



# 30x30

## A Guide to Inclusive, Equitable and Effective Implementation of Target 3 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

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# 30x30

# A Guide to Inclusive, Equitable and Effective Implementation of Target 3

## of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

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Cover photo: Overview of Juruena River, Juruena, Brazil. The National Park of Juruena is a protected area supported by Arpa. © WWF-Brazil / Adriano Gambarini

Edited by: Brent A. Mitchell, Nigel Dudley, Sue Stolton, Jessica Campese and Hannah L. Timmins for IUCN WCPA and IUCN CEESP

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The editorial team conducted extensive consultations and discussions before and during the drafting of this guide, and participated in relevant events, meetings, conferences and symposia convened by others, both in-person and virtually. Input was also solicited through an open form, advertised via a bespoke website and occasional newsletters. Review drafts were shared with more than 650 individuals and organizations in nearly every country of the world. More than 1,700 comments were received and processed, leading to substantial changes in the text, graphics and structure.

This publication was developed by the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) under project agreement FT14044 with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), with support from the Global Environment Facility (XX13157). The IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP), Equilibrium Research and QLF Atlantic Center for the Environment, constituted the editorial team (with WCPA). An advisory group was comprised of representatives from WWF, IUCN WCPA, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), UK Department of Environment, Fisheries and Rural Affairs (DEFRA); IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP); and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

This Guide should be considered a companion piece with the report [Best Practice in Delivering the 30x30 Target](#) and an online toolkit to support implementation of Target 3, [30x30 Solutions](#).

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# A Guide to Inclusive, Equitable and Effective Implementation of Target 3

of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework



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# Foreword

*“To take urgent action to halt and reverse biodiversity loss...”* So begins the mission statement of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) Target 3, or “30x30” for its objective to conserve at least 30% of the planet by the year 2030.

This document is a guide along the path to realizing Target 3 of the KMGBF. It guides us through the text of the Target itself, breaking down all of the elements and, perhaps most importantly, it is loaded with links to more details. The path it offers leads to effective implementation through equitable and human rights-based action. It is a big guide for a big job.

The development of this guide is a small example of the kind of cooperation and hard work that we need to succeed in Target 3. It began with weeks of consultations and discussions with a host of experts, all before a single word was written. Guided by an advisory group of six organizations, a five-member editorial team developed a rough draft, then shared it widely – twice – ultimately incorporating more than 2,000 comments.

The result of this crowd-sourced effort is before you. We hope it helps you on your path to 30x30. We all have a huge challenge before us, and not much time. But – together – we can do it, we must do it *“...to put nature on a path to recovery for the benefit of people and planet.”*



**Carlos Manuel  
Rodríguez, GEF**




**Nik Sekhran,  
WWF-US**



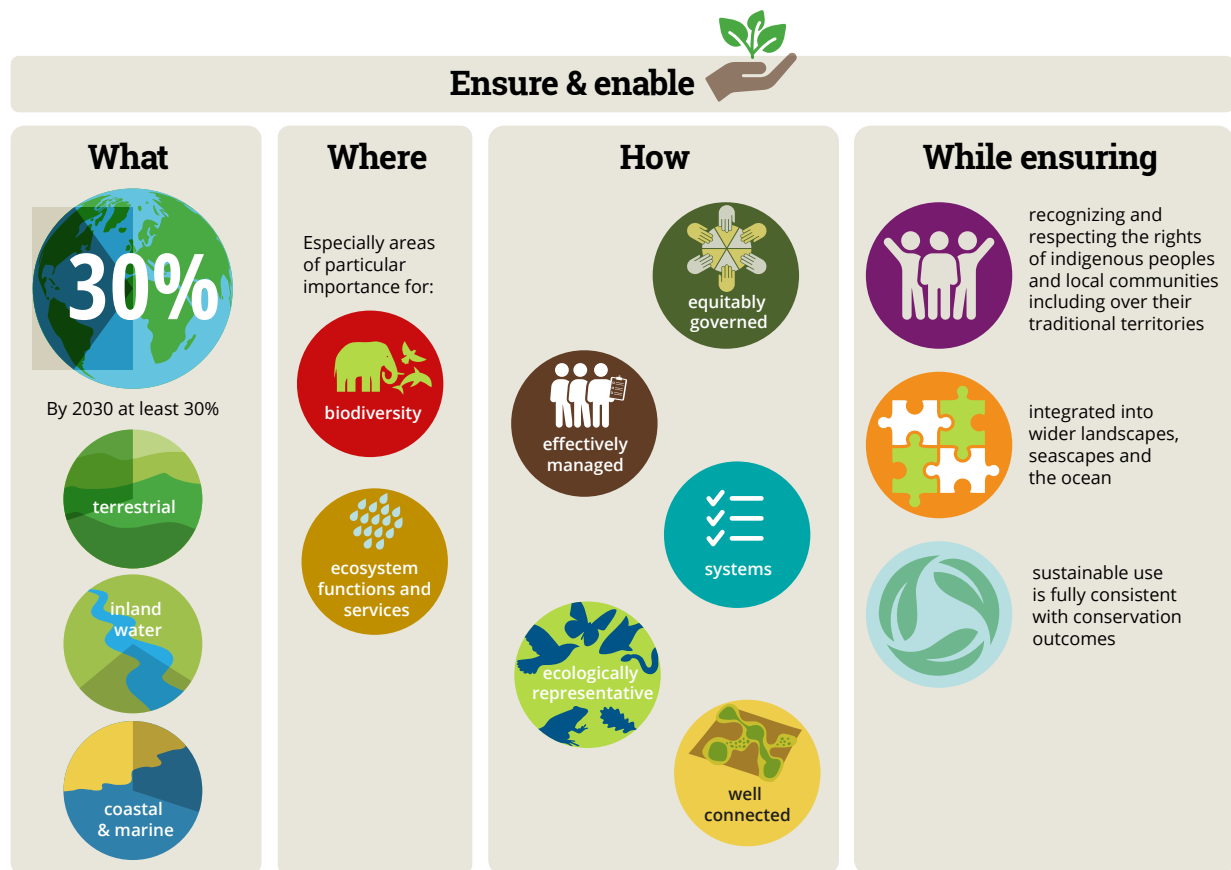
**Madhu Rao,  
IUCN WCPA**

# Introduction to the Target 3 guide

This guide is about how to plan and implement the new global target for effectively and equitably conserving at least 30% of the Earth by 2030. The [Global Biodiversity Framework](#) (GBF), adopted by Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in December 2022, includes Target 3, the “30x30” target. Figure 1 breaks down Target 3 into its main elements and this breakdown has been used to structure Part Two of this guide. Each element of this multi-faceted target is explained in the guide along with guidance on planning for implementation, some overarching concepts which should guide implementation, resources for multi-stakeholder / multi-rightsholder approaches, reviews of key resources (click these icons ) and some thoughts on how monitoring implementation can be developed.

The current text of GBF Target 3 is as follows, with links to where various elements are discussed: [Ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30% of terrestrial and inland water areas, and of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable, and integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories.](#)

**Figure 1.** A simple schematic representation of Target 3



## Objectives

This guide is intended to support countries in the development and execution of their plans for GBF Target 3. The guide focuses particularly on inclusivity and rights, equity and effectiveness, but also addresses prioritization, connectivity, ecological representation, climate resilience and many other issues, drawing on existing data and information.

Though not always possible when discussing complex and sensitive topics, the guide strives to use straightforward, jargon-free language that makes it accessible and inviting to the target audiences, many of whom will not be reading it in their native languages. It is illustrated with informative, uncomplicated graphics. It assumes little or no familiarity with Target 3, with the nuances of interpretation of its complex text nor its relationship with the other 22 targets. The guide will be translated into several other languages.

## Audience

While content is meant to be responsive and useful to all groups listed and consulted, the text is primarily oriented to those working in governments of CBD Parties.

Audiences for the guide include:

- Government planners, policy makers and technical staff in national and subnational wildlife departments, forestry departments, ministries of environment, natural resources, oceans and finance, CBD country focal points; landscape, coastal zone, marine and river basin planners; researchers, Indigenous peoples, local communities and human rights specialists (all inclusive of women and youth).
- National and subnational level Indigenous peoples' and community federations, associations and community-based organizations, including those that own, govern and manage territories.
- Planning and technical staff in NGOs and cooperation agencies covering biodiversity conservation; land, water, natural resource ownership and use rights; natural resource-related livelihoods; and support to Indigenous peoples and local communities.
- Protected area agencies, managers and rangers.
- Private sector and industry entities holding or managing land or water that could qualify as protected areas or OECMs.
- CBD Secretariat staff and members of IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) and the Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP), other relevant commissions and multilateral environmental agencies.

## Editors

The guide has been written and edited by Brent A. Mitchell, Nigel Dudley, Sue Stolton, Jessica Campese and Hannah L. Timmins, drawing on inputs from many hundreds of people around the world who have advised and commented on the text. A full list of acknowledgements can be [downloaded here](#).

## Navigating the guide

The guide is offered in two parts.

- **Part One** is expressly a “how-to” guide, with a general timeline for implementation, as well as mechanisms for monitoring and reporting.
- **Part Two** is a guide to the Target itself, digging deeper into the definitions of and concepts behind the terms it uses, and caveats for how they should be applied.

This guide is a compendium, with links to sources with even more detail: users should choose the sections most relevant for them. The section on [Inclusive, effective and equitable implementation](#) is a good place to start to better understand key definitions and concepts.

The GBF is prompting a range of guidance and advice internationally and regionally; this guide in particular is linked to two other outputs, an [evidence review](#) published by TNC before the Target was agreed and a new website focused primarily on Target 3 guidance (see figure 2). All documents and tools have embedded links, and there are links to more detailed descriptions on the [30x30.solutions website](#). Graphics and thumbnail case studies help explain complex issues.



**Figure 2.** Three linked products supporting Target 3 implementation



# PART ONE

Millipede. Salonga National Park, Democratic Republic of the Congo  
© Karine Aigner / WWF-US

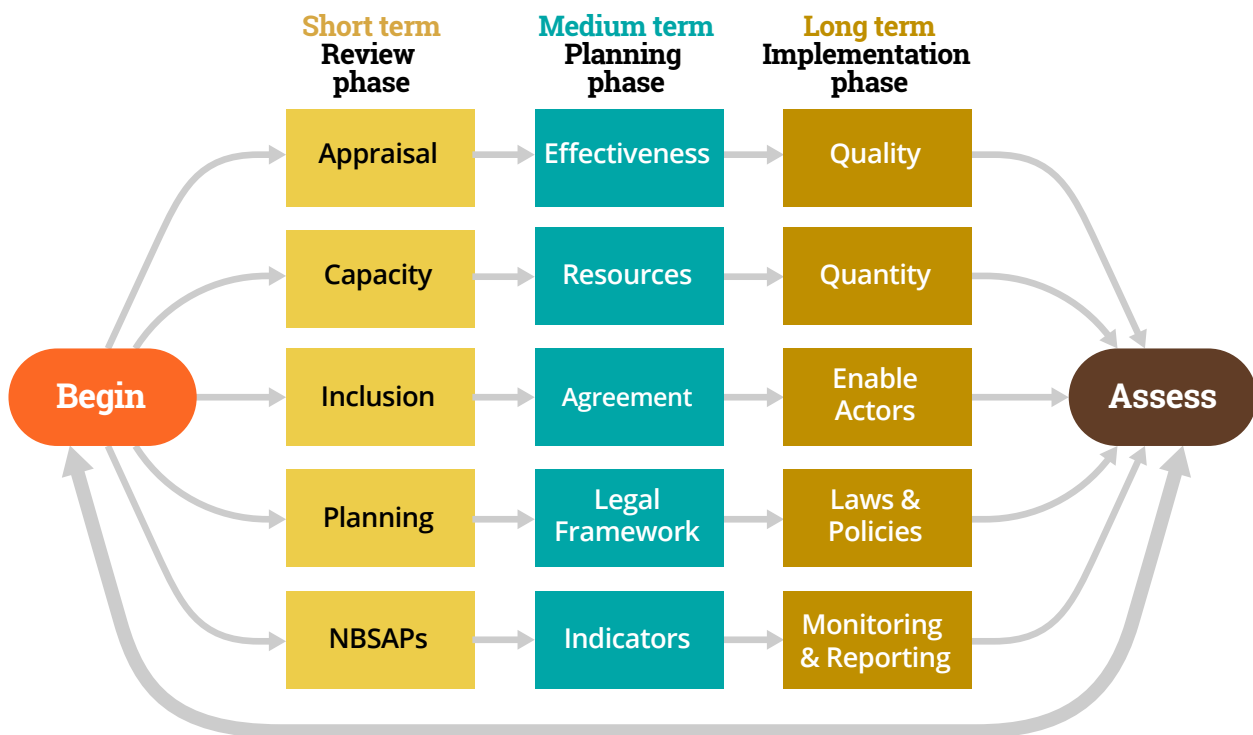


# Planning and implementing Target 3

The reach and ambition of Target 3 is huge and is being implemented to an extremely tight timetable. Planning is therefore critical, to ensure that necessary steps are taken in a logical order and a timely manner. Finding a balance between leaving space for proper consultation and participation and moving quickly enough to meet the 2030 deadline will require governments and others to move very carefully. The following section provides an initial blueprint for implementation.

## Timeline for implementation

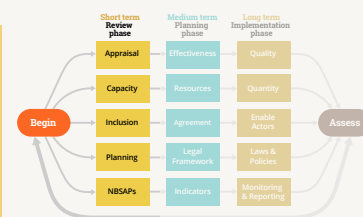
The first step for any country implementing Target 3 will be to develop a detailed implementation plan. Elements which may be required are suggested below (figure 3, followed by more detailed guidance). This approach is clearly indicative and suggested phases are approximate, individual countries will already have some elements in place and will be able to move forward more quickly, others may have additional factors to consider that slow progress.



**Figure 3.** Three phases for Target 3 implementation

# Short term: The review

**APPRAISAL:** Understand the national context, including biodiversity conservation, uses, needs, gaps in protected and conserved area (PCA) systems, and related governance, social, cultural, economic systems, pledges and policy to provide an evidence-base for participatory planning for Target 3 implementation.



**Action:** Assess national biodiversity [conservation status](#)

## Tools and approaches

- Review information (including [Indigenous and local knowledge, respecting FPIC](#)) on conservation status, trends and threats of terrestrial, inland water and marine species and ecosystems, including:
  - Representation of all ecosystems
  - Areas of particular biodiversity importance, such as [Key Biodiversity Areas](#)
  - [Areas important for ecosystem functions and services](#)
  - [National](#) and [international Red Lists](#) of species and ecosystems
  - National identification of at-risk species and ecosystems
  - Assessments of high conservation value areas
  - Impacts of land-use change
- Consider sustainability of resource use of biodiversity
- Assess research gaps and needs based on the information review and plan steps to fill gaps

**Action:** Assess [governance](#), social, cultural, economic systems

## Tools and approaches

- Undertake participatory situation analysis (including current and historical socio-political context) of PCA sites and systems
- Review governance of PCA sites and systems and assess whether these meet international standards and agreements
- Assess benefits and costs from PCA sites and systems; and review how these contribute to national economies and how benefits are shared with local and national populations

**Action:** Review and update [existing PCA information](#)

## Tools and approaches

- Review national databases and platforms on PCA related data, identify gaps (such as privately protected areas)
- Review internationally reported data to UNEP-WCMC [Protected Planet](#) databases (cross-check with national data and identify any missing or mis-information and update ensuring consent has been sought and agreed to provide data)
- Review information related to territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples and local communities, including in [ICCA Registry](#) and [Territories of life report](#)
- Review Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 Country [Dossiers](#)

**Action:** Consider PCA [connectivity](#)

 **Tools and approaches**

- Review any connectivity assessments that have been completed at the country or subnational scales
- Review areas important for connectivity

**Action:** Review existing [legislation and policies](#) for fulfilling Target 3 and the GBF

 **Tools and approaches**

- Review suitability of conservation [laws and policies](#) including those related to relevant economic sectors
- Review suitability of national and subnational laws and policies concerning governance, tenure and procedural and substantive human rights
- Review adherence with international treaties, conventions and declarations
- Review international and regional policy commitments related to the GBF and other related international agreements
- Consider perverse incentives which are impacting biodiversity conservation
- Review existing legal frameworks for the recognition of Indigenous and traditional territories
- Consider advice from [IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law](#) and other relevant organizations
- Adopt guidance related to Article 8(j) including [Akwé Kon guidelines](#) and [Action Plan on Customary Sustainable Use](#)
- Identify legal and policy gaps and barriers to meet international agreements
- Ensure legal frameworks on access to justice, including in a transboundary context, as well as requirements for grievance mechanisms within businesses, are in place

**Action:** Consider available [finance](#)

 **Tools and approaches**

- Review national protected area budgets and the scaling up required to meet Target 3 ambitions
- Review economic sectors' budgets dedicated to the establishment, control and monitoring of OECMs
- Review NGO and donor funding commitments
- Review opportunities for funding from Multilateral Development Banks, private investors and economic sectors
- Consider other potential funding sources, e.g., through the [BIOFIN](#) approach

**RECOGNITION & INCLUSION:** Identify relevant actors (rights-holders, stakeholders, decision-makers, other knowledge-holders, etc.) and engage through full, equitable and effective participation, including access to information.

**Action:** [Identify actors](#)

 **Tools and approaches**

- Identify governance studies already done in the country or region
- Identify and recognize those holding rights in the areas concerned, including relevant owners or resources users of lands, waters and territories (including non-title holders with traditional rights, with understanding that some rights may not yet be recognized under national law)
- Identify other actors who should be involved in planning and implementation of Target 3

**Action:** [Ensure full engagement](#)

■  **Tools and approaches**

- Ensure systems are in place for full, equitable, effective and gender-responsive participation, including access to information in planning and implementation processes

**PARTICIPATORY PLANNING:** Develop participatory planning for 30x30; options include (i) better governance and management of existing sites, (ii) potential expanded recognition / identification and/or new sites and (iii) if the latter, whether through protected areas, OECMs, and/or recognizing Indigenous and traditional territories.

**Action:** Review management and governance of existing [system](#)

 **Tools and approaches**

- Carry out a gap analysis of PCAs and identify areas of importance for biodiversity that are not currently reported as being part of the national PCA system, including (recognizing that different terms are likely used nationally or locally):
  - Indigenous and traditional territories
  - Territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples and local communities
  - Privately protected areas
  - OECMs
- Assess available information on [management effectiveness assessments](#) (and provide updated information to the [global PAME database](#) if gaps are found)
- Review diversity of governance types across PCA network
- Consider using tools such as the [Conservation Standards](#) for developing system-wide and individual PCA management plans
- Revisit and, where appropriate, revise, supplement or adopt protocols for transboundary cooperation agreements

**Action:** Consider **location** of new (or newly recognized) sites which contribute to Target 3 implementation

 **Tools and approaches**

- Ensure transparent and collaborative planning processes (including FPIC)
- Undertake systematic conservation planning including consideration of biodiversity importance, ecosystem functions and services and connectivity
- Identify restoration needs
- Engage with custodians of Indigenous and traditional territories and community lands which contribute to conservation outcomes (or could do so) and review options for recognition
- Engage with economic sectors using area-based management tools which contribute (or could do so) to conservation outcomes and discuss options for recognition (e.g., through the development of OECMs)

**CAPACITY:** Anticipate the capacity needed to govern, manage and monitor a PCA system at greater scale, including enhanced inclusion, effectiveness and equity.

**Action:** Assess **training and learning needs**

 **Tools and approaches**

- Define capacity requirements and assess current capacity at national level (against [WCPA competence register](#) and other relevant sectoral standards)
- Assess availability and adequacy of conservation and PCA training and learning opportunities (including providers, institutional programs, courses, learning programs and [online courses](#))
- Build capacity at local level to ensure all actors understand relevant policies, laws and international agreements

**Action:** Improve effectiveness of PCA **personnel**

 **Tools and approaches**

- Identify gaps in management and governance capacity at all governance levels
- Assess gender equity (identify any policy gaps that hinder gender inclusion in the workforce)
- Assess sufficiency of existing workforce to implement required measures
- Assess adequacy of working and employment conditions of PCA personnel against global standards and capacities of managing agencies
- Identify capacity and human resource needs related to diverse stewards and managers of PCAs, including Indigenous and local community stewards and guardians
- Establish or update safeguard policies (including full protection of environmental human rights defenders and [PCA rangers](#))

**Action:** Ensure **finance**

 **Tools and approaches**

- Develop a financial plan to cover the costs of implementing Target 3 bearing in mind the processes outlined above

**NBSAPs:** Identify strategic elements needed for Target 3 and GBF implementation in revision of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans.

**Action:** Revise **National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan**

**Tools and approaches**

- Review and update existing frameworks for PCA site and system management, governance and planning (e.g., through NBSAP, system plans, site management plans)
- Report on actions planned to implement, monitor and report on the GBF covering the wide range of issues noted in this guide including policy and legislation, systematic spatial planning, governance, equity and rights issues, inclusive approaches and effective delivery and management

## Medium term: The planning

**EFFECTIVENESS:** Develop plans to improve effectiveness of the existing PCA network.

**Action:** **Identify areas of importance for biodiversity** for potential inclusion in the PCA network

**Tools and approaches**

- Support or establish multi-stakeholder national coordination groups to map existing Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) and identify new KBAs for unassessed taxa and ecosystems
- Carry out a strategic spatial assessment and planning of desired conservation outcomes at a system level and how this integrates into the wider landscape / seascape, with all relevant governance authorities
- Strengthen design features to support biodiversity connectivity for land and marine areas

**Action:** Understand **PAME**

**Tools and approaches**

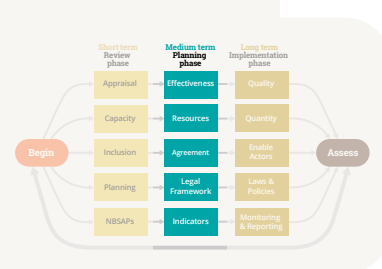
- Develop / adapt PAME systems which meet specific site/system/portfolio requirements
- Focus initially on the assessment through application of **PAME** in sites that have not recently been assessed

**EQUITABLE GOVERNANCE:** Establish and implement process to support governance effectiveness, with a focus on equity and rights.

**Action:** Develop processes for taking an **HRBA**, including FPIC

**Tools and approaches**

- Ensure appropriate recognition and support of areas under diverse governance including Indigenous and traditional territories and/or territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples and local communities within existing PCA systems, and areas not yet recognized within existing PCA systems
- Ensure full, equitable and effective participation in decision-making about conservation (see also Targets 22 and 23)



- Implement participatory governance and social assessment of sites and systems that have not recently been assessed
- Ensure equitable benefit and cost sharing, including access
- Ensure access to justice

**IDENTIFY & AGREE:** Find common cause and identify equitable implementation, including for recognition and support of PCAs under diverse governance types.

**Action:** Agree a **common cause** to PCA system development

 **Tools and approaches**

- Agree the most suitable sites considered important for biodiversity conservation and develop equitable implementation pathways to recognition
- Implement processes for recognizing and/or designating areas of importance for biodiversity through transparent and collaborative planning processes (including FPIC) considering the diversity of governance types available

**Action:** Ensure **equitable agreement** of implementation plans

 **Tools and approaches**

- Co-develop implementation plans, including capacity and resources, with rightsholders, key stakeholders and all other relevant actors
- Ensure equitable understanding and sharing of benefits from and costs of conservation
- Regularly monitor and assess if implementation plans are advancing

**ENABLING CONDITIONS:** Ensure access to human and financial resources.

**Action:** Improve **capacity**

 **Tools and approaches**

- Support diverse capacity needs in terms of technical skills, leadership, adaptive management, equity and human rights-based approaches
- Support requirements for strengthening institutions and making them more effective and responsive
- Implement training, learning and capacity needs for existing and new managers, personnel and stewards (professional rangers and Indigenous and local community stewards and guardians) including multi-disciplinary and transdisciplinary approaches and remove any constraints to equitable employment

**Action:** **Resource needs**

 **Tools and approaches**

- Draw up budget for meeting all elements of Target 3 for new and existing PCAs, considering the diversity of governance types and a wide variety of channels to distribute funding
- Identify and implement immediate and sustainable finance solutions, including provision of direct financing at the local level and across multiple governance types
- Assess needs and opportunities for cross-sectoral coordination of conservation efforts

## MONITORING & RESEARCH: Identify indicators and processes for monitoring.

**Action:** Develop **indicators**

### 🔄 Tools and approaches

- Ensure monitoring aligns with the CBD headline indicators and note any changes to indicators developed over the course of GBF implementation
- Ensure monitoring considers qualitative elements of Target 3, including through use of complementary and component indicators
- Ensure consistency with indicators adopted to address all other relevant GBF targets (see [figure 5](#)) and implementation considerations (including recognizing the roles and contributions of Indigenous people and local communities, and applying an HRBA)
- Assess status of reporting to UNEP-WCMC

**Action:** Align **monitoring** and research

### 🔄 Tools and approaches

- Align ongoing research across relevant natural, governance, social, cultural and economic systems and identify gaps in knowledge
- Diversify research (and monitoring) to include [Indigenous and local knowledge](#), citizen science and other participatory methods
- Establish monitoring baselines for newly recognized and reported PCAs
- Address major gaps in scientific knowledge, e.g., marine resources and ecosystem processes, including in the deep ocean

# Long term: The implementation

**QUALITY & QUANTITY:** Increase management effectiveness and governance quality of existing PCA systems (i.e., adaptive management based on assessments), and when all the preparatory steps identified above have taken place implement strategies to gazette or recognize new PCAs.

**Action:** Undertake **biodiversity conservation** contributing to Target 3 implementation

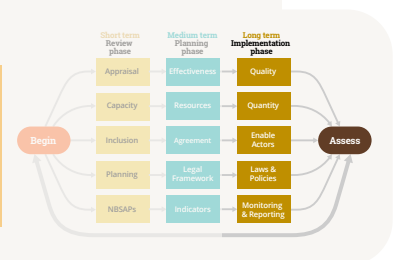
### 🔄 Tools and approaches

- Develop long-term management, monitoring and reporting systems for all PCA sites based on the conservation outcomes of areas of biodiversity importance
- Continue to assess and adapt to threats (e.g., climate change adaptation)
- Continue to develop and enhance connectivity

**Action:** **Management effectiveness**

### 🔄 Tools and approaches

- Carry out PAME at regularly agreed intervals, adapt management where necessary and report results





**Action: New (or newly recognized) PCAs which contribute to Target 3 goals**

 **Tools and approaches**

- Identify and gazette new protected areas following full consultation and FPIC; secure tenure rights where needed
- Recognize new OECMs following full consultation and respecting rights to FPIC
- Recognize Indigenous and traditional territories, including those within protected areas and OECMs governed by others
- Recognize and report privately protected areas
- Promote connectivity and corridors within existing PCA networks and to connect newly evolving networks

**ENABLE ACTORS:** Establish and sustain a system of PCAs with diverse governance.

**Action: Continue to focus on governance effectiveness, equity and rights**

 **Tools and approaches**

- Further develop / adapt or integrate social and governance assessment systems
- Carry out assessment of social impacts and governance quality at regularly agreed intervals, adapt governance and management where necessary
- Carry out / support custodians in carrying out initial establishment (boundary demarcation, management plan, etc.) or engage with existing custodians to support current management and governance

**SECURE ASSETS:** Continue to build conservation and social assets to contribute to the long-term achievement of Target 3 and the GBF.

**Action: Sustainable finance**

 **Tools and approaches**

- Develop a sustainable finance strategy for the PCA network to ensure sufficient management of sites according to their identified needs

**Action: Benefit sharing**

 **Tools and approaches**

- Monitor and ensure sustainable use and equitable and effective benefit sharing
- Develop an understanding of conservation assets and values (natural, social, cultural and economic) and the role they play in national well-being

**Action: Maintain capacity**

 **Tools and approaches**

- Institutionalize capacity development within relevant organizations, linked to capacity needs, effectiveness requirements, labor / employment policies, national educational and vocational training agencies.
- Continue long-term planning and implementation of capacity development and sharing and resource sustainability

**LAWS & POLICIES:** Make necessary changes to policy and legislation at national and sub-national level.

**Action:** Revise **policies and laws** to ensure effective and equitable implementation of Target 3 and the GBF as a whole

 **Tools and approaches**

- Enact identified changes in policies
- Introduce legislative changes to ensure that laws support full implementation
- Build capacity at local level to ensure all actors understand relevant policies and laws
- Resolve legal and policy gaps and barriers to success, including those related to the roles of Indigenous peoples, local communities, women, youth and various economic sectors in conservation

**MONITORING & REPORTING:** Implement continuing research, monitoring, assessment and associated adaptive management and governance; and report these effectively.

**Action:** Have in place an effective research, **monitoring and reporting system**

 **Tools and approaches**

- Introduce regular research and monitoring, with processes well understood and documented to ensure consistency over time
- Support Indigenous- and community-led and site-specific monitoring systems, particularly in OECMs and/or Indigenous and traditional territories
- Report relevant indicators to the CBD Secretariat as part of regular GBF reporting, and to UNEP-WCMC to inform global monitoring of Target 3
- Review ongoing research across relevant natural, governance, social, gender, cultural and economic systems and identify gaps in knowledge

**Action:** Focus on adaptive **management**

 **Tools and approaches**

- Undertake regular site and system management planning to ensure results of monitoring and assessment increase inclusion and effectiveness through adaptive management as required

## Monitoring and reporting

Robust monitoring and reporting will be essential to Target 3 implementation.

Monitoring systems need to be flexible (to respond to different contexts and enable participation of diverse rightsholders, stakeholders and other actors) and accountable (with specific and meaningful indicators). There is a global process to further develop the GBF [Monitoring Framework](#). National and subnational monitoring and reporting for Target 3 (and broader GBF) implementation can also be addressed within [inclusive planning processes](#). Indicators developed for the GBF framework should also be culturally appropriate. Herewith are highlights of some key considerations and approaches.

Success in Target 3 should be understood as achieving all its elements, and not just the percentage element. Protected areas need clearly defined ecological goals as the basis of monitoring programs, although many currently lack such goals. Monitoring of OECMs will focus on biodiversity identified as important, even if its management is not an explicit goal of the area. Currently, there is only one headline indicator for Target 3: coverage of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures. However, there are already component and complementary indicators that address, *inter alia*, effective management, connectivity, equitable governance, recognition of traditional territories, diversity of governance types, species protection, FPIC, etc.

Target 3 implementation can also incorporate indicators for related GBF Targets (e.g., 22 to 23), and targets relating to pollution, species conservation, rights, gender, etc.

Distinction will sometimes be needed between what counts on an official level and what genuinely contributes to Target 3. PCAs that conflict with elements of the Target (e.g., areas that violate human rights or fail to be “effectively conserved and managed”) should not be counted as progress towards reaching the Target.

### Reporting platforms

Countries should submit data regularly to the [UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre](#) (UNEP-WCMC) to ensure accurate tracking of Target 3. Protected areas can be reported in the [World Database on Protected Areas](#) (WDPA). OECMs can be reported in the [World Database on Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures](#) (WD-OECM). These are both components of Protected Planet, a joint product of UNEP and IUCN, managed by UNEP-WCMC. They include information about number, location, area, management category (for protected areas) and governance type. Some data (e.g., about governance type) is incomplete. UNEP-WCMC also manages the [Global Database on Protected Area Management Effectiveness \(GD-PAME\)](#) on where protected area management effectiveness assessments have been implemented worldwide and is working with partners to develop more meaningful indicators of effectiveness. These databases do not include information about all aspects of Target 3, some of which will need to be monitored separately or by combining Protected Planet data with other datasets.

The [ICCA Registry](#) is maintained by UNEP-WCMC and is a voluntary, global, online platform where Indigenous peoples and local communities can report information about territories and areas they conserve. This is an important resource for self-determined recognition. It is also important to note that information from the ICCA Registry is not currently reported as part of global figures for PCA coverage. Further, not all self-identified or nationally-recognized territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples or local communities [are reflected](#) in this global registry.

It is not yet clear what global platform(s) may be needed to aggregate and monitor the recognition of Indigenous and traditional territories, although existing initiatives like [Landmark](#) and the ICCA Registry may develop further to be able to fulfill this function, and continued monitoring of SDG Indicator 1.4.2 (on land tenure and land tenure change) could play a role here as well.

Also hosted by UNEP-WCMC, [Biodiversity Indicators Partnership](#) (BIP) is a global initiative to promote the development, delivery and use of biodiversity indicators. The BIP is now accompanied by a [Post-2020 Indicators website](#), developed by UNEP-WCMC in collaboration with the CBD Secretariat and the BIP, which provides metadata on the indicators adopted in the monitoring framework.

The [World Database on KBAs](#), managed by BirdLife International on behalf of the KBA Partnership, holds data on sites of importance to biodiversity and forms a valuable planning tool. See also the repository of information on [Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas](#).

[Local Biodiversity Outlooks](#) (LBO-1 and LBO-2) provide a snapshot of on-the-ground initiatives being led by Indigenous peoples and local communities that contribute to the successful implementation of multi-lateral agreements, with a focus on the Convention on Biological Diversity and synergies with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Many Indigenous peoples' and community territories will have community-based monitoring and information systems tracking locally relevant biodiversity and cultural indicators. Supporting and allowing the use of community generated data as part of a broader process to recognize and gather multiple data sources should be encouraged where possible. Community-based monitoring systems can also provide valuable additional data regarding equity, human rights and biocultural rights.

In some countries, data on privately protected areas is maintained at a national level but not fully reported to the World Database on Protected Areas because the data is maintained by private organizations or associations. This governance type is [often missing in reporting](#) but that could be changed relatively easily.

Other monitoring and reporting considerations for Target 3 elements include:

- **Conservation effectiveness:** Conservation effectiveness can be assessed through meeting defined objectives related to the intended outcomes. However, in complex natural systems with biodiversity and social outcomes to consider, defining success will never be easy. This reinforces the need for a multi-dimensional approach to developing [indicators and reporting requirements](#). In practice, PCAs usually define a limited set of environmental and social indicators to monitor over time. While these are a useful proxy, those responsible for stewardship also need to be aware of other changes, positive or negative, and adapt management as necessary. Remote sensing, auditory sampling, camera trapping, DNA sampling and crowd-sourcing data through social media are combining to make it easier to track changes in biodiversity.
- **Management effectiveness:** [PAME](#) as a tool for adaptive management does not necessarily require the same approach as measuring and reporting progress towards global targets. Attempts to aggregate different assessment systems into global reporting formats have proved costly and unsustainable. Global reporting should be based on an agreed suite of indicators, ranging from whether assessments are being undertaken (collected in the [GD-PAME](#) database) to global imagery of habitat status. These may or may not be a subset of indicators used in more general PAME assessments.
- **Marine and coastal, inland water, and terrestrial areas:** Given the huge variability in the ways in which MPAs are managed, in this case indicators of success must extend beyond the area officially recognized as protected areas and OECMs, to include other measures of success, including trends in marine biodiversity and the delivery of marine-based ecosystem services. Some marine-focused assessment [tools and guides](#) are available and there is a large literature on criteria impacting success and failure. [Dozens of resources](#) have been published that can serve as guideposts for improving PCA establishment and management in delivering protection and recovery of inland water ecosystems, including assessment systems and freshwater management guides. The [Freshwater Health Index](#) can facilitate stakeholder engagement regarding equity. [Basin Report Cards](#) are also helpful in that they are drawn up in conversation with local stakeholders.



- **Especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity:** Given that so many species are still unrecognized, ensuring everything is included in the network of PCAs will not be easy. Monitoring can be supported through, inter alia, national species lists, Red List data, prioritization tools like KBAs, EBSAs, IMMAs or ISRAs, and local level systematic conservation planning, which in many cases will inevitably remain approximate.
- **Ecological representativeness:** Ecologically representative networks of PCAs would include a full range of marine and coastal, inland water, and terrestrial species and ecosystems, at a large enough scale to ensure their long-term survival. Success will mean that all species plus important and representative ecosystems are adequately represented in PCAs.
- **Connectivity:** There is strong support for a GBF headline indicator for “ecological connectivity.” A suggestion is “Status and trends in ecological connectivity: structural, functional, and migratory connectivity across terrestrial, marine, and inland water ecosystems.” Groups such as the [Center for Large Landscape Conservation](#), UNEP-WCMC, IUCN WCPA [Connectivity Conservation Specialist Group](#) (IUCN WCPA-CCSG) and the Secretariat of the [CMS](#) are working to propose a connectivity indicator. The Protected Network metric ([ProNet](#)) is one tool available to track the performance of area-based conservation with respect to the connectivity of a network of protected areas.
- **Equitable governance:** Indicators for site-level governance assessment are useful, keeping in mind the lessons about [governance assessment](#) and noting that outcomes can rarely be meaningfully compared. However, accountability is also important, including safeguarding rights and promptly addressing any violations. Binary and outcomes indicators can help, including regarding [human rights](#).

Hol Chan Marine Reserve,  
Ambergris Caye, Belize,  
Central America.  
© Antonio Busiello/WWF-US

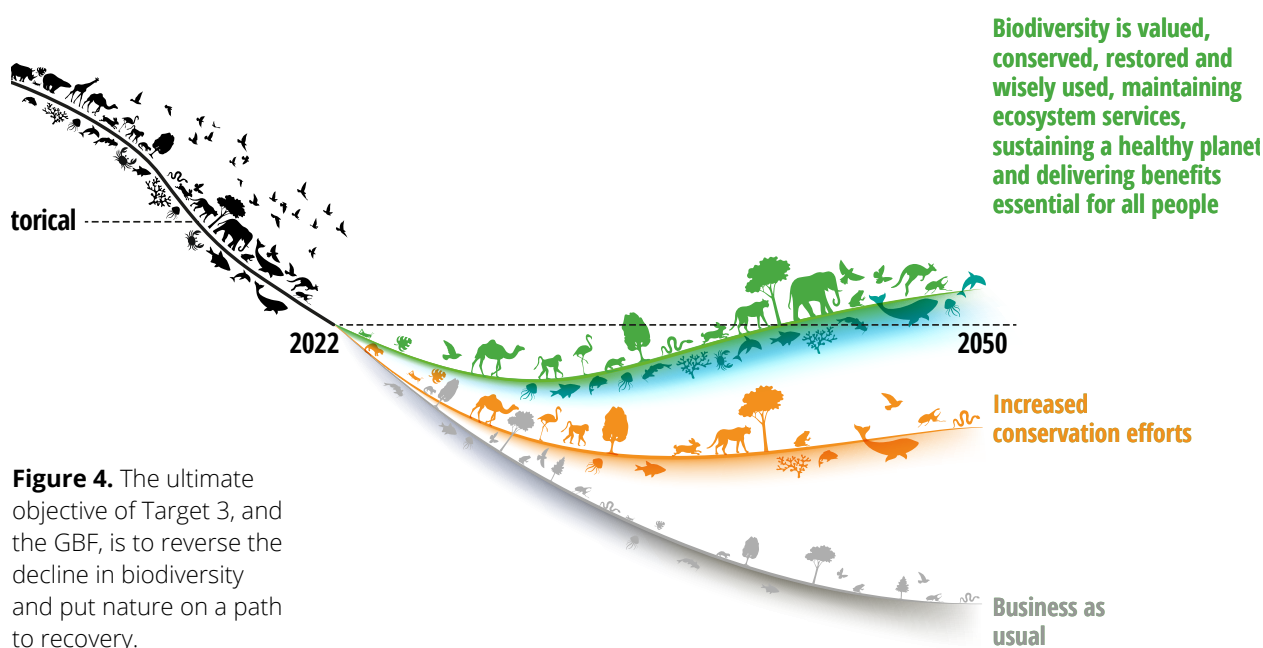
- **Governance diversity (of a system):** Success would include increasing recognition and support for a diversity of governance types and conservation contributions, with security for the collective and individual rights that underpin them. Reflecting that recognition and support in monitoring frameworks could include tracking the number and implementation of systems level assessments, as well as the existing complementary indicator on reporting “governance type,” with expanded efforts to enable governing actors’ self-reporting.
- **Recognizing Indigenous and traditional territories:** Success could be found in PCA (and broader) systems that fully recognize and uphold Indigenous peoples’ and local communities’ rights and responsibilities to their traditional territories, within and beyond protected area and OECM frameworks. Monitoring and reporting may include but will likely extend beyond the global frameworks mentioned above, to include other national and community-defined platforms. Reporting must respect FPIC in all cases.
- **Recognizing and respecting the rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories:** This element will require robust indicators, including concerning tenure, FPIC and trends concerning environmental human rights defenders, with options for community-reporting.
- **Ecosystem services and functions:** Measuring and valuing ecosystem services and functions remains a challenge; total valuation studies often rely on largely theoretical values, like the value if a valuable pharmaceutical product is synthesized from a species in the ecosystem, which is seldom enough to convince governments. However, methodologies are becoming [available](#), for example to incorporate nature into national accounting systems. Concrete, realizable values are harder to measure and have historically not been assessed systematically and are thus difficult to compare. While some ecosystem services, like carbon values, have received focused attention, others like disaster risk reduction have fewer available measurement methodologies. Improving measurement is therefore an urgent task associated with the GBF.
- **Integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean:** To date, there are no agreed indicators for tracking progress on the “integrated” component of Target 3. Instead, a collection of tools can be used as proxies and should perhaps be combined to monitor this component more formally. For example, the [Restoration Barometer](#) is being used by governments to track the progress of restoration targets across terrestrial, coastal and inland water ecosystems. Degradation in the 70% (that is, land and water outside of PCAs) will also need to be tracked – deforestation is already being tracked outside of PCAs by bodies like [Global Forest Watch](#), but ideally this tracking would extend to other ecosystem types too and include metrics that cover degradation: biodiversity loss, pollution, etc. (Target 2 of the GBF specifically calls for 30% to be “under effective restoration,” also by 2030.

# PART TWO

Golden snub-nosed monkey  
(*Rhinopithecus roxellana*)  
mother with very young baby  
in Foping Nature Reserve,  
Shaanxi, China.  
© Staffan Widstrand / Wild  
Wonders of China / WWF

# Inclusive, effective and equitable implementation

The ultimate goal of Target 3 and the GBF is to halt and reverse the steep decline of biodiversity worldwide, an outcome based on seeking a transformative change in the way humans manage our shared planet (figure 4). Target 3 calls for effectively protecting “at least” 30% of land, inland water and marine areas. This is a global target, which some countries may not be able to meet while other countries will succeed or may need to protect more, depending on where important biodiversity is located. The technical interpretation of the specific language is examined in more detailed, and plans for implementation explained, however this ultimate goal should always guide decisions and actions. The GBF is articulated as a step towards the objective of “people living in harmony with nature” by 2050.



**Figure 4.** The ultimate objective of Target 3, and the GBF, is to reverse the decline in biodiversity and put nature on a path to recovery.

While the nickname for Target 3, “30x30,” is quantitative, the qualitative provisions of the Target are equally relevant and success depends on ensuring that it is implemented **effectively** and **equitably**. It is entirely conceivable that a country could recognize 30% of its areas as protected or conserved while not significantly improving the conditions and outcomes for biodiversity or investing in management. If not carefully designed and managed, as has occurred sometimes in the past, conservation can be implemented in ways that perpetuate or create inequalities. In other words, implementation measures should not focus only on numerical “expansion” but on improving effectiveness and equity of existing PCA sites and systems, ensuring that new areas reported meet all the relevant criteria in the Target, and implementing measures to support biodiversity and sustainable management on the rest of a country’s lands and waters.

The answer to the question, “How much is enough?” lies not only in the number or size of polygons on a map, but on whether PCAs are located in the most important sites for biodiversity, and on assessments of whether species and ecosystems have recovered to healthy conditions, genetic diversity is secure, the full range of ecosystems and ecosystem services are being maintained and improved, and on the relationships that people(s) have with and the benefits they draw from their lands, waters and spaces.





## Implementing Target 3: Key definitions and concepts

This section draws on elements of Target 3, the broader GBF, and other guidance, including from discussions convened in the development of this guide. The guide that follows offers a variety of ways that Parties can implement Target 3, offering connection to tools, sources of guidance, and illustrative examples.

**Focus on nature:** Target 3 centers on “[areas of importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services](#).”


**Global target:** Target 3 is a global target. Biodiversity is not distributed equally, thus Parties and other actors are encouraged to focus on “[especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services](#),” and “*ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems*,” both in terms of physical location but also in selecting the appropriate means for protecting and conserving these areas. [Of note, many national and subnational jurisdictions have unilaterally adopted 30x30 strategies which contribute to the global effort and national contributions.]

**Integrated and connected approach:** [Inland waters](#), [terrestrial](#), and [coastal and marine](#) are all important areas. While PCAs are important in conserving biodiversity, in some countries the current protected area system is not adequately designed or managed for stemming biodiversity loss. In some cases, it would be advisable for governments to consider developing ecological networks of PCAs, which the [literature indicates](#) offer the best conservation design solution in the face of climate change and habitat fragmentation. Such networks have emergent properties that enable the network to better conserve biodiversity and ecological processes than would individual PCAs managed in isolation. Ecological corridors are the necessary element for the creation of ecological networks of PCAs.

A Quechua person at the farming village of Parobamba (3000 to 3500 meters above sea level), along Manu National Park's southern neighboring area, Peru.  
© André Bärtschi / WWF

Integration of PCAs requires planning and managing the surrounding areas, so the conservation values are considered more broadly. Integration means that the values of PCAs are integrated or mainstreamed into larger scale planning, and that large-scale ecological connectivity is planned outside of PCAs. This applies equally to land, freshwater and marine ecosystems.

**Sustainable use:** While Target 3 includes a reference to sustainable use, this does not imply that sustainable use in general is equivalent to a protected area or OECM, or that sustainable use should necessarily be taking place in a protected area, depending on the feature being protected. Target 3 is aimed at biodiversity conservation, not sustainable use, which should occur only “where appropriate” and “fully consistent with conservation outcomes.” [Application of sustainable use in Target 3](#) is in many cases quite limited, particularly in the stricter protected area categories (e.g., to some traditional uses, extensive agriculture, small-scale ecotourism and similar) and/or uses necessary for conservation management, (e.g., in long-settled areas where modified ecosystems have developed, over millennia, which are rich in biodiversity). Note that [Target 10](#) pertains to ensuring “that the areas used for agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry are managed sustainably,” and thus is more suited to address areas managed primarily for production. At the same time, Target 3 implementation must uphold CBD Articles 8(j) and 10I, and related provisions, including those regarding [customary sustainable use](#).

**Contributions and rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities:** The GBF acknowledges the important roles and contributions of [Indigenous peoples and local communities](#) as custodians of biodiversity and ecosystem services and partners in conservation, restoration and sustainable use. It recognizes the importance of Indigenous and traditional territories in achieving Target 3. The framework specifically highlights the knowledge, innovations, practices, worldviews and values of Indigenous peoples and local communities as fundamental to the transformative change the GBF seeks to support, and calls for these to be respected, documented and preserved, with [Free, Prior and Informed Consent](#) (FPIC). The importance of the [UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)  and other human rights law is referenced and needs to form the basis for engaged partnership with and support for the contributions of Indigenous peoples and local communities.

**Human rights-based approach:** The GBF calls for implementation through a human rights-based approach (HRBA) including FPIC. Building from the [framework of HRBA](#) in the context of development, an HRBA in the conservation context [has been interpreted](#) (by the Human Rights in Biodiversity Working Group) to mean: “in simple terms, that biodiversity policies, governance and management do not violate human rights and that those implementing such policies actively seek ways to support and promote human rights in their design and implementation.” Within the human rights framework, there are duty-bearers and rightsholders, and they hold different responsibilities and obligations. States have specific duties under international law to respect, protect and fulfill human rights. However, the obligations and responsibilities of non-state actors are [increasingly recognized](#) as a central part of an HRBA, including to respect, protect and remedy, as well as to promote / contribute to fulfillment within the scope of conservation programming. “Rightsholders,” here, encompasses holders of both individual human rights (e.g., procedural and substantive rights recognized in human rights law) and collective rights (including customary, collective tenure rights, FPIC and self-determination). Both are important in relation to conservation and [Indigenous peoples’ and local communities’ rights](#), including over traditional territories.

The GBF – consistent with the CBD and its previous protected areas decisions – uses the terms “Indigenous peoples” and “local communities.” Understanding these terms is part of ongoing dialogue, within and beyond the CBD, and they are distinguished in human rights law. In all cases, no part of this guide is intended to, or should be interpreted as, diminishing the rights that any group or individual holds or may hold.

**Gender-responsive:** To reduce disparities and to empower women, girls and members of traditionally disadvantaged groups, the [CBD](#) defines a post-2020 gender-responsive approach as “systematically integrating a gender perspective and ensuring appropriate representation, particularly of women and girls” (see [Target 23](#)). Implementation should also be guided by the CBD’s [Gender Plan of Action](#) and the Programme of Work and [Action Plan on Article 8\(j\) and related provisions](#) as well as other relevant [international](#) and regional commitments, including related to human rights.

**Inclusive:** In the conservation context, “[inclusive](#)” refers to holistic, transdisciplinary and/or multi-actor approaches; approaches focused specifically on recognition, respect and support for the governance, knowledge and practice of [Indigenous peoples and of local communities](#); and socially-inclusive, including the rights and contributions of women, girls, youth, and people with disabilities, including through gender-responsive representation and participation. In short, inclusion refers to approaches to *in situ* biodiversity conservation that are supported by science and different worldviews, knowledge systems, practice and governing systems and authorities.

**Equitable:** Equitable governance in a [conservation context](#) is evolving and is often understood to involve three elements: the fair distribution of conservation’s costs and benefits; the extent to which stakeholders and rightsholders have opportunities to meaningfully influence decisions, manage resources and resolve disputes; and recognition and respect for diverse knowledges, worldviews, and customary and statutory rights, including over lands, waters and traditional territories. In practice here, equity should mean that conservation interventions promote the well-being of affected communities. Specific aspects of “[equitably governed](#)” and “[recognizing and respecting rights](#),” including benefit sharing, are taken up in succeeding sections of this document. But principles to guide implementation include engaging rightsholders and key stakeholders not solely through consultation but through sharing of capacity, power and benefits. Equity covers aspects of fairness and justice that go beyond what is normally understood by the term “inclusive.” Parties must also recognize that transgressions of rights have been made in protected areas. Redress, reconciliation and other appropriate measures may be required to address historical injustice or trauma, as a matter of justice and before groups can engage in constructive ways to achieve broad goals of biodiversity conservation. This may include recognizing territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples or local communities within areas also recognized as protected areas and OECMs.

**Effective:** Effectiveness is defined as the degree to which something is successful in achieving a desired result. In terms of conservation effectiveness this is usually related to achieving clearly defined conservation objectives, which in turn should be driven by the intended outcomes. All forms of effective area-based conservation need to demonstrate and deliver positive and sustained long-term conservation outcomes either related to specific conservation goals and objectives for protected areas, or as a result of other goals and objectives. Effective conservation of systems and sites results in flourishing biodiversity and positive sociocultural outcomes in the landscape and seascape. To be effective, sites should represent areas of biodiversity importance, be connected, have effective management and equitable governance, i.e., all the elements of GBF Target 3. Success is based around assessing how effectively objectives have been met. These might be planned conservation targets, or the result of traditional values, or be recognized later in the case of OECMs. Such objectives will therefore be culturally or contextually distinct but must ensure conservation effectiveness to meet the GBF. [Management effectiveness evaluation](#) is a tool for adaptive management that needs to include a focus on conservation outcomes. It does not necessarily require the same approach as measuring progress against global targets.



**Transformative:** Finally, Target 3 cannot be achieved through business-as-usual approaches. Quoting the [IPBES Global Assessment Report of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services](#), “*Nature can be conserved, restored and used sustainably while other global societal goals are simultaneously met through urgent and concerted efforts fostering transformative change.*” In the long run, such approaches also lead to higher effectiveness towards ultimate biodiversity objectives. These subjects are explored further in this guide, but many increasingly recognize that they will require just transformations in rights, responsibilities, recognition, respect, and relationships, including power relationships. The “equitably governed” element in Target 3 implies full, equitable and effective participation of, among others, Indigenous peoples, local communities, women, youth, and [persons with disabilities](#). Such participation is best built on trustworthiness, which must be earned over time, and must include the FPIC of rightsholders.

River Mura hosts the richest fish biodiversity (51 fish species) and biggest floodplain forests in Slovenia. It is part of the 5-country UNESCO Transboundary Biosphere Reserve Mura-Drava-Danube or “Amazon of Europe”.  
© Matevž Lenarčič

# Integrating Target 3 into policy

## Target 3 in relation to the rest of the GBF

While Target 3 has arguably attracted the most attention in the GBF, the other 22 targets are equally important, as are the goals and considerations for implementation (Section C). [All should be considered in implementation of Target 3](#). The considerations for implementation include contribution and rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities, with FPIC; different value systems; collective effort towards the targets; rights to development; human rights-based approach; gender; fulfillment of the three objectives of the Convention and its Protocols and their balanced implementation; principles of the Rio Declaration; inter-generational equity; access to financial resources and avoiding perverse financial incentives. All the Targets should also be considered in Target 3 implementation, though some are more directly related than others.

Targets 1–3 are all area-based. Target 1 on “participatory, integrated and biodiversity inclusive spatial planning and/or effective management processes addressing land- and sea-use change” overlaps with Target 3’s “integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean.” Target 3 will be an important component of planning in Target 1. Target 2 is also “30x30,” calling for “30% of areas of degraded terrestrial, inland water, and marine and coastal ecosystems [to be] under effective restoration” by 2030. Some PCAs will require restoration so there will be overlap between these two targets.

Area-based conservation remains an important tool to achieve Target 4 on the recovery of species and genetic diversity and reduction of human-wildlife conflict in favor of coexistence.

Pollution reduction, addressed by Target 7, is essential for the success of Target 3, particularly in inland and coastal marine waters but also, for example, for pesticide links to insect decline. Target 6 provides invasive species targets “especially in priority sites,” many of which would likely overlap with areas in Target 3. PCAs can also be major contributors to land-based climate mitigation strategies (Target 8).

Conservation areas contribute to food security, medicines and livelihoods (Target 9) – examples include protecting of wild relatives of cultivated plants, replenishment of fish stocks through marine or freshwater protected areas, and management of many Indigenous and traditional territories.

Target 21 calls for data, information and knowledge to be accessible to decision-makers, practitioners and the public, including traditional knowledge, innovations, practices and technologies of Indigenous and traditional peoples (though only through their FPIC). Target 15 targets corporate disclosure of risks.

Targets 22 and 23 are so important, and so related to elements of Target 3, that they are shown here in their entirety:

Target 22. *“Ensure the full, equitable, inclusive, effective and gender-responsive representation and participation in decision-making, and access to justice and information related to biodiversity by Indigenous peoples and local communities, respecting their cultures and their rights over lands, territories, resources, and traditional knowledge, as well as by women and girls, children and youth, and persons with disabilities and ensure the full protection of environmental human rights defenders.”*

Target 23. *“Ensure gender equality in the implementation of the Framework through a gender-responsive approach, where all women and girls have equal opportunity and capacity to contribute to the three objectives of the Convention, including by recognizing their equal rights and access to land and natural resources and their full, equitable, meaningful and informed participation.”*

Parties to the GBF also commit to “strengthen capacity-building and development, access to and transfer of technology, and promote development of and access to innovation and technical and scientific cooperation, including through South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation...” (Target 20).

Target 3 is also dependent on a secure financial framework, to be achieved both by reducing perverse incentives that damage biodiversity (Target 18) and by increasing positive financing, with the objective of reaching at least US\$200 billion/year by 2030 (Target 19), with specific funding needed for Target 3. (See [finance section](#) for projections of what is required.)

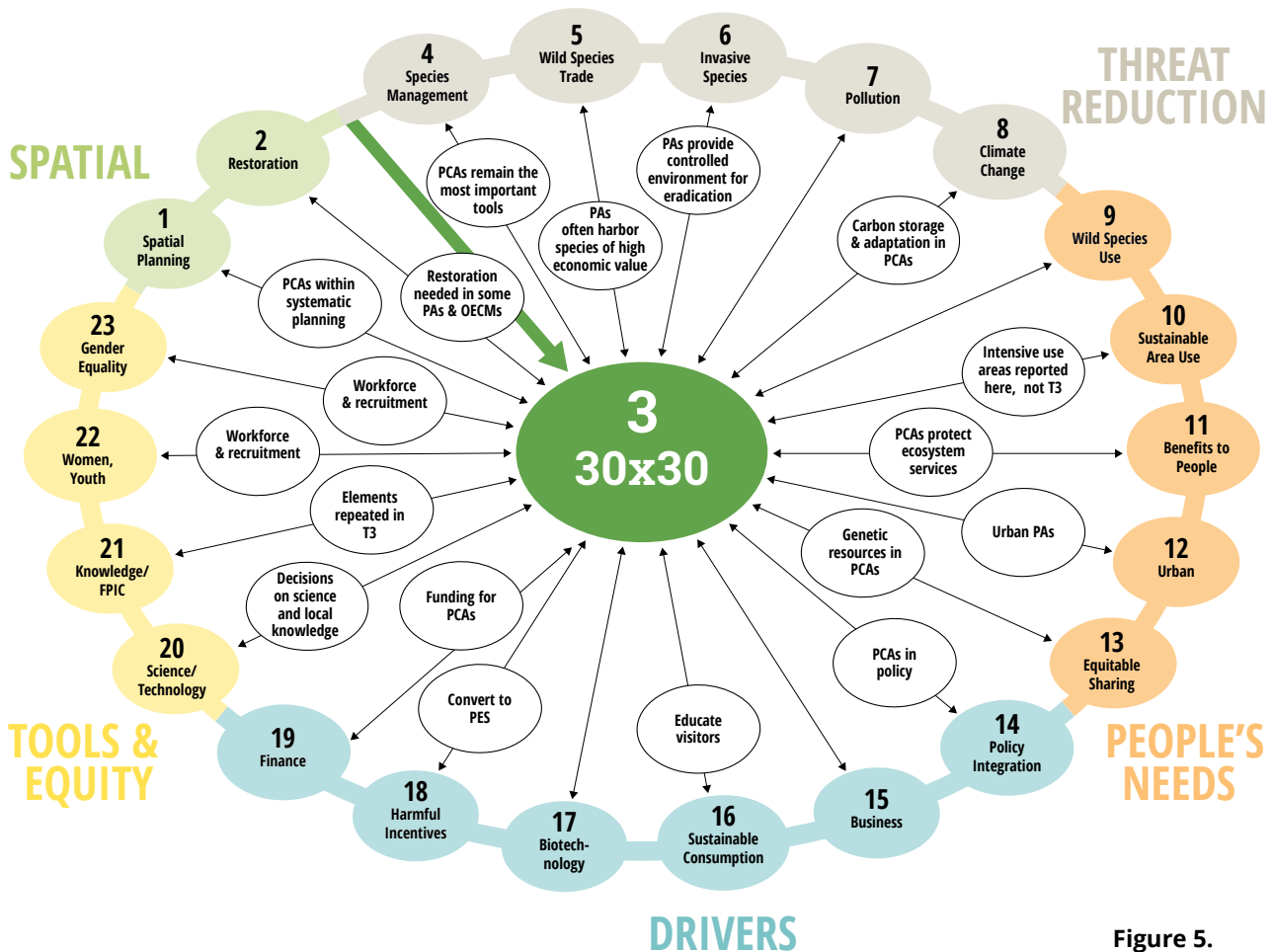
These connections and alignment amongst all the GBF targets are represented in figure 5, but the full [text](#) should be consulted by all readers.

**A:** Integrity, connectivity, resilience, extinction halted, native wild species increased, genetic diversity of wild and domesticated species maintained

**C:** Benefits from the utilization of genetic resources are shared fairly and equitably, and traditional knowledge protected

**B:** Biodiversity is sustainably used and managed and nature's contributions to people valued, maintained and enhanced

**D:** Financial resources, capacity-building, technical and scientific cooperation, and access to and transfer of technology secured and equitably accessible



**Figure 5.** Interrelationships to Target 3 of the other 22 targets of the Global Biodiversity Framework

## The role of the Parties to the CBD

As the Parties to the CBD, ultimate responsibility for delivering on the GBF falls to signatory countries (officially referred to as the Parties to the Convention). This does not mean, however, that national governments are or should be the only actors, nor that they should always be in the lead on efforts to achieve “30x30.”

A country’s government is also the duty-bearer on many other international agreements, including those related to human rights such as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas (UNDROP), Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). (Duty-bearers are those actors and institutions who have a particular obligation or responsibility under laws and agreements.)

The Parties cannot achieve Target 3 on their own. The task is too great, and a great diversity of other actors have rights and agency in achieving the ambition. Useful roles for government are to:

- Convene all relevant actors to plan and support implementation.
- Ensure that all elements of Target 3 are achieved, through systems planning, monitoring and reporting, and engagement of other actors.
- Create enabling conditions for other actors to engage and lead, including for Indigenous peoples and local communities to secure their [tenure](#) rights where lacking, build their capacity (and capacity of duty-bearers / governments), reduce barriers to self-determined priorities, and recognize and respect diverse worldviews and knowledge systems.
- Enable policy and legal frameworks that recognize and support diverse governance types, including privately protected and conserved areas, and areas and territories conserved by Indigenous peoples and local communities; and report such areas against the Target with the consent of the governing authority.
- Facilitate and support shared governance of areas, where appropriate and agreed through FPIC where Indigenous peoples and local communities may be affected.
- Direct management and governance of some areas, as appropriate (governance by government).
- Revisit management plans of existing PCAs to ensure they have dedicated targets for each relevant biome, with particular attention to freshwaters, still often under-represented.
- Cooperate with neighboring countries in protecting transboundary ecosystems, including shared basins, through revision of treaties and the mandate of cooperation organizations.
- Ensure application of the best available science and technology in implementing Target 3 and support through resources and capacity building.
- Ensure regular monitoring and evaluation of established sites and networks fulfilling Target 3 goals and apply adaptive management as necessary.
- Ensure that decisions in other sectors of public policy and development projects inside or near PCAs apply precautionary and prevention principles, including through legislation on licensing and environmental assessments, to ensure Target 3 objectives are not undermined.

## Incorporating Target 3 into NBSAPs

As signatories, countries commit to demonstrate progress towards meeting targets, and updating their [National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans](#) (NBSAPs) accordingly. NBSAPs are key national instruments for planning implementation of CBD decisions, including the GBF, in integrated, multi-sectoral and participatory ways. They lay out how a country will fulfill objectives of the CBD and include action plans. While called NBSAPs at a global level, they may have different names at the national level, for instance [Peru's National Biodiversity Strategy](#), [Australia's Strategy for Nature](#) or [Colombia's National Biodiversity Policy](#).

The [approach to](#) NBSAPs has developed based on the commitments that Parties have made to:

- **Develop (or adapt) national strategies for conservation and sustainable use** (i.e. ways a country intends to fulfill CBD measures) and related plans and programs (i.e. specific implementation steps a country will take) (per [Article 6](#)).
- Integrate conservation and sustainable use into national decision-making ([Article 10\(a\)](#)) including other relevant (sectoral or cross-sectoral) plans, programs, policies (per [Article 6](#)).
- Provide national reports with information about what measures have been taken to implement the Convention and how effective these measures have been (per [Article 26](#)).

CBD Decision 15/6 asks Parties to [revise and update their NBSAPS](#), to align them with the GBF goals and targets, including those related to means of implementation and to submit them by the next Conference of Parties (CoP 16) in 2024. Parties that cannot manage this have been asked instead to provide a standalone submission that communicates their national targets related to these same GBF elements. All Parties should follow a reporting template provided in [Decision 15/6 Annex 1](#). Parties are urged to use the relevant GBF headline indicators, supplemented by component and complementary indicators (from [Decision 15/5](#)) and other relevant national and subnational indicators.

NBSAPs can support accountable, integrated action to implement the GBF, including Target 3. Decision 15/6 ([para. 9](#)) specifically encourages Parties to adopt their revised or updated NBSAPs as policy and/or legal instruments, and to integrate them (or elements of them) with broader strategies and plans such as, “national sustainable development plans, national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, and other relevant national sectoral and cross-sectoral plans, in line with national circumstances and priorities.”

Target 3 plans, including for monitoring and reporting, can be built into NBSAPs. Plans should include:

- National targets in line with GBF indicators.
- Headline indicators, supplemented by component and complementary indicators (from the GBF [Monitoring Framework – see below](#)).
- Other national indicators in relevant planning processes.

Target 3 implementation needs to have an inclusive, equitable, effective and gender-responsive approach, and this includes in the planning process for implementation. The NBSAP development process should start by identifying actors, with particular attention to those most likely to be positively or negatively impacted by policies and plans regarding biodiversity, those whose rights may be affected, people contributing to conservation and those groups often marginalized in decision-making, including women and girls, youth, and Indigenous peoples and local communities' representatives. Parties should then conduct a transparent, documented and widely disseminated consultation process on implementation targets/pledges, including with protected area rangers and others directly involved in management and closest to conditions on the ground. The IPBES



Sustainable Use Assessment has a detailed analysis of how NBSAPs can take biodiversity conservation into account in sectoral management. The UN Office on Human Rights ([UNOHCHR](#)) has issued draft guidance on [integrating human rights in NBSAPs, a core component of the GBF's commitment to integrating a human rights-based approach](#).

## Target 3 and the GBF in a broader context of policy coherence

Support for 30x30 is needed from all arms of government, including subnational government and from other sectors of society, with policies and actions aligned. A major obstacle is inconsistency within the state: for example, the Ministry of Environment might set up a national park while the Ministry of Resources authorizes mining in the same area; or a road could be built through an Indigenous Protected Area without consultation with the traditional owners; or the judiciary fail to support poaching control; all real-life examples that have happened repeatedly around the world. Policies of companies, local government and other actors also need to be aligned. A meeting of ministries and departments early in the implementation (i.e., in the [appraisal stage](#)) of a national GBF plan can identify points of conflict and maximize integration, including with [other GBF targets](#). Processes will be strengthened by including civil society and industry actors and this is critical for private or Indigenous areas. Challenges come from ingrained interdepartmental rivalries and vested interests; success can be measured by identifying examples of policy integration. In Indigenous Territories, [FPIC](#) processes should help ensure policy coherence, if effectively implemented.

The Target 3 phrase “integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes” can be viewed in several dimensions. Simplest is the spatial integration of PCAs into wider areas, with “integration” ranging from physical proximity to natural resource planning taking into account conservation, as well as other uses in wider landscapes/seascapes and the sea. The IPBES [thematic assessment](#) on interlinkages between biodiversity, water, food and health is helpful here.

But planning for successful implementation must also look beyond the confines of the Target 3 language and the mandates of environmental ministries and agencies of the Parties. “Integration” implies also policy coherence, and the GBF calls for a “whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach,” and a commitment to spatial planning across all areas in Target 1. Planners for Target 3 implementation should consider the drivers of biodiversity loss as they relate to area-based conservation.

Policy coherence is defined by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as the “systematic promotion of mutually reinforcing policy actions across government departments and agencies creating synergies towards achieving the agreed objectives.”

Implementation should identify potential conflicts of objectives and interests among policies of various sectors and resolve them as far as possible. These may include agricultural and water policy, forestry, fisheries, energy, mining, shipping, ports and wider environmental policy to fiscal policy and economic development strategies.

The GBF is part of a multilateral treaty, but it is not the only such treaty to which countries are signatories. Planning for Target 3 must consider these other commitments, which present both an obligation and an opportunity. Policy coherence and integrated planning of the GBF takes place alongside programs of the UNFCCC, UNCCD, the SDGs, CMS, the new BBNJ relating to the high seas, and others, plus multilateral agreements on human rights, health, wildlife trafficking and trade. (While no target specifically deals with health, the GBF, in its “considerations” section, “acknowledges the interlinkages between biodiversity and health and the three objectives of the Convention. The Framework is to be implemented with consideration of the [One Health Approach](#)...”)

The UNDP has pioneered a [methodology for integrated land use planning](#) that utilizes the principles of systematic conservation planning but also includes data layers related to nature-dependent Sustainable Development Goals. Projects in 12 countries have been [mapped](#), and they offer an [online learning module](#).

Done well, Parties can leverage resources to meet multiple targets at the same time.

## Biodiversity and climate change

Climate change and biodiversity loss are linked, existential threats and often should be [addressed in relation to each other](#), and [PCAs are at the nexus](#). In GBF Target 8, PCAs have important roles to play in both mitigating and adapting to climate change, particularly through carbon sequestration and disaster risk reduction. The UNFCCC acknowledges the need to address biodiversity loss, but there are many barriers and [knowledge gaps in integrating biodiversity into adaptation strategies](#).

Increasing protection of high-biodiversity / carbon-dense ecosystems is widely recognized as the single [most effective mechanism](#) to provide synergistic benefits for biodiversity and climate change in the short term – i.e., by 2030. For some countries, enhancing protection of areas where the interface between biodiversity and carbon density is high would be a significant contribution to attaining Target 3 of the GBF, as well as contributing to their Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the Paris Agreement. [Many countries identified this link in their early NDCs](#) in terrestrial and [coastal marine ecosystems](#).

Freshwater ecosystems have a major role to play in adaptation and mitigation. Water is to adaptation what carbon is for mitigation, and certain wetlands also hold considerable amounts of [carbon](#). Conserving water systems and their biodiversity under Target 3 could thus contribute significantly to climate goals.

Ecosystems' functions and services, already disrupted by human activity, are also directly impacted by climate change, and the impacts on biodiversity can be significant, including species extinctions.

Focusing on enhanced [protection of areas where biodiversity and carbon-density overlap](#) will prevent not only the loss of species but also prevent the release of ecosystem-based greenhouse gases (CO<sub>2</sub> and methane in particular) into the environment. Protected areas have been shown to be successful in protecting carbon stocks and biodiversity in a regional study in Southeast Asia, a national study in the [United States](#), and forested ecosystems in [Brazil, Costa Rica, Indonesia and Thailand](#). IUCN provides [guidance on how networks of protected areas can provide global resilience to change](#).

In the marine realm, there has been significant progress in identifying opportunities for integrating biodiversity into climate change strategies, including use of [ecosystem functions and services to help mitigate climate change](#) via [blue carbon](#). More is also known about how to identify climate risks to marine ecosystems such as ocean acidification, ocean deoxygenation, ocean warming, heatwaves, pollution (eutrophication), erosion, storms and more.

Research has highlighted the importance of connectivity to support potential [climate refugia](#) and opportunities to include climate change in [MPA plans](#) and [strategies](#). Connectivity also links biodiversity and climate goals. Ensuring ecological connectivity is conserved and restored is critical for PCAs to maximally support climate adaptation.



## Understanding Target 3

The following sections step through all of the elements of the Target, providing guidance where available, identifying challenges and linking to examples of how issues have been approached in practice.

Ways to achieve 30% will vary by context. (For example, Puerto Rico is planning to [protect 33% by 2033](#).) They should be identified through an [inclusive and participatory spatial planning process](#) and should uphold the principles outlined above, including following an HRBA and full, equitable, effective and gender responsive participation. The other elements of Target 3 describe where, how, and by and with whom this percentage target should be achieved. Therefore, the strategies and actions described throughout this guide are, together, ways to achieve 30%.

Eurasian lynx (*Lynx lynx*)  
running in snow, National  
Park Velka Fatra, Slovakia  
© Tomas Hulik

### Ensure and enable

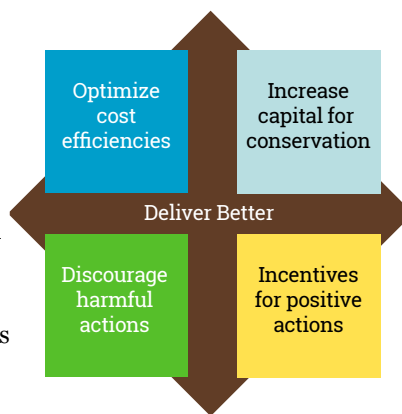
Achieving the GBF needs strong, consistent leadership from governments and multiple actions initiated and carried out at local level. Everyone has a role. Success depends, amongst other factors, on supportive and coherent laws and policies, sufficient finances and many actors with the necessary skills and enthusiasm.

#### Supportive policies and legislation

Success in the GBF will often require changes to policy and sometimes to legislation. Conservation is often hampered by out-of-date laws; many countries still have laws established in the colonial era which can insist that protected areas be empty of human habitation, creating unnecessary conflicts and undermining traditional management and governance even in cases where this supports biodiversity. Constant policy shifts on financing leave many PCAs vulnerable to loss of income. A thorough review of existing legislation can identify needed changes, particularly in the marine realm and for aspects of freshwater conservation such as free-flowing rivers. Comparing national and subnational legislation with [international best practice](#) from the [IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law](#) can help. Natural Justice's [ICCA Legal Reviews](#) analyze 17 countries' legislation and institutions in relation to territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples. Legal reviews have been done under the UNDP's Global Support Initiative of territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples and local communities. A synthesis of Phase I results is available [here](#).

## Promoting investment and efficiency

Conservation finance must increase. Well planned conservation finance is a wise investment not a net cost (figure 6). Projections suggest that achieving Target 3 requires investment of approximately US\$100 billion per year globally (~US\$80 billion more than now); this will bring major returns (from US\$64 billion–US\$454 billion per year by 2050) and benefits from avoided losses, calculated at US\$170–US\$534 billion per year by 2050 for forests and mangroves alone.



**Figure 6:**  
Strategies for effective finances

1. **Entrance Fees:** Charges levied for access to PCAs; one of the most widely implemented site-based revenue strategies.
2. **Protected and Conserved Areas Concessions:** The right to use land or other property for a specified purpose, granted by a government, company, or other controlling body.
3. **Collaborative Management Partnership:** A PCA authority (government, private, or community) enters a contract with a partner (private or NGO) and devolves certain PCA management responsibilities to the partner.
4. **Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES):** Creation of a market-based approach where users pay providers for ecosystem services benefits received from a site.
5. **Conservation Enterprises:** Businesses that promote sustainable use of biodiversity in and around PCAs and generate revenue for conservation and / or communities.
6. **Project Finance for Permanence:** A financial model that brings together governments, Indigenous peoples and local communities, funders, and other partners to secure long-term conservation, full and sustained funding, and community benefits through a single closing.
7. **Biodiversity Offsets:** Compensation (finance or actions) for significant adverse biodiversity impacts used to lead to measurable conservation outcomes.
8. **Biodiversity credits:** Conservation actions with measurable positive biodiversity impacts are verified and ‘credited’ such that credits can be sold and the buyer can claim positive impacts.
9. **Climate Finance for Nature:** Provision of climate funds to facilitate nature-positive climate change mitigation and adaptation measures with a positive biodiversity impact.
10. **Impact Investing:** Investments that generate social and environmental impact alongside financial returns, often through blended finance.
11. **Conservation Trust Funds (CTF):** Private, legally independent institutions that provide sustainable financing for biodiversity conservation.
12. **Taxation Policy and Revenues:** Government policies including tax incentives, green taxes, and use of tax revenues, including earmarks, that benefit PCAs.
13. **Debt Conversions:** Conversion of sovereign debt that simultaneously reduces a country’s debt burden or interest rate and allocates finance for conservation.
14. **Sustainability Certification:** The use of standards for production or trade, along with monitoring, and labelling processes, to recognise and incentivise products that meet specific environmental and social criteria.

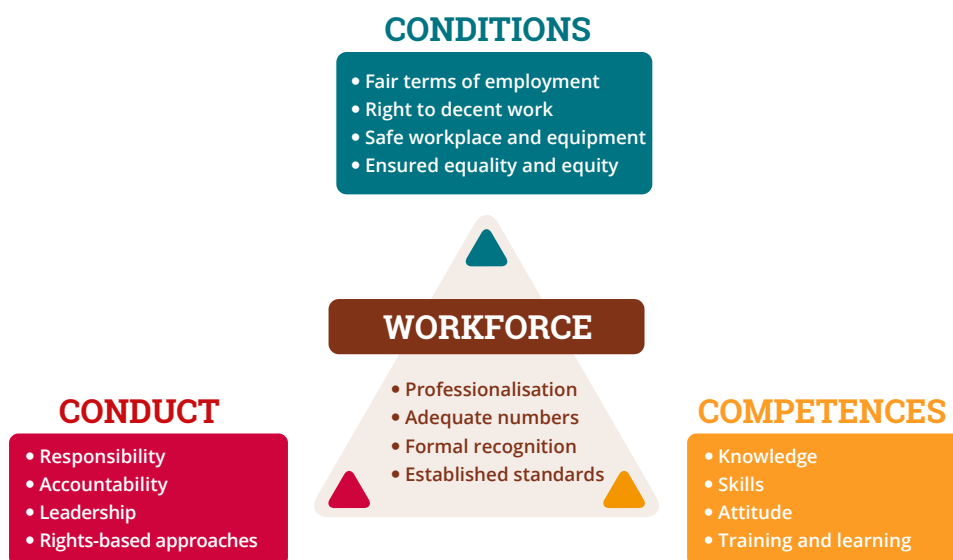
## Finance equity

Equitable distribution of conservation funding is a crucial consideration. Currently, most conservation funding goes to governments and large organizations. Far more (and directly accessible) funding needs to be provided directly to Indigenous peoples, local communities, women and girls, youth, and their networks and organizations, to support and sustain their conservation agency and action. There are a growing number of mechanisms for doing so – including the GEF [Inclusive Conservation Initiative](#) and several mechanisms being developed by and with the [Rights and Resources Initiative](#). Yet, local rightsholders, stakeholders and organizations continue to face [substantial barriers](#) in accessing adequate and appropriate (e.g., flexible and long-term) conservation funding.

At the same time, conservation funding streams also need human rights safeguards and accountability mechanisms to ensure that, particularly as mainstream PCA efforts are scaled up and out for Target 3 implementation, they do not entrench or exacerbate inequity and human rights concerns.

## Human capacity and workforce needs for 30%

Investment of additional finance should include establishment of workforces adequate in numbers and capacity to manage and sustain 30%. This will require at least [five times](#) the current number of people working in PCAs of all types. It will need [skilled people at many levels](#), including in leadership roles, as technical specialists and as rangers (or equivalents); it will also require parallel strengthening of capacity of managing entities for PCAs (governmental, private, community and Indigenous) (figure 7). Major technical needs include addressing social tensions, understanding rights-based approaches, adaptation to climate change and human-wildlife conflict. Adoption of common norms and standards is an important measure of success; these include [competency standards](#) around which [training materials](#) have been developed, and [standards for conduct](#), with employment conditions and competence for rangers. For more, see [URSA](#) and [International Ranger Federation](#).



**Figure 7.** Elements of an effective workforce for 30x30 (from [URSA](#))

## What – at least 30%

Effective and equitable conservation is crucial to halting and reversing biodiversity loss. But the question of “how much” PCA coverage is “enough” is hard to answer, due to the diversity of factors involved. [Evidence](#) suggests that conservation of 30% to 70% or more of [terrestrial](#), [inland waters](#), [coastal and marine areas](#) is required to sustain and restore biodiversity. Thirty percent is therefore a minimum, probably only a provisional goal, and is only viable if achieved in ways that meet the other elements of Target 3, including ecological connectivity. Restoring biodiversity loss also requires that the remaining up to 70% is governed and managed sustainably, applying landscape and seascape approaches, integrated basin management and source-to-sea concepts.

### Improving and building on existing PCA systems

In 2022, before agreement of the GBF, globally [reported](#) protected areas and OECMs covered about 17% of terrestrial and inland waters and 8% of marine areas. From a starting point of these existing areas, three ways to implement Target 3 are:

- 1. Improving the existing system:** Improving the management effectiveness and governance equity of the existing system is an important starting point. Many marine protected areas (MPAs) currently have only weak controls over industrial fishing and many freshwater protected areas are impacted by dams. Strategies and tools for improving equity and effectiveness are noted throughout this guide. This includes resisting losses to the system through [Protected Area Downsizing, Downgrading and Degazettement](#) (PADDD).
- 2. Expanding recognition and support of areas that are already being effectively conserved:** Many areas that meet the definition of a protected area or an OECM are not yet recognized as protected or, especially, conserved areas. Recent increases in global coverage figures come in large part from [OECMs](#). Many of these are not newly *created* areas, but rather pre-existing initiatives that are now identified / recognized and reported and are at least in theory supported to continue to deliver conservation benefits. Similarly, many governments fail to recognize all the protected areas in their country. [Privately protected areas](#) (PPAs) (private trusts, for profit enterprises, company reserves, NGOs, etc.) are often omitted from national statistics and these should also be recognized for their contribution to Target 3, where the rightsholders agree. In addition, many areas and territories conserved by Indigenous peoples or local communities are not recognized or supported within their national contexts yet are expansive in their coverage and contributions (see case studies below).
- 3. Expanding the existing system:** Existing PCAs, recognized or not, will not be sufficient to reverse biodiversity loss. Not all protected areas are located in optimal places or are the right size. New PCAs need to be brought to bear, as far as possible, in places optimal for biodiversity conservation. This may include restoration of sites with the potential to be effective PCAs.

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**Case study:** [Queen Elizabeth II National Trust](#) in New Zealand and their PPA partners have worked with the national Department of Conservation and UNEP-WCMC to verify PPA data to be included in the WDPA.

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**Case study:** In South Africa, [biodiversity stewardship](#) is implemented on sites that have been identified as important for biodiversity and ecosystem services, based on best available science. In 20 years, biodiversity stewardship has secured well over 500,000 hectares of protected areas, largely on privately or communally owned lands.

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**Case study:** A [joint report](#) by UNEP-WCMC and the ICCA Consortium conservatively estimates that territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples or by local communities cover a potential 23 million km<sup>2</sup> outside of state and privately governed PCAs. This equates to 17% of the world's land covered uniquely by such areas.

### More than a number

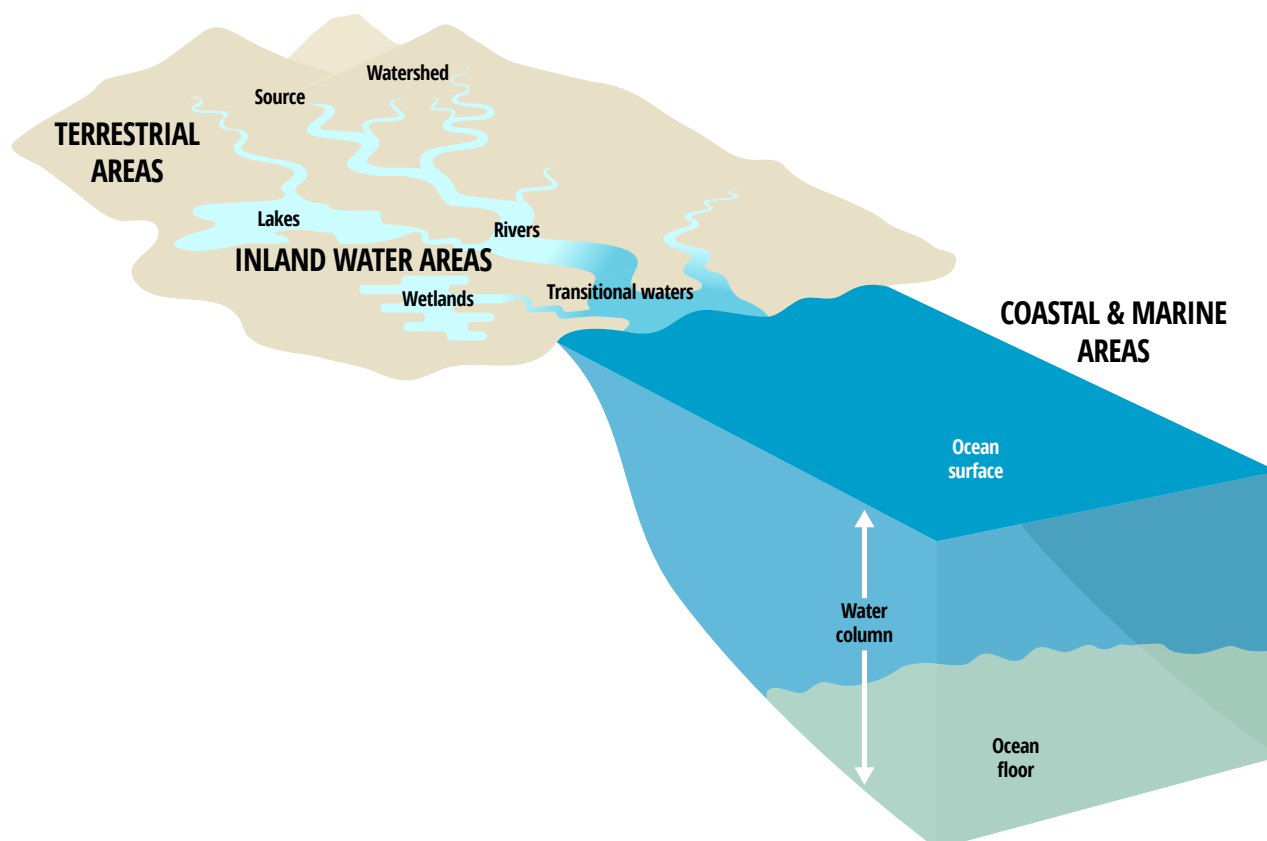
30% must be understood together with all of the elements of Target 3, and the broader GBF. Looking at percentage area alone is [insufficient](#), and poses sociocultural and environmental risks. For example, focusing on coverage alone risks “counting” areas that are not achieving conservation, or are doing so through inequitable approaches. In addition to other elements in Target 3, consideration is needed about likely changes in ecological condition over time and space within the system, the level of existing degradation and what is happening in the remaining up to 70% of the planet. The pathways in this guide for achieving the other elements of Target 3 are therefore also key pathways for realizing “at least 30%.”

### Integrating the three realms

Conservation of [coastal and marine](#), [inland water](#), and [terrestrial areas](#) are ecologically and socially connected (figure 8). Conservation within and across these realms should be a key element in systematic spatial planning within the [NBSAP process](#), including considering nature's contributions to people (e.g., river sediments help deltas keep pace with rising sea levels and provide nutrients for marine fish and forests regulate water flow in rivers and streams). Planning should take full advantage of and integrate existing and planned investments across global treaties and commitments (e.g., the [Ramsar Convention regarding wetlands](#)).

Integrated and cross-realm approaches can help ensure that relationships between different areas, and between natural, social and cultural systems, are visible and sustained. Aquascapes and [Source-to-Sea conservation](#), for example, are emerging areas of interest.

**Figure 8.** The three realms referred to in Target 3.



Aquascapes is an emerging approach to integrate conservation, restoration and management of inland, transitional, coastal and marine waters. The approach recognizes the ecological, physical, biochemical, economic and social co-dependencies of connected aquatic systems and interconnected nature of their threats, biodiversity and ecological functioning. For example, marine habitat and species protections are compromised by the impacts of polluted rivers, or poorly managed biological resources within those rivers. If a river feeding into an MPA runs along a deforested area, this could result in massive amounts of sediment flowing over coral reefs and other coastal ecosystems that the protected area is meant to conserve. This will affect the habitat, coastal fisheries, tourism and recreation around the MPA. And free passage and contiguous aquatic health are essential for the survival of many diadromous species (migratory between salt water and freshwater) and species that exist in transitional habitats (seagrass beds, mangrove forests, saltmarshes and estuaries). Conservation efforts for aquatic environments tend to be fragmented into inland waters or marine, overlooking these transitional areas.

Further, integrated basin management (“waterscapes”) and [integrated landscape-seascape approaches \(ILSAs\)](#) bring together stakeholders and resources for holistic solutions to socio-ecological challenges. Such integrated approaches also require recognition of different rights across landscapes and seascapes. Indeed a source-to-sea system may involve coordination across national borders and high seas. This can help support [effective](#) and [equitable](#) conservation with [connectivity](#) and [integration](#).

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**Case study:** Ridge to reef or source to sea initiatives have been implemented in [Haiti](#), [East Africa](#), numerous [Pacific islands](#), and many other areas.

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Target 3 refers to “terrestrial, inland water, and of coastal and marine areas.” All three are of equal importance and priority.

## Terrestrial

The Target applies to all natural terrestrial [ecosystems](#), plus some long-established cultural ecosystems (created through human management) with important associated biodiversity.

Key steps towards Target 3 include:

- **Ensuring that a full range of ecosystems are [represented](#).** Concern about tropical forests can overshadow other ecosystems, such as grassland, savannah and tundra, which can undergo unequal losses if forest conservation shifts land use change elsewhere.
- **Emphasizing a [mosaic approach](#).** Terrestrial protected areas need to be integrated both with conservation of inland waters and of coastal and marine systems, and with ecological corridors and sustainable management in the rest of the landscape.
- **Choosing the optimal [management](#) approach.** Many protected areas, and even more OECMs, support a variety of uses, but these sites are not just sustainable use areas. Navigating what is and isn’t compatible with conservation is a key challenge in the GBF.

In slightly different ways, many of these points refer to marine and inland waters as well.

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**Case study:** The [Laponian World Heritage Area](#) in Swedish Lapland was one of the few World Heritage sites explicitly listed for transhumance values, where traditional Sami reindeer herding goes hand in hand with biodiversity and landscape conservation.

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## Enabling factors and challenges

Pressures on land are huge and increasing. Area-based conservation needs to plan for future development and seek to shape how this evolves. Human population changes can threaten traditional, biodiversity-friendly management. Many countries will find it hard to establish large new terrestrial protected areas. The CBD requires OECMs to conserve significant biodiversity and obtain rightsholders' consent, but there are fears OECMs will be recognized in places of little conservation value and will harm human rights. Intensive agriculture is the [largest driver of ecosystem loss](#) and creates threats from fertilizer and [pesticide pollution](#). Success therefore depends on wider social and technical changes including restoration, [dietary change](#), the future of pastoralism, rural migration and [climate change](#).

This element of Target 3 interacts with many [other GBF targets](#) including particularly Target 7 on pollution reduction, Target 10 on sustainability of agriculture and Target 16 on consumption.

## Inland water

Inland waters – including rivers, lakes and other wetlands – represent some of the most biodiverse and threatened ecosystems on the planet. Monitored freshwater populations have declined 83% on average since 1970, twice the rate of marine and terrestrial, with almost 1 in 3 species threatened with extinction. Inland waters – in particular rivers – also provide vital connectivity between all ecosystems. Yet inland waters continue to be under-represented in conservation coverage and management planning. Inclusion of inland waters in the 30x30 target and indicators is therefore essential to achieve the GBF's goals to halt biodiversity and nature loss. Many inland waters also have sacred values for many Indigenous peoples and a variety of faith groups. The [Protected Planet database](#) currently does not provide a separate analysis of the amount of inland water in PCAs. UNEP-WCMC and partners are developing an approach to address this.

There are a [wide range of area-based approaches](#)  already used in inland waters that can contribute to Target 3. These include novel approaches like [fluvial reserves](#) and [community fish sanctuaries](#), although their match to consistent PCA definitions and IUCN management categories may have to be assessed on a case-by-case basis. An inventory of these areas could be conducted alongside country-mapping of freshwater [KBAs \(as yet not mapped comprehensively in freshwaters\)](#), and overlaying of spatial data from the forthcoming IUCN Red List of freshwater fauna as a first step for identifying potential PCAs that can contribute to Target 3. [Marxan tools](#) are available specifically for spatial planning and inland waters and the [Freshwater Health Index](#) can indicate baselines and enabling conditions.

Great egrets (*Egretta alba*),  
Pusztaszer protected area  
Hungary.  
© Wild Wonders of Europe /  
Markus Varesvuo / WWF




## Enabling factors and challenges


Conservation and [restoration](#) (Target 2) of inland water ecosystems depends partly on whether the whole or most of the focal habitat is within the PCA – if a river runs only a short distance through an area it will be harder to manage the influence of threats originating externally such as pollution or overfishing. However, this challenge also represents an opportunity for integrated river basin management, particularly regarding improved connectivity and quality of water resources for people. Such an approach would also contribute to Target 1 as an area under participatory integrated spatial planning where the rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities are respected.

**Case study:** In 2023, the [Vjosa River](#) in Albania was declared a national park by the Albanian Government – the first Wild River National Park in Europe. This is one of more than 40 case studies of area-based conservation of inland waters included in [A Pathway for Inland Waters in the 30x30 Target](#).

It will be a challenge, but there is also an opportunity to align or balance the needs of local communities, downstream and upstream water users, infrastructure development outside the PCA's borders, and dependent biodiversity. The effective protection of inland water biodiversity within PCAs will require, where appropriate, legal imposition, regulation and enforcement of limitations on external activities. This will require careful participatory approaches and FPIC, but if protection and development can be balanced, inland waters will contribute to conservation at a basin-wide level both within and outside Target 3.

## Coastal and marine

Three distinct elements relating to MPAs  are significant here: conservation of coastal and near-shore waters, offshore waters still within a country's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and therefore subject to decisions by national or subnational governments, and high seas MPAs, where international agreements need to be applied. The opportunities and challenges are very different.

Coastal areas and near-shore waters almost always require careful interaction with Indigenous peoples and local communities, with conservation objectives  being negotiated. Conservation is therefore sometimes compromised with the needs of resident communities or visitors, although this is not always the case. There are many coastal and marine areas governed and managed by and with Indigenous peoples and coastal communities. And, more generally, there is much experience in [establishing and managing protected areas and areas that may be suitable as OECMs](#) or other conserved areas in coastal communities, including traditionally / locally conserved or managed areas that do not meet protected area definitions. Challenges include the willingness of fishing communities to work with area-based conservation, which is influenced by specification of user rights, participatory and inclusive planning, engagement of community leaders and the extent to which set-asides have been used traditionally. Experience with Locally Managed Marine Areas, particularly in the Pacific, provides [models](#) that are being used in other coastal areas.

Coastal protected areas are complicated from a reporting point of view because it is often difficult to decide where the “coast” begins, with many sites having terrestrial, freshwater and marine components; some refer instead to “coastal zone” areas. Given this, it is important to recognize the need for [connectivity](#) between inland water and marine conservation and the various designations outside PCAs that can contribute in the wider ocean (such as fishery management areas, exclusive artisanal fishing areas (EAFAs), Indigenous and traditional territories), spatial planning needs to take place at a broader scale, involving participation of multiple actors. (See [Gabon spatial planning](#).)

Nearshore waters within the EEZ often have a different but overlapping set of stakeholders, including fishing communities but also shipping and offshore energy operations such as wind power and oil drilling. Management of such sites may be challenging in that it will be more difficult to maintain oversight.

High seas protected areas are vital for 30x30 since the high seas represent 64% of the marine surface compared with only 36% of marine waters under national jurisdictions. But despite many proposals, mechanisms for establishment and management are missing: how to set up, who manages and enforces, and who pays. The [agreement](#) in March 2023 on *conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, will help; but many challenges remain.*

**Case study:** In March 2023, the Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Treaty language was [finalized](#), a [major step](#) in protecting life on the high seas. The treaty will act as the [governance framework](#) for establishing large-scale MPAs in areas beyond national jurisdiction. This is a significant step in achieving Target 3. Legally binding under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, it creates a framework and obligation for marine protections over previously unregulated waters. The first objective of the BBNJ Agreement in terms of area-based management tools (ABMTs) is to “conserve and sustainably use areas requiring protection, including through the establishment of a comprehensive system of area-based management tools, with ecologically representative and well-connected networks of marine protected areas.” Priority [sites](#) include the Walvis Ridge off southern Africa, the Sargasso Sea, South Tasman Sea and Emperor Seamounts in the north Pacific.

There has been a recent trend to establish large-scale MPAs in offshore waters, often larger than 100,000 km<sup>2</sup>. MPAs in deeper waters are important to protect long-lived deep water marine species, especially fish, to protect spawning populations from damaging deep-sea trawling and to conserve or restore damaged deepwater biodiversity hot spots (e.g., seamounts, hydrothermal vents, deep cold-water corals).

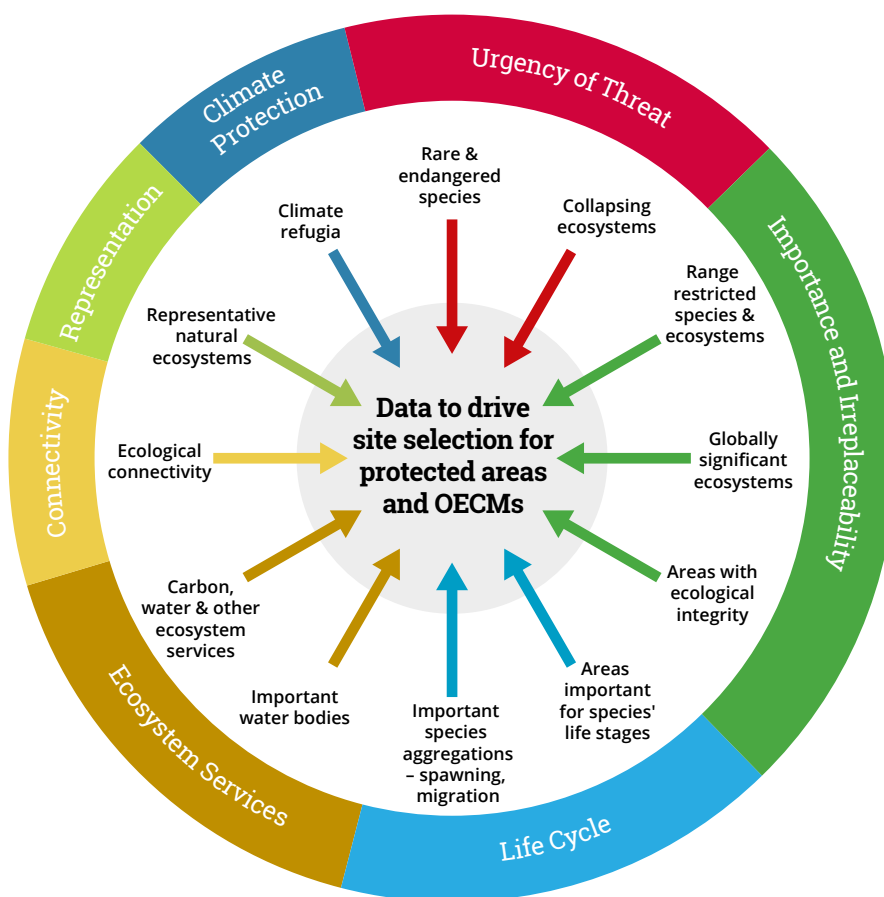
### Enabling factors and challenges

Challenges include reconciling conservation and [ecosystem integrity](#) with the interests of marine-based industries such as fisheries, addressing problems of partial conservation (e.g., MPAs that protect the water column but not the seabed), difficulties in monitoring both the marine environment and human use, particularly in offshore sites, uncertainty about application of OECMs in a marine context, jurisdictional complexity, multiple interests and the many implications of climate change. Fishing inside an MPA can significantly reduce (or effectively eliminate) its conservation value. Agreeing on a global definition of “[sustainable use](#)” in a marine context, and how this differs from the rest of the marine environment, is particularly important. Financing is also difficult, although there are a few examples of sustainable financing models for coastal and high seas MPAs.

**Case study:** Research from [Australia](#) shows that MPAs are often initially contested, require balance between realpolitik and science, clear targets for different types (e.g., multi-use and no-take) and involvement of many stakeholders to be successful.

**Case study:** Success in Costa Rica has been boosted by a legal framework that recognizes different categories of (government) [marine protected areas and \(shared governance\) Marine Responsible Fishing Areas](#), with negotiated small-scale fishers’ rights.

**Case study:** [Blue Bonds for Ocean Conservation](#) help countries like Seychelles refinance their national debt while creating financing for marine protection.



**Figure 9.** Summary of considerations in site selection

## Where to implement

PCAs should prioritize places with significant biodiversity. Ensuring ecological representation requires data and planning, but also needs to take account of human uses and ecosystem services, necessitating negotiation and trade-offs.



### Areas of particular importance for biodiversity

Biodiversity is not distributed evenly on the planet. The best areas for biodiversity conservation for PCAs must be selected to be effective and efficient. [Representation](#) is a useful concept in selecting PCAs, but will only address biodiversity needs adequately if both species and ecosystems are considered. Target 3 refers to “ecologically representative” and this poses further challenges. [For example](#), temperate grasslands and tropical dry broadleaved forests are both seriously under-represented in [current protected area systems](#). Given the current [bias](#) in the type of ecosystem represented in protected areas, achieving representation by any measure (ecoregions, bioregions or ecosystems) will require more than 30% area-based conservation. This is true for biodiversity and ecosystem services conservation as a whole: [analysis](#) suggests that ~79% of remaining natural vegetation is needed to meet the full range of issues identified in four United Nations’ resolutions (UNCCD, UNFCCC, CBD and the Sustainable Development Goals). This means that PCA efforts, which may expand in future with a larger target, need to focus on the most urgent needs now. It is also important to understand what can effectively be conserved in the wider landscape and seascape; this is context-specific and depends largely on the extent to which area-based conservation is integrated into the rest of the landscape and seascape.


Research and experience suggest that approximately a dozen different issues must be considered when prioritizing future sites (figure 9). These are summarized in the infographic and, as all are important, they should not be traded off against each other. [Many tools exist](#) to help these processes, from software planning packages to bottom-up planning approaches. There are also many critical input datasets – for example, the [World Data Base on Key Biodiversity Areas](#) (KBAs) provides large quantities of information that can help identify sites of global importance to biodiversity that may be important for protection.

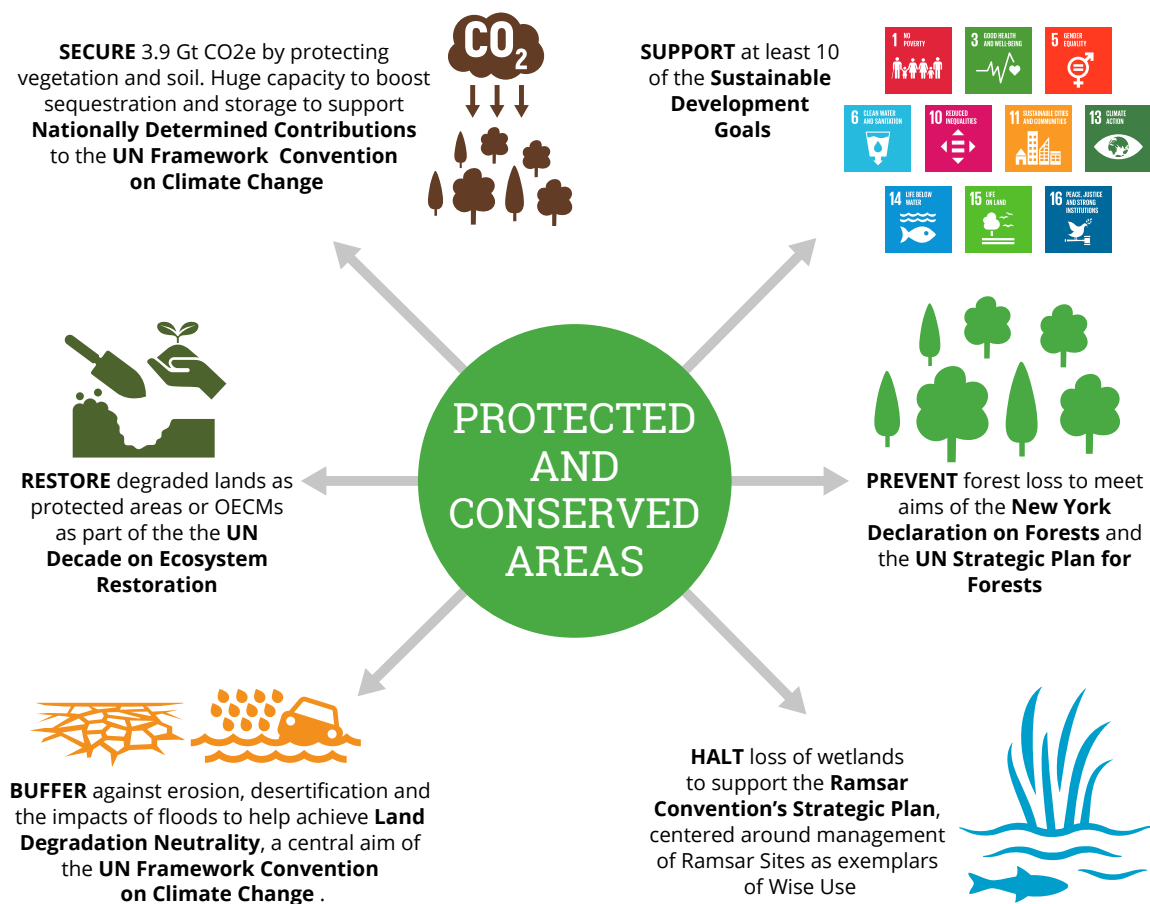
In formal terms, ecological representation means including viable populations of the full variety of biodiversity of different biological realms (freshwater, marine and terrestrial through all the ecoregions) and biological scales (ecosystems, species and within-species variation) within a system of PCAs. Although national-level planning is essential, it is also important to develop this in the context of the global significance of a species' population at a site, to avoid spending effort conserving globally abundant species that may be rare in a particular country because they are at the edge of their range. Conservation biologists also advise building some functional redundancy into the system to ensure that omissions are minimized and there is some insurance against loss of critical sites. In some cases, locally rare species common elsewhere may have cultural or spiritual significance that means they also deserve special attention.

### Enabling factors and challenges

Multiple [studies](#) report beneficial effects of protected areas on [species abundance and diversity](#) in all types of protected areas. Yet at present, many species are missed by the global protected area system, and others are not covered in sufficient numbers to ensure survival. Similarly, many ecosystems and important sites, including KBAs, are not or are inadequately included. Indeed, KBAs have not been comprehensively identified   in many countries across all taxonomic groups and this should be a national priority. An analysis from 2010–2019 of over 12,000 threatened species (e.g., Vulnerable, Endangered or Critically Endangered on the [IUCN Red List](#)) found 87.6% had some portion of their geographic range protected by 2019. But only 2% had gained protection in the last decade suggesting slow progress towards representation. Also, biodiversity in protected areas is affected by wider environmental and climate changes. Research in German protected areas found a 76% decline in flying insect biomass over 27 years, with agricultural intensification the likely cause. Lack of insect food is a major driver behind a 55% decline in European farm birds since 1980. And climate change can not only make species go extinct due to inability to adapt, but also change their distribution. Many times, species will have nowhere to go because of so much environmental destruction and degradation, and also if their [future, habitable environment](#) is not itself protected. So protected areas must also take into account future habitat wherever possible.

### Areas of particular importance for ecosystem functions and services

Target 3 gives more emphasis on ecosystem services  than previously and mentions “ecosystem functions,” without a very clear definition of what this means. Increasingly, particularly in OECMs, ecosystem services will be the primary driver behind management. There may in some cases be trade-offs between emphasizing ecosystem services and conserving biodiversity, although there is also [evidence](#) that areas of high biodiversity also supply proportionately more ecosystem services. Understanding which of those values exist, where and when are all important. Note that the definitions of both protected area and OECMs focus on the conservation of biodiversity, and ecosystem functions and services are often “associated” with biodiversity. This is because functioning ecosystems sustain the ecological processes that drive the services humanity depends on. Thus, it is appropriate that biodiversity values are the key selection criteria for PCAs. Protected areas are designated for their biodiversity conservation values, and many also have other ecosystem service values (figure 10). Many OECMs may be managed for other ecosystem services values, such as water services or carbon storage,



but it is the association with biodiversity that provides the services and OECMs are only recognized as such if they provide significant biodiversity benefits.

[Critical Natural Assets mapping](#) research illustrates the global distribution of ecosystems providing services related to water quality regulation (nitrogen, sediment), food provision (pollination, grazing, riverine and marine fish), timber and fuel production, flood regulation and coastal risk reduction, and access to marine and terrestrial areas for recreation and gathering of resources. And specifically regarding the oceans, absorbing as much as half of all anthropogenic carbon emissions over the past two centuries, producing as much as 50% of the oxygen on the Earth used by all life, providing ocean current stability, and global temperature regulation.

The [UN Biodiversity Lab](#) provides decision-makers with spatial data to put nature at the center of sustainable development. It includes a collection on protected areas with more than 20 different data layers that users can explore to query key questions related to protected areas.

From the perspective of planning, ecosystem services come in two main types, those immediately valuable to people living in or near the site and those with wider, possibly global, significance but that are less recognizable at a local level. Thus, access to fish populations is easy to understand and appreciate at a community level whereas the carbon value of a peatland is much harder to comprehend and bring into negotiation about land use. Ecosystem functions and services should also be understood in a way that reflects the [diverse values](#) of nature, including relational values and biocultural diversity (see figure 10). Planning for ecosystem services – such as food and water security, disaster risk reduction, health benefits and climate adaptation and mitigation and cultural values and services – therefore depends on two types of assessment, a) finding out what local people think is important and b) determining wider global values provided by nature that help maintain life on the planet, including values and benefits such as genetic materials

**Figure 10.** The variety of services and synergies with other processes deriving from natural, intact ecosystems (source: Best Practice in Delivering the 30x30 Target)

and ecosystem processes that may yet be discovered. [Tools](#) are available for both, ranging from analysis of satellite imagery to workshop approaches with local people. These can include economic valuation, although methodologies are imperfect and decisions are seldom made purely on financial terms. A [2022 IPBES report](#)  also offers guidelines on valuation and policy making in relation to diverse values of nature. “Transformative change needed to address the global biodiversity crisis relies on shifting away from predominant values that currently over-emphasize short-term and individual material gains, to nurturing sustainability-aligned values across society.” (from the [Summary for Policymakers](#)).

The addition of “ecosystem functions” to Target 3, which was not present in previous CBD objectives, indicates that part of the aim should be to maintain underlying ecosystem health on a wider scale, rather than just those elements that are immediately translatable into human values.

### Enabling factors and challenges

Although there are many examples of partnerships around the world between PCAs and institutions such as water companies, municipalities, health departments, tourism ventures, etc., the role of natural ecosystems in maintaining ecosystem services has still failed to come to scale, or to enter mainstream thinking with the seriousness needed for effective uptake. The combination of the new GBF, elements of the UNFCCC climate strategy and the UN SDGs may be sufficient to give the necessary push.

## How to implement

### Equitably governed

Governance is understood in different ways. Broadly, it [concerns](#) how and by whom decisions are made and upheld, including power, voice and accountability. This guide focuses on issues of [equity](#) which is defined and explored with respect to conservation governance. Equity is a multi-dimensional concept, closely related to fairness and justice. CBD [Voluntary Guidance](#) on protected areas looks at three dimensions of equity:

1. Recognition: acknowledgement of and respect for rights and the diversity of identities, values, knowledge systems and institutions of rightsholders and stakeholders
2. Procedure: inclusiveness of rule- and decision-making
3. Distribution: equitable sharing of costs and benefits

This CBD Guidance points to a [framework](#) for assessing these three dimensions (figure 11).



Equity is a core component of [governance quality](#). IUCN [identifies](#) legitimacy and voice, direction, performance, accountability, and fairness and rights *as principles of equitable and effective PCA governance*. Other frameworks and approaches may include different or additional elements / principles for equity (e.g., [for marine conservation](#)) and governance (e.g., the governance assessment resources noted below, as well as the [Governance Principles for Community-Centered Conservation](#) and the [Conservation through Reconciliation Partnership](#)).

**Figure 11.** Three dimensions of equity embedded within enabling conditions



Strategies and actions for equitably governed [systems](#) and sites should themselves be well governed. They may include laws, processes and practices at appropriate scales, for example:

- Equitable recognition and support for all governance types (including where territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples or local communities are overlapped by areas under different *de jure* [governance types](#), or other overlapping situations), through site and systems-level assessments (see below) and other means.
- Safeguards, participatory assessments and follow-up actions to improve governance of existing sites and of any new protected area or OECM establishment and expansion (see below).
- Access to justice, including recognition, reconciliation and redress (e.g., through approaches like the [Conservation through Reconciliation Partnership](#) and the [Whakatane Mechanism](#)) and including where Indigenous peoples' or local communities' conserved territories are [overlapped](#) by protected areas or OECMs under other *de jure* governance types.
- Recognition and respect for diverse values, knowledge and ways of knowing, innovation and practice.
- Equitable distribution of costs and benefits across the system.
- Closing implementation gaps and enhancing transparency, accountability and [coordination](#) across sectors and scales.
- Sharing and building capacities and resources, including through peer learning and exchange.
- Ensuring equity in [funding](#) (access and safeguards).
- Continuing and strengthening efforts to build processes and relationships that address structural inequities, equalize power, [recognize and support Indigenous-led](#) and community-led conservation and human rights-based and [decolonizing approaches](#), including [shifting roles and relationships](#) with states, NGOs, donors, and other non-state actors in conservation.

Fijians in traditional dress, drinking kava during the celebrations for the creation of new marine protected area (MPA), Vanua Levu, Fiji.  
© Brent Stirton / Getty Images




Equitable governance is also closely related to the application of a broader [human rights-based approach](#), and the rights language throughout the GBF, including in relation to FPIC, access to information and justice, and full protection of human rights defenders, the rights of women and girls, and the principle of intergenerational justice. A wide range of human rights can be (negatively or positively) impacted by conservation processes and outcomes. One helpful resource in understanding these rights is [The Living Convention](#) (Vol. 1). This offers a “compendium of internationally recognized rights that support the integrity and resilience of Indigenous peoples’, local communities’ and peasants’ territories and other social-ecological systems.” (This resource notes which provisions come from instruments dedicated specifically to Indigenous peoples, including [UNDRIP](#). It does not reflect specific provisions in the Resolution on the Right to a Healthy Environment, as this was adopted after its publication.) The rights explored within this compendium include:

- **Procedural rights** related to: precautionary principle, FPIC, impact assessment, information, decision-making, access to justice, capacity building and awareness, and research and development.
- **Substantive rights** related to, among others: knowledge, innovations and practices; tenure; non-removal from lands and territories; stewardship, governance and management of territories, lands and natural resources; customary use; sustainable use; protected areas; sacred natural sites; and benefit sharing.

At a regional scale, the [Escazú Agreement](#) in Latin America and the Caribbean is an environmental agreement with specific provisions for environmental defenders and in Europe the [Aarhus Convention](#) links environmental rights and human rights.

### Enabling factors and challenges

Governance assessment is one way to understand and improve the current situation. Assessments can be done at both systems and site levels, supported by a variety of participatory approaches and tools. These include CBD [voluntary guidelines](#) and IUCN WCPA [good practice guidance](#) on site- and systems-level assessments (including an [Annex](#) with further guidance on recognizing and supporting areas and territories conserved by Indigenous peoples or local communities), the [SAGE framework](#) of 10 principles of effective and equitable governance, a [self-strengthening process](#) for territories of life, the IUCN [Natural Resource Governance Framework](#) , and the [Green List](#) among others. PCA governance assessment has been done less frequently than PAME. However, [lessons for good practice](#) include that:

- Governance of the assessment matters – including who convenes, who participates, how (and why) assessment is done, how outcomes are shared, and who decides. Inclusive, context-appropriate processes are crucial.
- There is value in (inclusive) assessment processes (e.g., shared reflections).
- Assessment also means a responsibility for responsive action. The path from assessment to action requires commitment.
- Governance is dynamic; assessment is only one step in ongoing learning and adaptation.

Currently, global indicators on the quality of protected area and OECD governance and management are limited. UNEP-WCMC, IUCN, WCPA and other partners are working to develop reporting systems and indicators to support Parties in reporting to Protected Planet on all aspects of effectiveness – management, governance, conservation outcomes, and design and planning.

## Effectively managed

For the GBF to succeed, quality of management at systems and site levels will be as important as quantity of areas conserved. Assessment of management effectiveness <sup>📄</sup> has been made in at least some protected areas in most countries, this effort will need to increase and most importantly management adapted to ensure effectiveness. This is particularly important as the effectiveness of the current protected area network does not match its rate of expansion. About 40% of all protected areas have [ineffective management](#). (Comparative data on OECMs is not yet available, although in theory OECMs cannot be recognized unless they are effective.)

Effective management is based on the adequacy and appropriateness of resources and processes to enable positive and sustained long-term biodiversity (and concomitant social outcomes). What is considered effective will vary from site to site, and should be agreed by a participatory process, and influenced by context (e.g., governance, pressures, enabling conditions such as legislation), decisions relating to design and connectivity taken during establishment / recognition and evolving management actions (including inputs/resources and management practices) informed by monitoring and assessment.

Specific management processes vary, but global guidance exists in terms of management standards, capacity, competence, assessment and monitoring; all of which should contribute to management that is adaptive, inclusive and transparent.



The [IUCN Green List Standard](#) <sup>📄</sup> sets out an overarching template for the requirements of successful nature conservation (figure 12) achieved by identifying a set of performance standards; it thus sets a good practice blueprint. Countries can adapt the standards to be nationally relevant and take part in the Green List accreditation program to have their management [independently assessed](#).

**Figure 12.** The four components of the IUCN Green List Standard

All area-based conservation should have clear objectives, which can be identified using planning tools such as the [Conservation Standards](#). Management actions should support achieving objectives, and management regularly assessed to allow adaptive management and effective reporting. Management and assessment systems need to be culturally appropriate, suited to the local context and truly participatory. Capacity development needs to be embedded into strategies for the implementation of Target 3 with a focus on:

- Capacity to identify management requirements and specify required actions.
- Technical capacity for implementing management actions.
- Knowledge building for monitoring, assessment and adaptive management, etc.
- Capacity for leadership, critical thinking, problem solving and innovation.

Effective planning and management require access to up-to-date knowledge and best practice and evidence from successful projects. Evidence of success is not routinely considered when planning and designing conservation projects, major funders of conservation have thus pledged to focus more on [evidence](#).

Conservation competencies help identify skills, knowledge and personal attributes for effective management. They can be used to assess capacity needs, design training courses, set standards, establish qualifications and define organizational structures. Competence will need to diversify to cover a wide range of governance types, and capacity be significantly increased if the GBF targets are to be reached. [\(See section on capacity.\)](#)

Adaptive management is a structured, iterative process of decision-making based on the systematic acquisition and application of reliable information to improve management over time. IUCN WCPA has therefore developed a [Protected Area Management Effectiveness](#) (PAME) framework to help understand and assess management and support adaptive management. The framework spurred a major body of work including PAME systems and tools, research and development, implementation and adaptive management worldwide. Many countries have their own PAME assessment systems embedded into national policies. The Protected Planet [website](#) includes overviews of some well-known tools and a [database](#) of where assessments have been implemented worldwide. See also tools, stories and other resources on adaptive management on [USAID's Biodiversity Links](#).

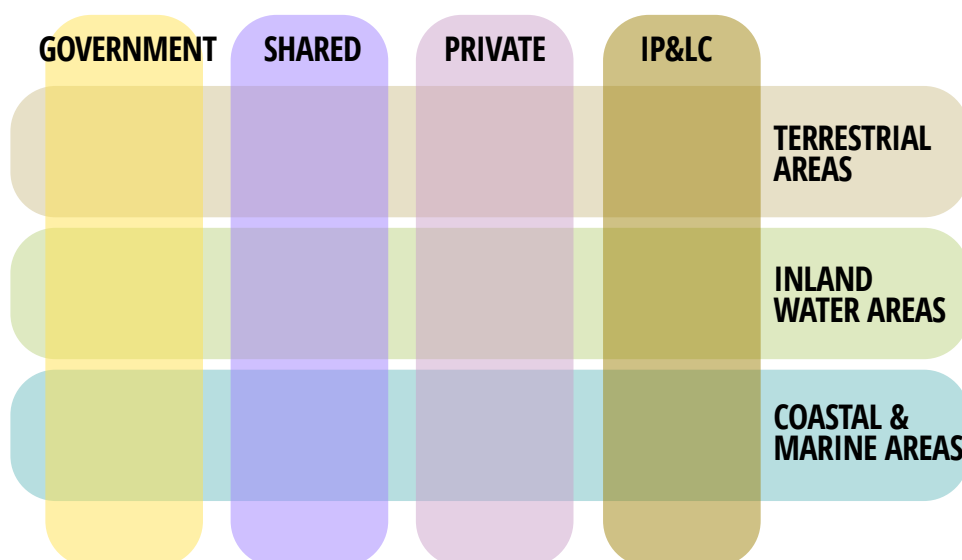
Assessment and adaptation are informed by monitoring to determine progress on key objectives. [Miradi](#) provides a comprehensive set of conservation standards. The Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART) supports management activities, such as law enforcement, visitor management, natural resource use, citizen science, human-wildlife conflict, intelligence, and performance and threat level assessments.

Involving rightsholders and stakeholders in management decision-making at all stages and ensuring transparency of management actions and achievements (from sharing information locally to international reporting) is fundamental to effectiveness. As the conservation system diversifies, there should be more effort to understand how individual actors measure effectiveness, whether those mechanisms are effective and potentially replicable, how they might be better suited to ensure increased effectiveness in their particular situation, and/or better integrated into existing assessment systems.

### Enabling factors and challenges

A major focus for GBF implementation has to be on building capacity to refine/ implement existing tools, rather than a major focus on new tools. Questions remain in terms of understanding management success, specifically: 1) how to quantify conservation outcomes and 2) who is making judgements about whether long-term conservation outcomes have been achieved (and who decides what success should look like).

Understanding the relationship between management and outcomes is often [inadequate](#). Effectiveness is based on whether objectives have been met, but this assumes sites/systems have appropriate objectives (which is becoming even more challenging with the impacts of climate change). Defining baselines and identifying counterfactuals to compare conservation management with other areas remains challenging (particularly as many species become confined to PCAs). Although baselines can be relatively straightforward for *outputs* (e.g., actions undertaken), outcome indicators (e.g., what was achieved) are harder to agree.



**Figure 13.** PCA governance diversity


The question of who develops the objectives and makes the decisions around effectiveness is even more challenging. Assessments can vary from studies of large datasets and satellite monitoring (e.g., to [assess deforestation](#)) to long-term participatory multi-stakeholder site assessments. Finding the most appropriate processes and tools to ensure effective management should be a first task when implementing Target 3, followed by an assessment of capacity needs to ensure inclusivity and equity as vital components of management. Approaches, tools and methods need to be developed or adapted for Indigenous territories and other diverse governance types, specific realms, biomes and regions, including by the rightsholders and stakeholders involved. Indicators need to capture both local and global concerns, if these are different.

If users themselves are convinced of the importance of maintaining a resource in the long term, they can be among the best monitors. Agreeing indicators, thresholds (the amount of change in an indicator that will stimulate and management response) and the type of response all must be selected carefully.

## Systems – governance diversity

A system here refers to a PCA network along with its governance and management and key actors. A national or subnational PCA system may include [terrestrial](#), [inland water](#), and [marine and coastal](#) areas (particularly those important for [biodiversity](#) and [ecosystem functions and services](#)) being conserved through different measures – including [protected areas](#) and [OECMs](#), [recognizing Indigenous and traditional territories](#) – and under different governance types. Like sites, these systems should be [effectively managed](#), [equitably governed](#), ecologically [representative](#), well [connected](#) and integrated, with recognition and respect for the [rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities](#). A system should be more than the sum of its parts, but a goal in itself, to address needs such as representativeness.

Focusing first on [governance diversity](#), this is implied, rather than explicitly named, in Target 3. “Governance” is understood in different ways. Broadly, it [concerns](#) how and by whom decisions are made and upheld, including power, voice and accountability. Governance *diversity* exists in PCA systems that include areas conserved under a variety of governance types. Here, governance “type” refers to, essentially, who governs a particular area or site. The [CBD](#) and [IUCN](#) refer to four governance types:

- **Governance by government:** national and/or subnational ministries/agencies and government-delegated management (e.g., to an NGO).
- **Private governance:** individual owners, non-profit entities (e.g., NGOs, universities, cooperatives) or for-profit organizations (individual or corporate).
- **Governance by Indigenous peoples or local communities:**  territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples or local communities (referred to in some CBD decisions as ICCAs, and in some contexts also referred to as “territories of life,” Indigenous and community-conserved areas and territories, and/or a wide variety of context-based names).
- **Shared governance:** collaborative and co-governed governing bodies of different (governmental and/or non-governmental) actors as well as transboundary governance.
- [Protected areas](#) and OECMs can both be governed under any of these types (figure 13) – noting that their designation / identification must be by or with the consent of their governing authority, respecting rights to [FPIC](#).

Governance “types” must be understood in context. There may also be complex differences between them. Considerations include:

- Overlapping governance types; in particular, many territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples or local communities are [overlapped by protected areas](#) or OECMs, or protected areas under other *de jure governing authorities and need appropriate recognition*.

- Indigenous governing authorities: While the governance “typology” above distinguishes between governance by government and governance by Indigenous peoples or local communities, this must be interpreted in ways that fully recognize and respect Indigenous and local community governance institutions, including the governments of Indigenous nations.
- Contested claims or unrecognized rights to governance (and/or ownership, management, access), including due to displacement.
- Diversity of power relations and ways of participating [across diverse and sometimes overlapping governance types](#), including participation in planning and stewardship of government-governed protected areas, e.g. in the [Great Barrier Reef](#) and [Mosi-Oa-Tunya/Victoria Falls](#).
- Multiple (mosaic) systems, such as in the Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range World Heritage Site, [Japan](#).
- Shifts in governance type over time – including from government to shared-governance, as was done in the coastal zone of [Soc Trang Province](#), Vietnam.

Beyond (and within) governance diversity, there are other forms of diversity important to Target 3 implementation. These include:

- [Biocultural diversity](#), including within diverse language, knowledge, ways of knowing, systems of government and transmission of knowledge and wisdom.
- Diverse conservation objectives and [values](#) – including relational values.
- Diversity in the genders, ages, identities of conservation leaders and change agents.

Appropriate recognition, respect and support of diverse governance – and other dimensions of diversity – is crucial to conservation equity and effectiveness. [Diverse systems](#) are generally more:

- Effective, e.g., by respecting and supporting the rights, agency and contributions of different governing actors, including [Indigenous peoples and local communities, women and girls, and youth](#).
- Resilient, e.g., by engaging multiple institutions that can respond to changes in different ways.
- Widely covered, connected and representative, including the vast coverage of co-governed areas, privately governed areas, and areas and territories conserved by Indigenous peoples and by local communities.

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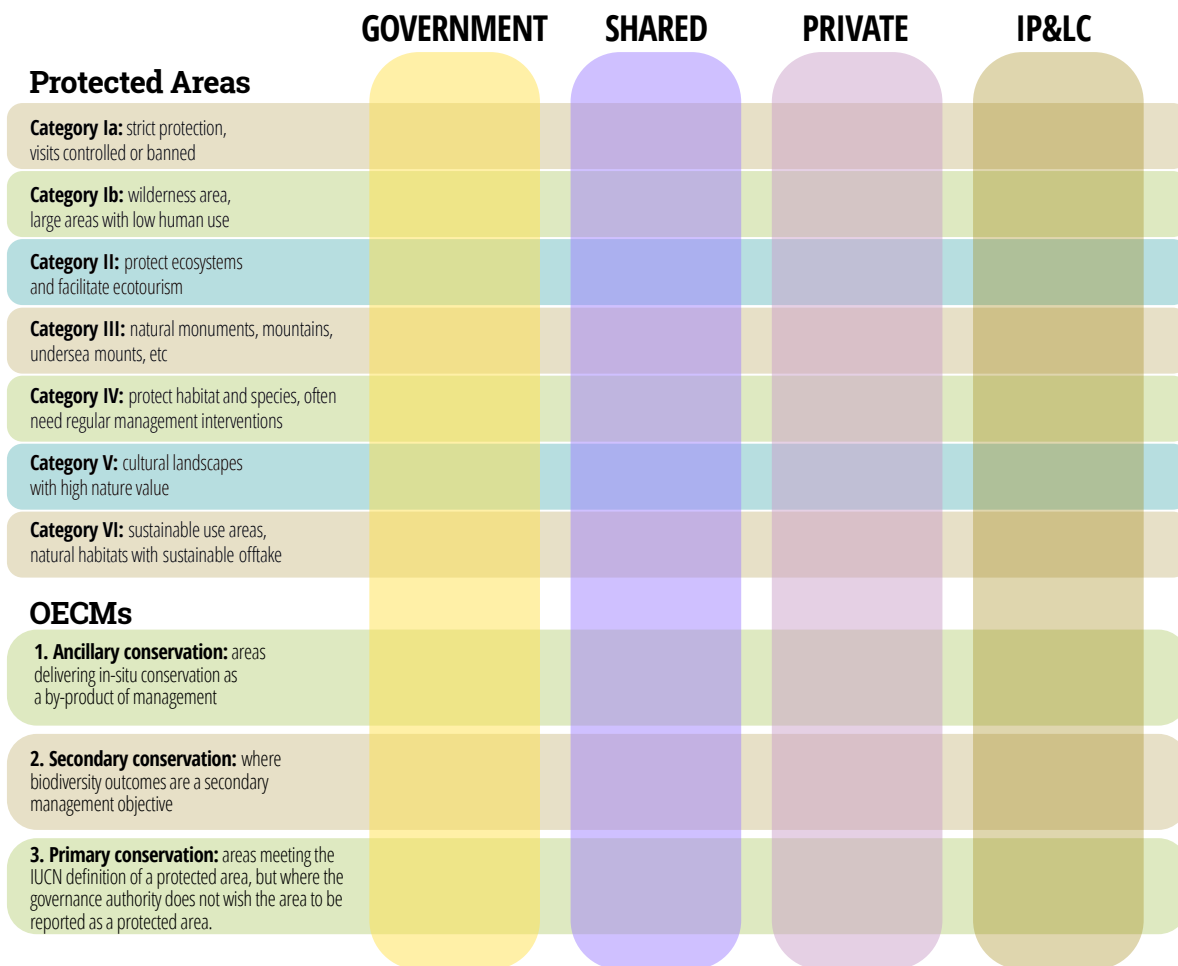
**Case study:** The equity and effectiveness benefits of governance diversity – and examples of ways they can be recognized and supported – are illustrated in this [collection of PANORAMA Solutions](#). These include governance by Indigenous communities in [Canada](#) and [Senegal](#); shared governance and knowledge for conservation in [Australia](#), [Colombia](#), [Laos](#) and [Sweden](#); and a PPA in [Kenya](#).

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Governance diversity often exists in practice (*de facto*), even if not recognized in law (*de jure*). But recognition is fundamental to equity, including the [rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities](#). Further, particularly in light of threats, secure governance rights are crucial to sustaining contributions of different governing authorities.

A useful place to start is to [reflect, and then revise and update](#), such as by reviewing laws, processes and practices related to governance diversity, and finding ways to address gaps. The review process should itself be inclusive and equitable, consistent with, but not limited to, Targets 21 to 23 and considerations for implementation in the GBF.

Recognition and support of diverse governance types can come in several forms, including legal, financial and social (e.g., network). *Specific forms of recognition and support will vary by context and should be determined by and with rightsholders.*




**Figure 14.** IUCN WCPA protected area management categories

Examples and resources that may be useful in this process include, among others:

- [Systems-level PCA assessment](#) and examples of its [use in practice](#)
- National and subnational experiences in diversifying governance of systems, such as in the case studies here in Colombia, Madagascar, Namibia, Peru and the Philippines
- [Privately protected areas](#)
- [Territories and areas conserved](#) by Indigenous peoples or by local communities, including [Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas](#), and the diverse ways custodians have secured collective [rights and contributions](#)
- [Shared governance](#)
- Lessons and examples from [across types](#) of governance
- Sources of synthesized guidance, e.g., concerning [tenure](#) and small-scale fisheries ([SSFs](#))

## Protected areas

Protected areas remain the cornerstone of most conservation strategies. But they are neither simple nor uncontroversial, differing enormously in both their management and governance  and in some cases having similarities in management approaches with the more recent recognition of OECMs. This section gives a background to what they are and what they can do.

Protected areas are places set aside to secure biodiversity and ecosystem services. Many also have cultural, spiritual and recreational values. The CBD defines a protected area as “a geographically defined area which is designated or regulated and managed to achieve specific conservation objectives,” while IUCN says, “A clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values.” The CBD recognizes the two definitions as equivalent.

The way that protected areas are managed varies considerably. There are several very different [protected area management categories](#), agreed by IUCN WCPA and recognized by the CBD, outlined in figure 14.

To be recognized as a protected area a site must first meet the definition and then (on a voluntary basis) be matched to a category. Management ranges from strict protection (in practice rather unusual) to living landscapes and seascapes where people and nature co-exist. As new approaches to area-based conservation are developed, management in categories V and VI protected areas is sometimes similar to strategies since recognized in OECMs and working out exactly where a particular type of area-based conservation falls on the spectrum of opportunities is going to be one of the important tasks of plans relating to Target 3.

“Legal or other effective means” shows that protected areas are rather flexible tools, which can be officially designated by governments and enshrined in law but can also be self-declared areas managed by local communities or private individuals. What matters is whether they work to conserve nature. “To achieve the long-term conservation of nature” emphasizes the importance of long-term investing in the skills, finance and local support to ensure that protected areas are [effective](#).


Note also that [IUCN’s guidance](#) recognizes that up to a quarter of a protected area can be used for other purposes (e.g., settlement, tourist facilities) as long as this does not interfere with nature conservation – the 75% rule.

There are also different ways of [governing protected areas](#): by national or local government, by a variety of private profit or non-profit entities, by Indigenous peoples and local communities and finally through various forms of shared governance.

[IUCN](#) has defined a series of principles for protected areas, some of the most important are:

- Only those areas where the main objective is conserving nature can be considered protected areas; this can include many areas with other goals as well, at the same level, but in the case of conflict, nature conservation will be the priority.
- Not all categories are equally useful in every situation.
- Protected areas should not be used as an excuse for dispossessing people of their land.

## Other effective area-based conservation measures

Other effective area-based conservation measures (OECM)  is a relatively new and largely untested type of area-based conservation but will be a fundamental building block of Target 3. Understanding and implementing OECMs to provide genuine contributions to 30x30 is likely to be one of the great challenges of the decade. See especially the [IUCN WCPA Technical Report](#).

OECM is a term created in 2010 during CBD COP 10 and included in Aichi Target 11. In 2018 the [CBD](#) finally [defined an OECM](#) as “a geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in situ conservation of biodiversity, with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio-economic, and other locally relevant values.”

OECMs offer a significant opportunity to recognize de facto effective long-term conservation that is taking place outside designated [protected areas](#), in other areas of high importance to biodiversity. OECMs can be governed and managed by a diverse set of actors, such as [Indigenous peoples, local communities](#) and the private sector, but also government agencies including those responsible for energy, water resources, commerce and the military.

A useful approach to OECMs in national planning is to look for areas that are important for biodiversity where management and governance results in positive outcomes for nature. Then look for ways to support those benefits into the future without disrupting what is already working. This can include securing tenure and usufruct for those



successfully managing the area or avoiding perverse incentives for development that would undo the beneficial status quo. It may be necessary to plan for species movement in response to climate change and encourage OECMs in receptor habitats.

Recognition and support of OECMs should aim to enhance the governance capacity of their legitimate authorities and secure positive and sustained outcomes for biodiversity. While national circumstances will differ, any related recognition or support should reinforce and support existing governance systems where they are effective and not seek to supplant or unnecessarily alter those local arrangements for other purposes.

#### **Guidance on recognizing and reporting OECMs**

IUCN WCPA has developed an [assessment tool](#) for [recognizing and reporting OECMs](#), which can be used by governments or other actors. Key questions include:

- Is there important biodiversity in the area?
- Is the area already a protected area?
- Do those responsible for governance and management want the area to be recognized as an OECM?
- Is the area's management and governance intended to be sustained to help maintain positive biodiversity outcomes in the long term?

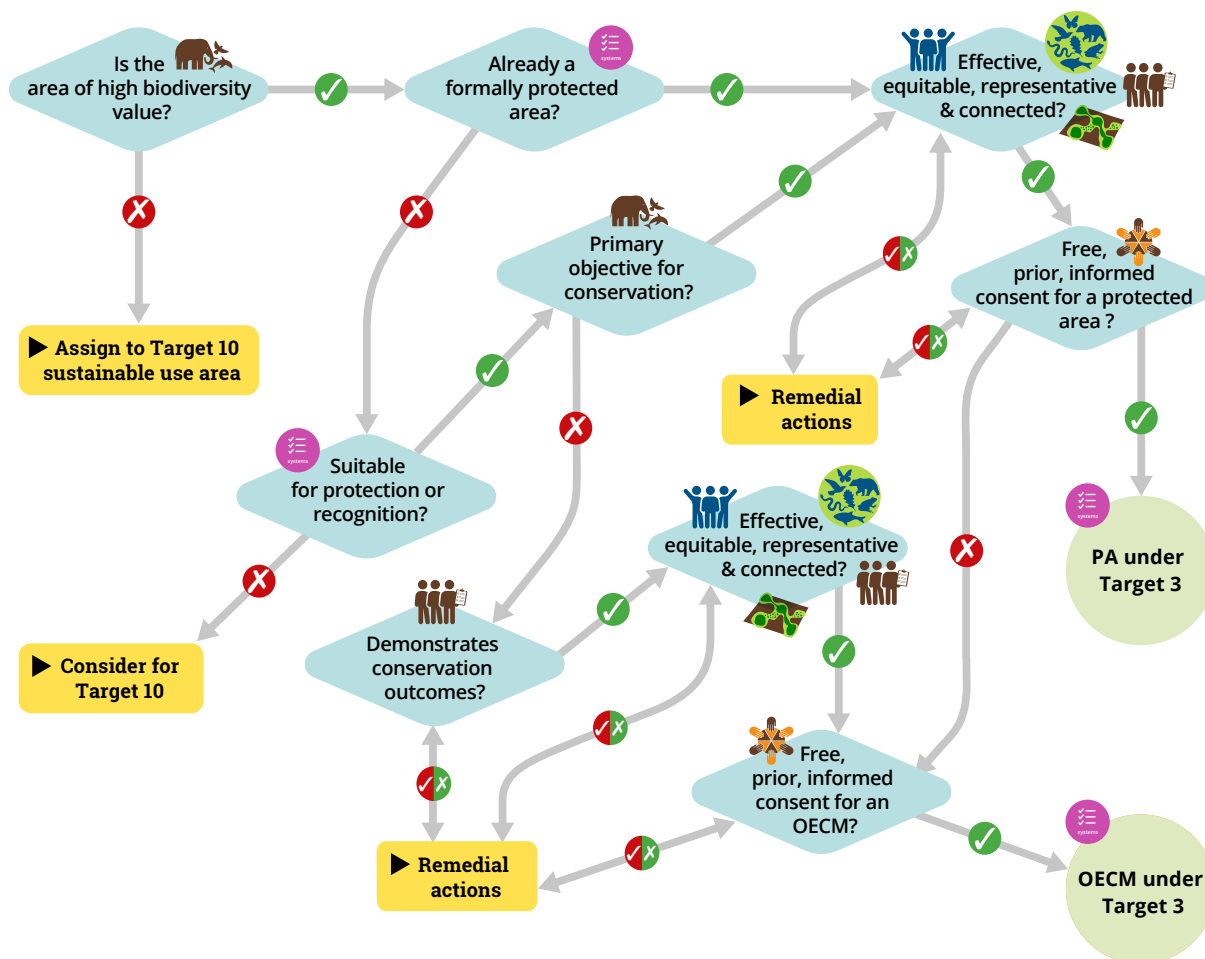
A growing number of [training materials](#) on OECMs are available, globally and regionally. For example, see [30x30LAC.com](#) and its [MOOC](#) (which cover OECMs but also 30x30 more broadly), and guidance from [Canada](#).

Examples of areas that could be OECMs include:

- Sacred natural sites with high biodiversity conserved long-term for their importance to faith groups.
- Military lands and waters managed for defense but providing ancillary conservation.
- Permanent or long-term fisheries closure areas designed to protect complete ecosystems for stock recruitment or to protect specialized ecosystems and their full complement of species.

High density of seagrass is seen during seagrass mapping ground truthing at Matakang Island, Semporna, Sabah.  
© WWF-Malaysia / Mazidi Abd Ghani





- Freshwater and coastal wetlands designated for flood protection, which also protect important habitats, species and ecosystem services, and may require restoration.
- Watersheds or other areas designated and managed primarily for water resource management that also result in the *in-situ conservation of important biodiversity*.

Areas and management regimes that are unlikely to qualify as OECMs include:

- Small, semi-natural areas within an intensively managed landscape with limited biodiversity.
- Forests that are managed commercially for timber supply and are intended for logging.
- Fishery closures, temporary set asides or gear restriction areas with a single species, species group, or habitat focus, that may be subject to periodic exploitation and/or be defined for stock management purposes, and that do not deliver *in-situ* conservation of the associated ecosystems, habitats and species.
- Temporary agricultural set asides, summer fallow and other agricultural practices that provide only limited benefits for biodiversity.
- Conservation measures that apply to a single species or group of species, over a wide geographical range, such as hunting regulations or whale-watching rules.

Figure 15 provides a simple decision tree to help distinguish OECMs and protected areas.

Most OECMs will likely be reported by national governments, but other stakeholders can also submit data to the [World Database on OECMs](#), although in the latter case some verification will be needed. Any reporting of OECMs should be done with full agreement of the relevant governance authority(-ies) and [FPIC](#). Reporting of potential or candidate OECMs could also be useful in giving a more comprehensive picture of progress to Target 3 and also identifying capacity needs on these areas.

**Figure 15.** Distinguishing a protected area from an OECM (adapted from: Best Practice in Delivering the 30x30 Target)

The number and size of OECMs reported to the database may not be a good indicator of success. No independent verification system yet exists to confirm that an area reported as an OECM supports significant biodiversity over the long term. Existing guidance may be useful, such as the KBA monitoring protocol for OECMs that overlap with KBAs. Reporting of areas that do not meet the criteria of OECMs fully will give a false picture of progress towards 30x30. A solution lies in monitoring of important biodiversity in and around areas to assess effectiveness, and reporting only those areas that demonstrate positive outcomes, but this has challenges itself in that many OECM managers will not be knowledgeable about biodiversity monitoring or have capacity to implement it.

Like protected areas, OECMs can make an important contribution to the qualitative elements of Target 3 – connectivity, representativeness and providing ecosystem services – but states and other actors need to put in place systems to ensure they are also [effective](#) and [equitable](#).

### **Ecologically representative**

Systems of PCAs should represent, or contain examples of, the full range of biodiversity. “[Ecological connectivity](#)” (hereby connectivity) is defined by the Convention on Migratory Species as the unimpeded movement of species and the flow of natural processes that sustain life on Earth. Without connectivity, ecosystems cannot function properly. Under the GBF goals and targets, countries aim to maintain, enhance and restore ecological flows, species movement, and dynamic processes across intact and fragmented environments at all scales.


Ecological representation refers to the concept that the full variety of biodiversity of different biological realms (freshwater, marine and terrestrial) and biological scales (ecosystems, species and within-species variation) should be represented in the system of PCAs. This requires a systematic approach to identify, assess and measure biodiversity. Because our knowledge is incomplete, the use of coarse-filter biodiversity surrogates helps in this identification process. Representation approaches need to be adjusted periodically in response to new data, tools and information about their effectiveness.

The disruption or absence of connectivity occurs mostly because of human-induced habitat degradation and fragmentation (i.e., the breaking up of an ecosystem into smaller and smaller parcels). Fragmentation and degradation has already impacted [over 75% of terrestrial ecosystems](#) (excluding Antarctica) and [87% of marine biomes](#) (by overfishing, nutrient run-off and climate change), and whilst currently [17%](#) of the world’s terrestrial areas are recognized as protected and conserved, only [7.84%](#) of recognized PCAs are connected. Information on connectivity of MPAs is currently not available and is an [acknowledged gap](#).

### **Planning and creating ecological networks for conservation**

The goal of the well-connected component of Target 3 is to create ecological networks for conservation: systems of core habitats (e.g., PCAs), [connected by ecological corridors](#), which are established, restored and maintained to conserve biological diversity in otherwise fragmented systems. An ecological corridor is a clearly defined geographical space that is governed and managed over the long term to maintain or restore effective connectivity. They are the “glue” of conservation networks. In some cases, ecological corridors can be disjunct patches of habitat, called “stepping stones,” particularly when supporting long-distance migration of wildlife such as marine mammals, sea turtles and birds. For example, [just 9% of 1,451 migratory birds](#) are adequately covered by protected areas across all stages of their annual cycle (migration), in comparison with 45% of non-migratory birds.

## Well-connected

[Guidelines for conserving connectivity through ecological networks and corridors](#)  are based on the best available science and practice for maintaining, enhancing and restoring ecological connectivity among and between PCAs, and provide a rich resource for policy makers and practitioners. More [resources](#) are being developed to help implementers identify opportunities for advancing connectivity conservation at national and subnational levels through NBSAPs and GEF financing.

There are a [wide range of area-based approaches for connectivity](#) in use that can contribute to Target 3 and can be drawn on for inspiration and legal precedents. [Bhutan](#), [Costa Rica](#), [Croatia](#), [India](#), [Kenya](#), [Malaysia](#) and the Netherlands all have corridor legislation and are undertaking national connectivity measures. [Marine spatial planning](#) and marine zoning can help connectivity planning for MPAs. It is likely that there are already initiatives taking place within most countries including involvement in transboundary efforts, for example, flyways, free-flowing rivers or the Cetacean migration corridor in the Mediterranean Sea. An inventory of these areas could be conducted identifying potential networks contributing to Target 3.

**Case study:** [East Asian-Australasian Flyway](#) is one of nine major migratory waterbird flyways around the globe; it is home to over 50 million migratory waterbirds and currently has 900 sites recognized as internationally important to migratory waterbirds along the flyway. Other initiatives include the [Arctic Migratory Birds Initiative](#), [African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds](#), etc.

Most connectivity planning will occur beyond PCAs – connectivity is ultimately a reason to support conservation occurring in the remaining areas of [cities, farms and shared lands](#). (See [discussion on other targets of the GBF](#).) This represents both a challenge and an [opportunity](#). Whilst ideally guided by ecological considerations, design decisions will be constrained by existing ownership or resource use rights and human activities. Securing and improving connectivity is therefore often [only achievable by a multi-stakeholder group](#) including PCA managers, Indigenous peoples, local communities and government, landowners and managers, etc. International cooperation for migratory networks requires a different set of stakeholders, policies and cooperation. The same range of governance types that apply to PCAs also apply to ecological corridors and the governance authority may or may not be the same as the landowner or rightsholder of a portion of the corridor. Along the corridor, a mix of tenure, whether legally or customarily defined, can be present under all governance types and be represented through a variety of instruments such as formal delegation, leasing, contracts or other agreements requiring a large scope of social alliances and cooperation to handle. The corridor tenure(s) should be clear and articulated; identifying statutory and customary ownership and use rights and negotiating with all rightsholders on their respective connectivity management roles.

**Case Study:** Lessons from large-scale conservation networks in Australia provides an example of a multi-stakeholder group collaborating on landscape connectivity.

These approaches require actor identification, awareness raising and management, achieving scale requires planning at the landscape or seascape level. Engaging such a diverse range of rightsholders, stakeholders and other actors at a large scale will be complex but also represents an opportunity for greater community involvement in conservation and aligning goals on the 70% of areas outside of PCAs at risk of loss or reduced connectivity from the heightened human use.

Connectivity is important for achieving many [Multilateral Environment Agreements](#), in particular the [Convention on Migratory Species](#) (CMS). Connectivity is also a qualifier of GBF Targets 2 and 12 and prominent in Goal A for 2050.

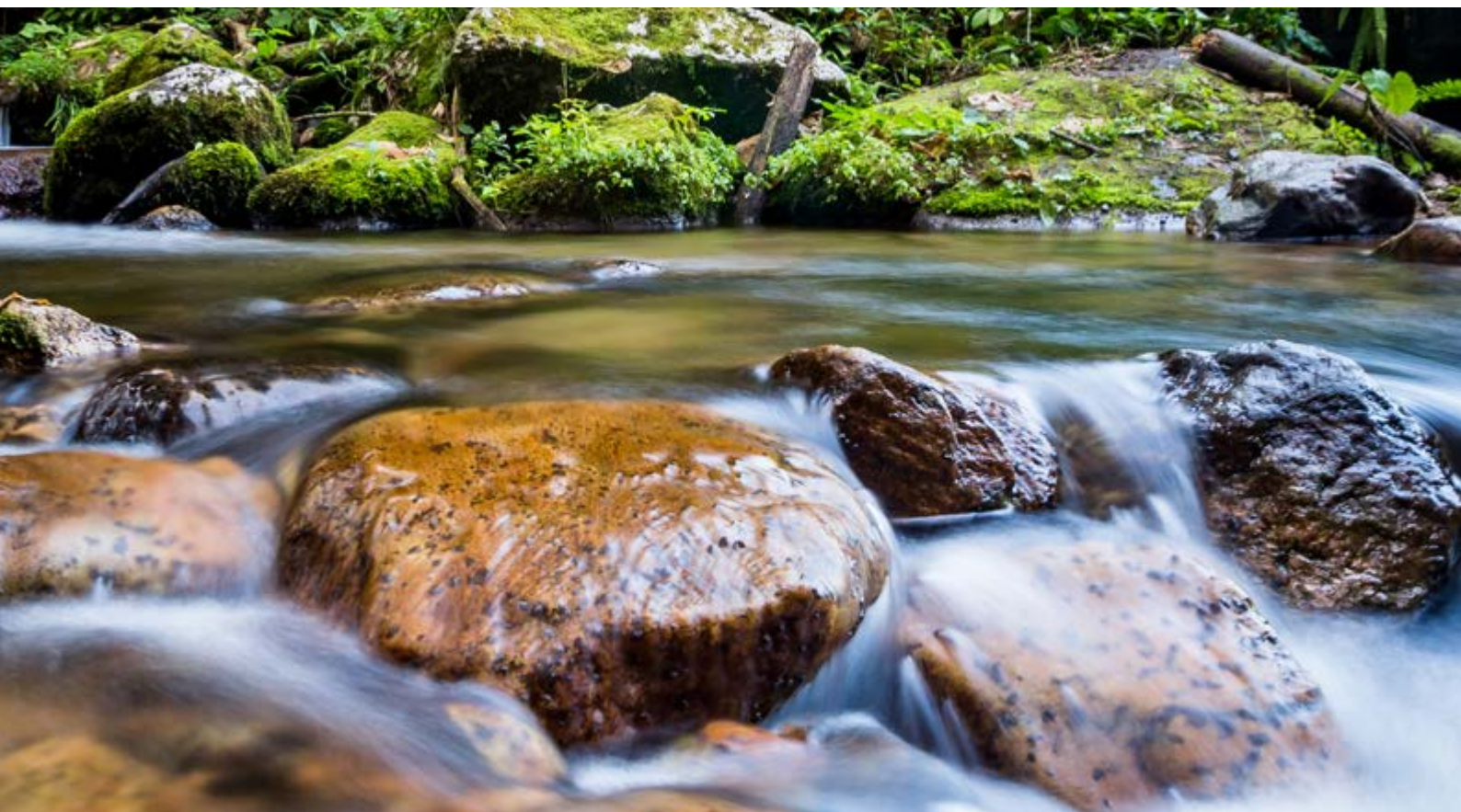
## Enabling factors and challenges

Ecological corridors are not a substitute for PCAs but should be identified and established in areas where connectivity is required, have specific ecological objectives and be managed and governed to achieve these goals. They **should** be differentiated from non-corridor areas by specific uses that are prohibited or allowed, such as sustainable resource use. **Systematic conservation planning** and ecological modelling can identify potential ecological corridors and factor in likely obstacles. Such planning may consider specific conservation targets (e.g., focal species, **KBAs**, population sizes, etc.), **climate change modelling scenarios**, and socio-economic and political filters. It is also important to consider the role of existing and planned **infrastructure** (e.g., roads, railways, oil pipelines, hydropower dams), where poor **planning** can result in fragmentation and further loss of connectivity.

It is important to consider certain species' needs for dispersal and habitat size when assessing or improving the connectivity of a PCA. Calculations of appropriate distances between them should be made according to species' characteristics such as dispersal range and area required for a minimum viable population. Distances should be minimized and the area between core habitats managed to maintain connectivity. PCA managers can propose corridors to regional/national planners and support corridor managers to develop ecological objectives and management plans. Managers of very small PCAs (e.g., < 10 ha) in highly fragmented regions or in mountains where habitat range is limited, may play a critical role in maintaining connectivity across a region and should work with other local PCA managers to retain connectivity.

**Connectivity in marine conservation planning** is an emerging topic of discussion and particularly important for **coral ecosystems** that require connectivity for heat-adapted larvae to migrate to cooler sites under climate change. Kelp forests, hydrothermal vents and **migratory routes of marine species** whose life cycle needs involve movements vertically and horizontally through the ocean as well as across regional or global routes for food, breeding, calving and other essential functions, are other important

Landscape of the Bekona River, one of the tributaries of the Ambolokopatrika River in the COMATSA Sud forest corridor, about 10 km from the village of Ambodivoara. © WWF-Madagascar / RAKOTONDRAZAFY A. M. Ny Aina



**examples.** [Disruption of marine connectivity](#) can have wide-ranging impacts. The IUCN Conservation Corridor Specialist Group is collating [rules of thumb](#) for [designing MPA networks](#) and a series of [case studies](#) of initiatives around the world working toward maintaining, enhancing and restoring ecological connectivity of the marine environment.

Connectivity approaches are particularly important for inland water systems that have landscape-scale dependencies on their upstream catchments and connectivity with groundwater, floodplain and downstream habitats. For example, the [Pärnu River](#) was targeted under Estonia's [National Water Act](#) as a *migratory swimway to restore the free-flowing* condition and important habitat of a river and manage freshwater fishes over their entire migration route.

**Case study:** Just [27% of ecoregions in tropical Andean countries](#) (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Venezuela) are both protected and connected on more than 17% of their lands. Researchers concluded that if nations seek to meet the 30% target, further efforts are needed to implement and report subnational conservation areas and appropriately evaluate PCA systems.

## Recognizing Indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable

The GBF recognizes the [crucial contributions](#) of Indigenous peoples and local communities in conserving biodiversity through their governance systems, values, knowledge, innovations, practice and worldviews. The GBF is a commitment to halting and reversing loss of biodiversity. Ensuring PCA [systems](#) recognize, respect and support territories and areas conserved by and with Indigenous peoples and local communities is crucial for [equity](#) and [effectiveness](#). Area-based conservation should not be used as an excuse to dispossess Indigenous peoples of their territories but rather promote and restore traditional values and practices that support biodiversity and ecosystem services and contribute to sustainable livelihoods.

Target 3 calls for effective conservation through, among other elements, “recognizing indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable.” *The [International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity](#) (IIFB) and meetings of the IPLC Caucus identified the inclusion of this phrase as crucial for Target 3 during negotiations. (IIFB has been recognized by the CBD as a representative body in the deliberations since 1996.)* How do Indigenous and traditional territories relate to protected and OECMs? The IIFB position is that “recognizing indigenous and traditional territories” in Target 3 provides a distinct pathway to conservation in addition to protected areas and other OECMs, so not subsumed to protected areas and OECMs. The [CBD Secretariat has posed an interpretation](#) as “This target calls for the expansion and enhancement of protected and conserved areas, (i.e. areas that are managed with the aim of achieving positive outcomes for biodiversity). The target indicates three approaches that may be employed to achieve this aim”: and goes on to list protected areas, OECMs and Indigenous and traditional territories.

[Systems](#) can include protected areas and OECMs governed under diverse governance arrangements. There are contexts in which territory custodians may seek (and have sought) protected area designations or OECM identification. Some Indigenous and traditional territories are governed and conserved under their own customary government systems (e.g., Indigenous and traditional territories in Colombia). In addition, there are also in other cases shared or mosaic arrangements.

However, as noted in [recent articles](#), there will also be (and are) contexts in which Indigenous peoples and local communities consider that protected area designation or OECM recognition do not support, potentially undermine, or are not appropriate for recognition of Indigenous and traditional territories that otherwise meet Target 3 criteria.

For example:

Many conserved territories and areas are [overlapped by](#) protected areas under other *de jure* governing authorities and still need to be recognized.

- [Existing legal frameworks](#) for territory recognition are often not yet in place, or are fragmented, costly, or otherwise difficult to effectively use, including in ways that uphold rights to self-determination.
- OECMs might provide a more flexible pathway. However, these are relatively new frameworks and policies, and Indigenous peoples, local communities and others have [raised concerns](#) that need to be addressed before OECMs are implemented.

Recognition of this element as a distinct pathway does not preclude Indigenous peoples or local communities from seeking recognition of their conserved lands, waters or territories through protected area or OECM frameworks, where that is possible and they wish to. Rather, it may [provide more flexibility](#) to appropriately recognize these territories in contexts or instances where those frameworks are not an appropriate option, provided those territories have demonstrated positive conservation outcomes.

In all cases, [experience illustrates](#) that not having appropriate frameworks for recognizing territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples and local communities often results in erosion of biodiversity, biocultural diversity, and wellbeing. It is of central importance that the views and positions of Indigenous peoples and local communities (as major rightsholders) are given full consideration and priority when it comes to discussions on the ways forward.

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**Case study:** The [Bio-Cultural Protocol](#) developed by the Indigenous Ogiek of the Mau Forest in Kenya [recognizes](#) the Ogiek's collective responsibility to protect and conserve the forest directed by their traditions and culture.

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### Enabling factors and challenges

Approaches for recognition of “indigenous and traditional territories” should be led by their owners/governing authorities, and with FPIC in all cases, in accordance with GBF implementation considerations and Targets 21 to 23. Decisions and their implementation should uphold applicable law and multilateral agreements, including the Nagoya Protocol, the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention and UNDRIP. Examples and resources that may be useful in this process include, among others:

- Legal, policy and other territory recognition and support approaches, including described within the [Territories of Life Global Report](#) and [CBD guidance](#).
- Mapping, documentation and other processes to secure, and protect and sustain territories, governance and knowledge, e.g., as described by custodian communities in [Local Biodiversity Outlooks-2](#) and this [celebration of territories of life](#) in Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Vietnam.
- Self-determined registration in appropriate platforms, e.g., the [ICCA Registry](#) and/or at [national and subnational levels](#).
- Social support and solidarity initiatives and networks (such as the [MIHARI network of LMMAs](#)).
- Developing [Community Protocols](#) and life plans.
- Overall self-strengthening processes, e.g., in this [guide](#) from the ICCA Consortium with questions, tools and examples regarding reflection, documentation, understanding, visioning and celebrating, acting and communicating, and reviewing and renewing.
- [Systems](#) level [assessments](#) – and assessments of individual protected areas and conserved areas – that include focus on recognition and respect for territory rights, including recognition by the state.
- A wide variety of other Indigenous-led and co-developed guidance, e.g., within the [IPCA Knowledge Basket](#).
- [Guidance](#) on recognition and respect for Indigenous and traditional territories within/ overlapped by protected areas and OECMs.

## While ensuring

### Recognizing and respecting the rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories

Achievement of Target 3 will require far greater engagement with and recognition of the [existing contributions of Indigenous peoples and local communities to conservation outcomes](#). Recognizing and respecting the rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories, is paramount.

Indigenous peoples and local communities play [outsized roles](#) in biodiversity conservation through their collective action, systems of government, transmission of knowledge, biocultural protocols and others. Yet in many places, their rights are not sufficiently recognized, respected or protected, including in the PCA context. Target 3 recognizes this in the commitment to “Recognizing and respecting the rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories.” This is foundational for Target 3 (and GBF) implementation.

In “Recognizing and respecting rights,” recognizing rights refers to affirming and acknowledging rights, including inherent rights; respecting rights refers to the duty and responsibility not to violate or interfere with rights.

The collective and individual rights of Indigenous peoples and of local communities, including over their traditional territories, are recognized in a wide range of international instruments, as well as regional, and national and subnational statutory and customary laws and protocols. One key instrument, cited in the GBF, is the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples – a cornerstone document for recognizing rights.

**Case study:** Sacred forests represent an ancestral practice of local communities in Burkina Faso. Although the declared objective is not the conservation of nature, these sacred forests contain [significant biodiversity](#). Sacred forests could be recognized as OECM or Indigenous and traditional territory, depending on the case and consent.

Amongst the many relevant rights in relation to Target 3 implementation are rights to own, [govern](#) and manage lands, waters and territories; to participate in decision-making; and to give or withhold FPIC. FPIC is an enshrined right of Indigenous peoples in [UNDRIP](#) – including in relation to lands and territories (e.g., Arts 10; 29(2)), cultural, intellectual, religious and spiritual property (e.g., Art 11), adoption and implementation of legislative or administrative measures that may affect them (e.g., Art 19), and effective redress where FPIC is not upheld (e.g., Arts 28; 11(2)). FPIC of Indigenous peoples and local communities is also required in the GBF and earlier CBD decisions, specifically in relation to: Rights, knowledge, innovations, worldviews (Decision 15/6; Decision 12/12); Establishment, expansion, governance and management of protected areas, including MPAs (Decision 12/12, B, Annex, V.3(i)); and in the Mo’otz Kuxtal Voluntary Guidelines on Traditional Knowledge (Decision 13/18).

In the [context of CBD Article 8\(j\)](#), traditional territories can be understood as “lands and waters traditionally occupied or used by indigenous peoples and local communities.” The new inclusion of “indigenous and traditional territories” requires some development of similar understanding, with the Article 8(j) definition providing a starting point for what this might mean and acknowledging at the same time that it is of central importance that the views and positions of Indigenous peoples and local communities (as major rightsholders) are given full consideration and priority when it comes to resolving this definition.



### Enabling factors and challenges

Recognition and respect of Indigenous peoples and local communities' rights may include contextually grounded laws, processes and practices to:

- Identify laws, policies and practices that do not recognize or respect the rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities, enable redress, address current conflicts and make and implement reforms to fully recognize and respect rights going forward.
- Identify, support and engage with Indigenous peoples and local communities at all levels of government to appropriately support their conservation initiatives, e.g., Indigenous protected areas and Indigenous guardian programs.
- Support other duty-bearers to meet their obligations, and rightsholders to claim and exercise their rights, including in relation to capacities, resources and relationships.
- Analysis / mapping of strengths and gaps in how current systems uphold Indigenous peoples' and local communities' rights, including to territories, e.g., through [systems-level assessments](#), such as those done in Ecuador, Georgia, Indonesia, Iran, Peru and Tanzania.
- Pathways for rightsholders to secure and protect collective tenure and territories such as the initiative to [secure collective and connected territory](#) for livelihoods and conservation in northern Tanzania.
- Indigenous- and community-led initiatives with technical, financial and other support to fully implement these measures, e.g., the process led by custodian communities in the [Philippines](#).
- Appropriate social support, e.g., learning / peer-exchange networks, such as the [MIHARI network](#) connecting and supporting Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs) in Madagascar.
- The [Tribal Marine Stewards Network](#) is an established nonprofit working to bring tribal nations together within MPA boundaries to include their knowledge in the [State of California's MPA decadal management plan](#) and support capacity building within the nations.
- Identify and operationalize appropriate indicators at local, national and global level, with full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities.

A Butter tree overlooks a valley in the Palmwag Concession. Namibia.  
© CreativeLAB / WWF-US



The IPCA Knowledge Basket also offers a [toolkit for respectful collaboration with Indigenous people](#) as well as a [glossary](#), among other relevant resources.

## Integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean

As biodiversity continues to decline, focusing on PCAs as solutions alone has proven insufficient. The broader drivers of biodiversity loss need to be addressed, for example, restoring degraded areas between PCAs, reducing pollution impacts, or preventing the “leakage” of deforestation displaced by PCAs into the surrounding landscape.

Integrating PCAs into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean (hereby “integration”) implies that PCAs should not be considered or managed as isolated islands for biodiversity, but rather as part of wider strategies for [conservation and sustainable development](#) beyond the areas themselves. Currently, many protected areas are missing essential ecosystem attributes. For example, for 85% of protected areas with groundwater dependent ecosystems, the ground-watershed is unprotected. This includes integration in terms of geography and biology (i.e., connectivity, buffers, etc.), policy coherence and coordination, and social integration. [Connectivity](#), [OECMs](#), [Indigenous and traditional territories](#) and transboundary areas and more are explored elsewhere in this guide, as such, the focus here will be on restoration and integration into policy and social systems.

**Case Study:** Bhutan, India and Nepal have agreed to cooperate on developing connectivity corridors to address human-wildlife conflict and climate-induced range shift in the transboundary [Kangchenjunga Landscape Conservation and Development Initiative](#).

## Linking restoration and integration into policy and social systems

Integration involves factoring PCAs into broader sectoral and development planning, including local, national and regional spatial planning and basin planning. It means considering the impacts and dependencies between PCAs and surrounding areas and people. This will likely involve sustainable management, halting of Land-Use-Change (LUC) damaging to biodiversity, restoration of areas outside PCAs and management of shared lands, inland waters and oceans, particularly in areas of importance for biodiversity or ecosystem services. It will involve legislation enabling and requiring the strategic siting of infrastructure, such as dams and roads, to ensure overall natural system connectivity necessary to conserve biodiversity within PCAs.

A comprehensive overview of the state of partially degraded areas can help prioritize areas for restoration; enhancing ecological representation and connectivity, while providing refuges for biodiversity, with these areas potentially integrated into the network of PCAs over time. The [Global Human Footprint Index](#) provides an indication of the state of degradation. Planners will likely need to identify the many ways in which PCAs and the surrounding nature are enhancing human well-being, such as the provision of ecosystem services and economic benefits. Such an exercise can be done using tools like the [Protected Areas Benefits Assessment Tool](#). This knowledge will be important for informing sustainable management and restoration of areas outside the area covered by Target 3.

Restoration and conservation activities have the potential to halt biodiversity loss, but only if the broader drivers of biodiversity loss are also addressed such as the overconsumption of natural resources and the pollution of areas important for biodiversity and ecosystem services. (See [discussion on other targets of the GBF](#).)

Policy makers in shipping and fisheries could safeguard [Blue Corridors](#), Arctic superhighways for migrating whales, seals and walrus, by reducing ship speeds, rerouting vessels, regulating sonar usage and mitigating risks of oil spills. These international waters would then be better integrated into the [PCAs of the Arctic region](#).

**Case Study:** The [EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030](#) encourages the integration of biodiversity considerations into public and business decision-making at all levels through the European Green Deal and the Common Agricultural Policy.

### Enabling factors and challenges

Integration of PCAs into wider landscapes and seascapes will bring many GBF targets and other international agreements into alignment. GBF Targets 1–3 are tightly connected to this component, and Target 4 on species and reduction of human-wildlife conflict, Target 7 on reducing the impacts of pollution and Targets 9 and 10 on sustainable use and management.

Like connectivity, this component needs to involve stakeholders outside typical conservation actors. Blue Corridors for example would need to involve the ministries of fisheries, shipping and maritime affairs. This inevitably presents both a challenge – securing the buy in of stakeholders with very diverse interests, often unfamiliar with biodiversity conservation – and an opportunity to generate support for conservation from a much broader segment of society.

### Sustainable use consistent with conservation outcomes

The Target 3 text on sustainable use stresses that any uses must not undermine the fundamental conservation objectives and gives extra impetus to look critically at the ways in which PCAs are used. This section provides some guidance on how to interpret vague terms such as “appropriate” and “fully consistent.”

Target 3 includes wording on sustainable use in order to recognize that many, probably most, protected areas permit a range of uses, and stresses that these should be “*fully consistent with conservation outcomes.*” It does not specify what is covered by the term “[sustainable use](#)” in the context of PCAs, but this is usually defined as both non-extractive uses such as ecotourism, exercise and visiting sacred sites, and sometimes also extractive uses such as collection of medicinal herbs and fodder, catching fish, etc. The intent might better be described as ensuring any permitted uses, extractive or non-extractive, are sustainable, i.e., not damaging to biodiversity or ecosystem services. Agreement on management intent, including uses, ideally takes place when planning the reserve and will often be a compromise between the needs of people living in or near the area and wider conservation considerations. This will in turn influence the IUCN [management category](#), with for example, category Ib wilderness areas often including use by traditional communities, category V managed around long-standing cultural landscapes and category VI including natural areas with low-impact sustainable extraction of natural products, such as rubber. Some formerly strictly protected areas are opening to sustainable use, whereupon policies and rules will need revision. In general, there is now an expectation that protected areas and OECMs should not result in undue infringements on customary sustainable use, particularly by Indigenous peoples and local communities, if this is compatible with biodiversity conservation objectives. In all cases, as noted above, Target 3 implementation must uphold CBD Articles 8(j) and 10(c), and related provisions and guidance, including regarding [customary sustainable use](#).

### Enabling factors and challenges

If properly negotiated, planned and managed, sustainable use agreements can limit uses to local people who have a stake in ensuring sustainability. If not managed well, non-extractive uses, such as tourism, can be as destructive as many extractive uses. Problems are likely if there is competition for resources (e.g., high value medicinal plants) or if desire for revenues drives up tourism to unsustainable levels or in cases such as MPAs allowing large-scale commercial fishing.

# Acronyms, abbreviations and key terms

**Actors:** In addition to using the terms rightsholders and stakeholders, the guide uses “actors” where referring broadly to the rightsholders, stakeholders, decision-makers and others involved or interested in PCA governance and management. Use of these terms may differ in translations of this guide, as appropriate.

**BBNJ:** [Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction](#) agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction

**CBD:** UN Convention on Biological Diversity

**CMS:** Convention on Migratory Species

**COP:** Conference of the Parties to the CBD

**EAFAs:** Exclusive Artisanal Fishing Areas

**EBSAs:** Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas

**EEZ:** Exclusive economic zone

**FPIC:** Free, prior and informed consent, a right enshrined in Article 19 of the UN [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)

**GBF or KMGBF:** Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

**GEF:** Global Environment Facility

**HRBA:** Human rights-based approach

**ICCAs:** An abbreviation for [territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples and local communities](#). This abbreviation comes from earlier CBD decisions and international guidance referring to Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas and Territories. This document uses this abbreviation primarily where it appears as part of a document title or organization name.

**ICCA Registry:** Global [registry](#) of territories and areas that are self-identified and conserved by Indigenous peoples and local communities

**IIFB:** [International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity](#)

**ILOITC:** ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention No 169

**IMMA:** Important Marine Mammal Area

**IPA:** Indigenous protected area

**IP&LCs:** Indigenous peoples and local communities

**ISRA:** Important Shark and Ray Area

**IUCN:** [International Union for Conservation of Nature](#)

**IUCN WCPA:** World Commission on Protected Areas

**KBA:** Key biodiversity area

**MPA:** Marine protected area

**NBSAP:** [National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans](#)

**NDC:** Nationally Determined Contribution

**OECD:** Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

**OECM:** Other effective area-based conservation measures

**PADD:** Protected Area Downgrading, Downsizing and Degazettement

**PAME:** Protected area management effectiveness

**Parties:** In this context this refers to all the governments that have signed the CBD

**PCA:** Protected and conserved areas (used in this guide as a shorthand term for protected areas and OECMs plus, in some cases, Indigenous and traditional territories)

**PPA:** Privately Protected Area

**SDG:** UN Sustainable Development Goals

**SSF:** Small-scale fisheries

**Target 3:** The third target in the GBF

**UN:** United Nations

**UNCCD:** UN Convention to Combat Desertification

**UNDP:** UN Development Programme

**UNDRIP:** UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

**UNDROP:** UN Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas

**UNEP-WCMC:** UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre

**UNFCCC:** UN Framework Convention on Climate Change

**URSA:** Universal Ranger Support Alliance

**WDPA:** World Database on Protected Areas

**WD-OECM:** World Database on OECMs

**30x30:** Shorthand for the Target 3 goal to extend area-based conservation to at least 30% of the planet by 2030

30x30

# A Guide to Inclusive, Equitable and Effective Implementation of Target 3

of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework



## Key partners



## Organizations supporting Target 3



Full endorsement of all information in this guide is not implied.