



XI Conference of Parties
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
HYDERABAD INDIA 2012

Press Brief

Protected Areas

Why is this important?

Protected areas are the cornerstone of biodiversity conservation; they maintain key habitats, provide refugia, allow for species migration and movement, and ensure the maintenance of natural processes across the landscape. Not only do protected areas secure biodiversity conservation, they also secure the well-being of humanity. Protected areas provide livelihoods for nearly 1.1 billion people; are the primary source of drinking water for over a third of the world's largest cities and are a major factor in ensuring global food security by protecting fisheries, wild crop relatives, and the ecosystems services upon which agriculture depends.

Well-managed protected areas harbouring participatory and equitable governance mechanisms yield significant benefits far beyond their boundaries. These can be translated into cumulative advantages across a national economy and contribute to poverty reduction and sustainable development, including achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. As climate change threatens the planet, protected areas provide a convenient solution to an inconvenient truth. Better managed, better connected, better governed and better financed protected areas are recognized as the key to both mitigation and adaptation responses to climate change.

In February 2004, the CBD Parties made the most comprehensive and specific protected area commitments ever made by the international community by adopting the Programme of Work on Protected Areas (PoWPA). The PoWPA enshrines development of participatory, ecologically representative and effectively managed national and regional systems of protected areas, where necessary stretching across national boundaries. From designation to management, the PoWPA can be considered as a defining framework or "blueprint" for protected areas for the coming decades. It is a framework for cooperation between governments, donors, NGOs and local communities. Without such collaboration, programmes cannot be successful and sustainable over the long-term. To date, there are many signs of progress and there is much to celebrate. Political will and commitments are clearly being catalyzed.

A recent summary of global implementation found that from 2004 to 2011, coverage for terrestrial protected areas increased by over 1,29 million sq km and marine protected area by 3,97 million sq km. Currently some 13% of the world's terrestrial surface and 4% of marine areas (0-200 nautical miles) is protected.

However, there are still areas that lag behind. The social costs and benefits of protected areas, the effective participation of indigenous and local communities and the diversification of various governance types need more commitment and resolute actions. The evaluation and improvement of management effectiveness, and the development and implementation of sustainable finance plans with diversified portfolios of traditional and innovative financial mechanisms need enhanced measures. Climate change considerations for both mitigation and adaptation responses need to be incorporated.

Strengthening implementation of PoWPA will require concerted efforts and the combined strength of all sectors of society, as well as alliances at national, regional and international levels between policy makers, civil society, indigenous and local communities and business and the private sector.



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What news to expect in Hyderabad?

Successive decisions of COP 7 to 10 established the policy environment fostering implementation of the PoWPA. As the elements of Aichi Target 11 incorporate the tenets of the PoWPA, furthering PoWPA implementation will be key in achieving Target 11. PoWPA implementation will also help to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Targets 1, 2, 5, 10, 12, 14, 15 and 18.

To strengthen implementation of the PoWPA and to align implementation with available funding and technical support, the COP in decision X/31 invited Parties to develop a long-term action plan for the implementation of the PoWPA (or to reorient relevant existing plans), contributing to implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and to use these PoWPA action plans as the basis for timely and appropriately accessing their protected area biodiversity allocations of the GEF 5, as well as other relevant financial support. The COP also requested the Executive Secretary to submit a report on the preparation of these PoWPA action plans by Parties for consideration at COP 11. Accordingly, the Executive Secretary prepared a report "Protected Areas: Progress in the implementation of the programme of work and achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11" for consideration by COP 11 meeting in Hyderabad based on PoWPA action plans submitted by 105 countries. These action plans are available at [HYPERLINK "http://www.cbd.int/protected/implementation/actionplans/"](http://www.cbd.int/protected/implementation/actionplans/) www.cbd.int/protected/implementation/actionplans/.

The report includes suggested recommendations tailored to directly address barriers to implementation in a practical manner, for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties.

Decisions that could be adopted at COP 11 would lead to practical actions such as:

PoWPA action plans integrated into updated, revised NBSAPs

Parties using their PoWPA action plans as policy instruments and the primary framework of action for implementation of the PoWPA

Parties using their PoWPA action plans to obtain funding from national, bilateral, multilateral and other sources

Alignment of protected area projects of the GEF 4, 5 and 6 with actions identified in PoWPA action plans for systematic monitoring and reporting

Major efforts made to achieve all elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 with emphasis on improving marine protected areas

Improved coordination for mainstreaming protected areas and integrating protected areas into wider land- and seascapes, including enabling policy requirements

Strengthened recognition and support to community based approaches for biodiversity, including community conservation areas

Technical support networks of relevant partners are established to support implementation of the PoWPA.

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