implement international instruments and protocols relating to protected areas.

Lead: IUCN Environmental Law Centre.

Action: produce and disseminate general guidance on effective legal mechanisms for the establishment and management of protected areas and provide specific advice on request.

Lead: IUCN Commission on Environmental Law (CEL).

Action: lead collaborative efforts - internationally, regionally and nationally - in examining the current system of representation, identifying gaps and making recommendations to appropriate authorities. Special attention should be given to freshwater systems, grasslands, regional seas, the high seas, and polar regions, as well as the implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.

Lead: WCPA Building the Global System Theme.

Action: develop an open reporting system on the global distribution, extent and status of marine protected areas, involving wide information dissemination, and encouraging international participation and feedback.

Lead: WCPA working through the WDPA and the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre.

Action: encourage, and contribute knowledge to, the establishment of marine protected areas in the Antarctic region.

Lead: WCPA.

IUCN-led action on linkages

Action: encourage the development of programmes for linkages in all continents, especially across international boundaries, using networks of different categories of protected areas, buffers and connecting corridors, for example in the marine environment, basins and mountain chains, and along important migratory paths (e.g. the East Asian Flyway).

Lead: WCPA Regions and proposed new WCPA/CEESP/CEL Task Force on Governance.

Action: compile and disseminate information on methods of linking protected areas with surrounding landscape and seascape.

Lead: WCPA/Commission on Ecosystem Management joint Task Force.

Action: support the establishment of a Global Transboundary Protected Areas Initiative.

Lead: Secretariat and WCPA Task Force on Transboundary Protected Areas.

Action: promote the establishment of transboundary protected areas and Parks for Peace in all continents and oceans.

Lead: WCPA Regions supported by WCPA Task Force on Transboundary Protected Areas.

Action: support the examination of protected area boundaries where these restrict the achievement of biodiversity objectives.

Lead: WCPA Regions.

IUCN-led action on protected area categorization⁹

Action: establish a new WCPA task force on the IUCN system of Management Categories for Protected Areas.

Lead: WCPA.

Action: encourage the full use of the IUCN management categories for protected areas in all IUCN work on protected area systems.

Lead: WCPA Management Effectiveness Theme and new Task Force on Categories.

Action: prepare an updated version of the 1994 IUCN Protected Areas Management Categories guidance. This should include a better reflection of the interdependence of cultural and natural assets, and of various governance models (including community conserved areas, related types of natural resource protection and management, and indigenous-owned, designated and managed protected areas).

Lead: new WCPA Task Force on Categories.

Action: develop programmes on: (i) capacity building to improve understanding of the categories system, and (ii) on research and monitoring on the impact of the system.

Lead: new WCPA Task Force on Categories.

Action: before the compilation of the next UN List of Protected Areas, establish protected area category verification and certification systems and trial these in WCPA Regions, especially Europe, leading to a proposal for a protocol for the verification of protected areas in relation to the IUCN management categories.

Lead: new WCPA Task Force on Categories and WCPA Europe.

Action: consider revising the definition of a marine protected area in order to facilitate better reporting; this should consider the exclusion of coastal/intertidal sites if these do not include sub-tidal water. Any new definition should be presented at the next World Conservation Congress.

Lead: WCPA Marine Theme with the new WCPA Task Force on Categories.

Action: update the WDPA to include all sites that meet the IUCN definition of a protected area, regardless of governance responsibility.

Lead: WCPA working through the global consortium of the WDPA and the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre.