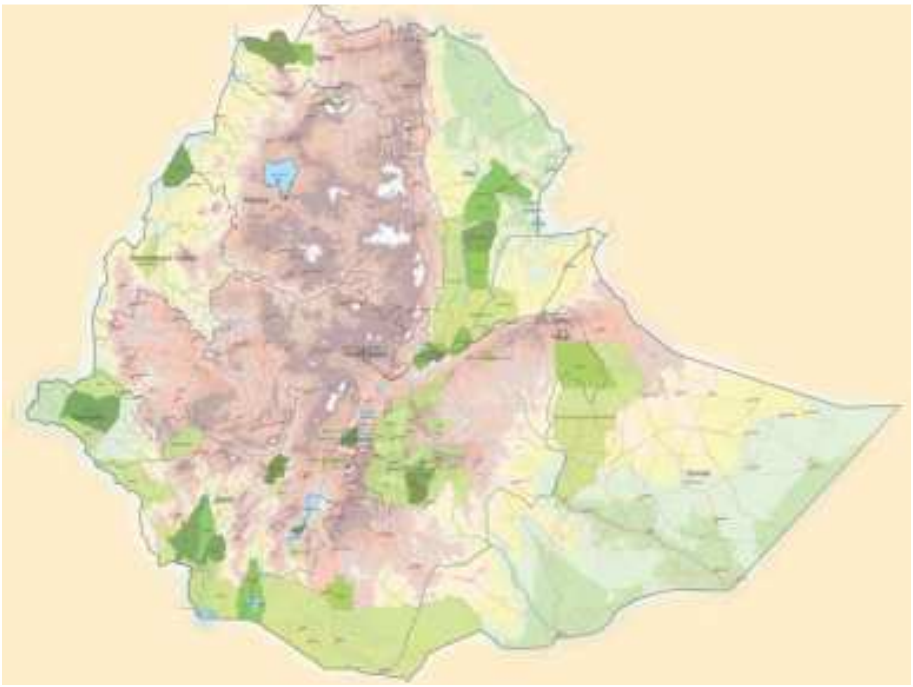
Action Plan for Implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity's Programme of Work on Protected Areas



(Ethiopia)

Submitted to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity [29/03/2012]

Protected area information:

Lead implementing agency: (Institute of biodiversity Conservation; Ethiopian wildlife Authority; Regional forest and wildlife Agency; Regional Culture and tourism; Regional Environmental Protection Authority; Regional Bureau of Agriculture)

Multi-stakeholder committee: (No)

Description of protected area system

National Targets and Vision for Protected Areas

The country's vision for protected areas include a perpetual existence of biological diversity in effectively managed protected area systems for enhanced ecological, cultural benefits of local, national, and global communities. In Ethiopia, protected areas are an integral part of sustainable development providing protection to centerpieces of wider landscapes and watersheds as source of important ecosystem services and climate change adaptation and mitigation. Further, they act as refuges for species and ecological processes that can not survive in intensely managed landscapes. Often, they provide other essential benefits for local communities and as well as the national economy at large.

National Aichi Related Targets

- By 2015, two corridors will be created, especially in the transboundary terrestrial protected areas as a contribution to enable climate change resilience of PAs
- Encourage the establishment of ten more protected areas that benefit indigenous and local communities by 2016.
- By 2018, undergo economic valuation for some five established protected areas.
- By 2015, mainstream protected areas into national development plans and programs
- By 2014, have management plans for 30 % protected forests

Coverage

Ethiopia has several designated Protected Areas (PAs) including 15 national parks (20,833 km^2); three wildlife sanctuaries (9,532 km^2), 11 wildlife reserves (24,810 km^2) and 18 controlled hunting areas (131,820 km^2). The government has committed to designate over 193,000 km2 (16.5% of the total area of the country) in order to increase the protection of the wildlife resources of the country. Ethiopia has 58 National Forest Priority Areas (48,000 km^2). Many more forests are now designated as protected areas. Although the primary objective of NFPA is to conserve the country's remaining forests, they are

extremely valuable in sheltering large numbers of species, including some that are not found in the wildlife conservation areas.

Description and background

(Ethiopia is one of the countries with richest biodiversity in the world. It has diverse physical features that cause a wide variation in climatic conditions. The flora of the country is very heterogeneous and has rich endemic elements. There are more than 6000 higher plant species, of which about 10-12 percent is endemic. The faunal diversity of the country is also rich. Important flagship species, endemic to Ethiopia include the Ethiopian wolf (*Canis simensis*), walia ibex (*Capra walie*), Gelada baboon (*Theropthecus gelada*), Giant lobelia (*Lobelia rhyncopetalum*) amongst others.

However, habitat loss, including degradation and fragmentation, continues to be the main driver of biodiversity loss. Thus, collaborative effort is required to conserve and maintain the sustainability and integrity of the biodiversity and their ecosystem. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) recognizes *in situ* or PA as primary approach to biodiversity conservation. Of particular importance is the balance to be struck between conservation measures within Protected Areas (PAs) and measures for sustainable use of natural areas outside (PAs). Protected areas, together with conservation, sustainable use and restoration initiatives in the wider land-and seascape are essential components in national and global biodiversity conservation strategies. They provide a range of goods and ecological services while preserving natural and cultural heritage. They can contribute to poverty alleviation by providing employment opportunities and livelihoods to people living in and around them. These inherent assets attract nature-lovers around the world, thereby promoting the flourishing of a new form of tourism in the country ecotourism.

The establishment and management of a representative and effectively managed system of protected areas is a key strategic approach in the conservation of Ethiopia's biodiversity and in the mitigation of the impacts of climate change on biodiversity. The country has established a number of protected areas since 1960's. According to published report, about

14% of the total land area of the country is designated as protected area. These include parks, sanctuaries, protected forest, and controlled hunting areas. However, these resources need extensive and representative systems of Protected Areas that maintain biological values as well as ensuring a continued flow of ecosystem goods and services. Despite being officially protected, these areas are generally marked by weak management capacity and continually degraded landscapes. The majority of these PAs has shrunk due to population pressure: crop cultivation, grazing, settlement, and deforestation. The existing management of the PAs is under federal and regional government mandates. Most protected areas need considerable capacity and support to implement and overcome the huge challenges and threats encountered.

Governance types

In Ethiopia protected areas are managed by different bodies. Some PAs are protected by federal government agency such as Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation (EWCA). Some of the PAs are managed by regional offices of forest and wildlife conservation agencies or bureaus. Some PAs are managed by indigenous and rural communities residing near by PA. However, most of the PAs are currently managed under government-community joint management system.

Key threats

The major threats to the protected areas and its associated biodiversity are unsustainable utilization of natural resources (over-harvesting), deforestation, conversion of natural vegetation to farmland, expansion of commercial farm, forest fires, settlement /encroachment, invasive species, illegal trafficking of domestic and wild animals, poaching, wetland destruction and climate change. These threats can be broadly linked to the following categories: limited governmental, institutional, and legal capacity; population growth; land degradation; weak management of protected areas. They are largely interrelated and self-reinforcing, and it is therefore important not only to understand the individual threats but also to examine them in a holistic fashion that recognizes their interrelation and can help to propose solutions to decrease the threats and mitigate their effects. But most of these are related to the root causes of poverty, which are lack of alternative viable livelihoods, increasing population pressure and inadequate awareness of the threats and possible solutions at all levels.

Barriers for effective implementation

a. **Weak institutional Interaction**

   Most of the protected areas are under weak management, inadequate institutional collaboration as well as inadequate funding. There is lack of cooperation between the institutions/organizations involved in protected area management. There is also lack of institutional coordination in PA

management with multiple institutions administering and influencing protected areas and conservation. There has been inadequate communication with key stakeholders at the federal and national regional state levels, as well as with NGO's, communities and the private sector. The PA system is complex with responsibilities across different federal and regional institutions resulting in overlap and conflicting mandates. These impede effective management of PA system in the country. Many of these relate to inadequate human capacity and financial resources.

b. PA is not well integrated in sectoral planning

Line ministries and institutions have the responsibility with respect to their own sectors and cross-sectoral natural resource and environmental management, including accounting for PAs in sectoral plan development. However, this is not well addressed in sectoral planning.

c. Lack of PA management plans

Management plans have been prepared for very few protected areas in Ethiopia. The majority of the PAs don't have management plan, which affect effective management.

d. In adequate law-enforcement

Legislation designed to protect the PAs has proven very difficult to enforce under the existing conditions.

Status, priority and timeline for key actions of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas

Status of key actions of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas

Status of key actions of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas	Status
• Progress on assessing **gaps in the protected area network** (1.1)	3 (final draft of the study is ready for some parks
• Progress in assessing **protected area integration** (1.2)	0
• Progress in establishing **transboundary protected areas** and **regional networks** (1.3)	2 (there is discussion on two trans boundary PAs; Alatish & Gambella parks)
• Progress in developing **site-level management plans** (1.4)	1 (most of the PAs have no management plans except Bale and Simien parks. Most forest PAs have participatory management plan but lack scientific approach
• Progress in assessing **threats** and opportunities for **restoration** (1.5)	1, there is on going effort
• Progress in assessing **equitable sharing** of benefits (2.1) • Progress in assessing protected area **governance** (2.1)	2 (is established in some PAS) 2 (is done in some PAs particularly in forest governance)
• Progress in assessing the **participation** of indigenous and local communities in key protected area decisions (2.2)	3 (is being implemented)
• Progress in assessing the **policy environment** for establishing and managing protected areas (3.1) • Progress in assessing the **values** of protected areas (3.1)	3 (Is underway for both wildlife and forest PAs)
• Progress in assessing protected area **capacity** needs (3.2)	3 (Done for some wildlife PAs not for forest PAs)
• Progress in assessing the **appropriate technology** needs (3.3)	
• Progress in assessing protected area **sustainable finance** needs (3.4)	3 (done for some wild life PAs but not for forest PAs)
• Progress in conducting **public awareness** campaigns (3.5)	2 There has been campaigns during tourism day celebration
• Progress in developing **best practices and minimum standards** (4.1)	0
• Progress in assessing **management effectiveness** (4.2)	2 (for few wildlife and forest PAs)
• Progress in establishing an **effective PA monitoring system** (4.3)	0
• Progress in developing a **research program** for protected areas	0

(4.4)	
• Progress in assessing opportunities for **marine** protection	0 (no marine PA) in the country
• Progress in incorporating **climate change** aspects into protected areas	3 study has been conducted for all PAs

Status: 0 = no work, 1 = just started, 2 = partially complete, 3 = nearly complete, 4 = complete
(Insert notes as appropriate)

Priority actions for fully implementing the Programme of Work on Protected Areas:

Action 1 Assess threats and opportunities for restoration

Action 2 Developing site-level management plans

Action 3 Capacity needs assessment of protected area

Action 4 Research in protected areas

Action 5 Valuation of protected area

Action 6 Encourage the establishment of ten more protected areas that benefit indigenous and local

Timeline for completion of key actions

Action 1 Assessing threats and opportunities for restoration (2013-2016)

Action 2 Developing site-level management plans (2013-2016)

Action 3 Capacity needs assessment of protected area (2013-2015)

Action 4 Research in protected areas (2013-2018)

Action 5 Valuation of protected areas (2013-2016)

Action 6 Encourage the establishment of ten more protected areas that benefit indigenous and local (2013-2016)

Action Plans for completing priority actions of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas

(Insert detailed action plans)

Action 1: (*Assessing threats and opportunities for restoration*)

Key steps	Timeline	Responsible parties	Indicative budget in (USD)
Assess the status of key biodiversity including the population, distribution and ecological systems	2013	EWCA, IBC, Regional PA sectors , Universities NGOs	120,000
Map the distribution and intensity of threats and their impacts on focal biodiversity features	2014	EWCA, IBC, Regional PA sectors , NGOs, Universities	20,000
Analyze the results of the threat assessment	2015	EWCA, IBC, Regional PA sectors , NGOs	5,000
Analyze the opportunities for restoration	2015	EWCA, IBC, Regional PA sectors , NGOs	5,000
Prioritize threats based on their overall contribution to the loss of biodiversity as well as their feasibility	2015	EWCA, IBC, Regional PA sectors , NGOs	5,000
Develop an action plan for threat prevention and implementation	2016	EWCA, IBC, Regional PA sectors , NGOs	20,000
Monitor changes in the status of protected area threats	2016-2020	EWCA, IBC, Regional PA sectors ,	15,000

Action 2: (*Developing site-level management plans*)

Key steps	Timeline	Responsible parties	Indicative budget in (USD)
Define the objective and expected out put, assess and collect data on ecological, social, biological situation	2013	EWCA, regional PA offices, NGOs	70,000
Evaluate (analyze) data	2014	EWCA, regional PA offices	5,000
Identify constraints, opportunities, and threats	2015		5000
Develop draft plan with participation of local communities	2015		
Conduct national and local stakeholder consultations, through a series of workshops, to ensure the incorporation of ideas and concerns from local communities	2015	EWCA, regional PA offices, other stakeholders	20,000
Publish the final management plan	2016	EWCA, regional PA offices, other stakeholders	8,000
Revision of draft and develop final management plan and get approval of the plan	2016	EWCA, regional PA offices, other stakeholders (NGOs)	10,000

Action 3: (*Capacity needs assessment of protected area)*

Key steps	Timeline	Responsible parties	Indicative budget (USD)
Identifying capacity gaps hindering effective PA management	2012	EWCA, regional PA offices, IBC	10,000
Analyze and prioritize the capacity gaps and select the most important gap to work on	20 13	EWCA, regional PA offices, IBC	2,000
Conduct training to the different staff members of PAs	2014-2015	EWCA, regional PA offices, IBc	25,000
Evaluate changes in PA management	2016-2020	EWCA, regional PA offices	2,000

Action 4: (*Research in protected areas*)

Key steps	Timeline	Responsible parties	Indicative budget (USD)
Reviewed pertinent literature regarding biological, socio-economic and biophysical situations of PA	2013	EWCA, IBC, universities	4,000
Identify research gaps and priorities	2013	EWCA, IBC, universities	4,000
Conduct research on priority issues	2014-2018	EWCA, IBC, universities	30,000
Compile and disseminate research findings	2014-2018	EWCA, IBC, universities	15,000

Action 5 (*Valuation of protected areas*)

Key steps	Timeline	Responsible parties	Indicative budget (USD)
Reviewed pertinent literature regarding biological, socio-economic and biophysical situations of PA	2013	EWCA, IBC, universities	40,000
Conduct valuation studies in PAs	2013-2016	EWCA, IBC, universities	120,000
Analyze valuation data	2017	EWCA, IBC, universities	5,000
Communicate findings of the study to stakeholders particularly to decision makers	2018	EWCA, IBC, universities	10,000

Action 6 (*Encourage the establishment of ten more protected areas that benefit indigenous and local*)

Key steps	Timeline	Responsible parties	Indicative budget (USD)
Consultation workshop with relevant stakeholders	2013	EWCA, regional PA offices, IBC	10,000
Assess the status of key biodiversity and ecological systems	2014	EWCA, regional PA offices, IBC	10,000
Analyze, compile and communicate the results of assessments	2015	EWCA, regional PA offices, IBC	5,000
Conduct a topographic survey of the proposed boundaries and map them	2015	EWCA, IBC, u	20,000
Consultation workshop with relevant stakeholders and local communities	2016	EWCA, regional PA offices, IBC	30,000
Demarcation of the boundaries of the proposed protected areas	2016	EWCA, regional PA offices, IBC	5,000

Key assessment results

Ecological gap assessment

Originally, the protected area system of the country had not been designed with scientific concepts of biodiversity and its optimal representation protected areas in mind. Like in most countries, it had developed over the years on the basis of educated guesses by wildlife managers, as to where diversity (mainly large mammal diversity) was located and where tracts of land were still available for protection that would not conflict too much with other land uses.

Management effectiveness assessment

Management effectiveness has been conducted for 10 protected areas in 2010/2011 and the result is compiled. For some, the result is compared with their corresponding result in 2008 but not for those that do not have a base line. According to the assessment result, all do not have management plan and business plans but two; Bale and Simien. In all protected areas the major problem is community pressure from over grazing, poaching, fire wood collection, illegal settlement and farming. On average their score is 35% which is very low.

Sustainable finance assessment

In order to ensure sustainable financing of protected areas, study on different sustainable financial options was conducted. Accordingly, Business plan for Ethiopian protected Area system was developed.

Policy environment assessment

Although arrays of policy, strategy and proclamations exist, there are still areas that need explicit legal provisions regarding the modalities of public-private partnerships. Particularly, co-management governance systems, national categorization of protected areas, finance mechanisms, resettlement issues for community members who settled within protected areas in the recent past. At federal and regional level various policies and proclamations were passed based on assessment of gaps. However, the existing enabling environment still showed gaps.

Protected area integration and mainstreaming assessment

The national protected area system is not explicitly accommodated in the programme. The Plan for Accelerated and Sustainable Development to End Poverty (PASDEP, recognizes the linkage between environmental degradation and poverty levels and does focus on the conservation of natural resources, including water, soil and energy. The recently developed Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) of the country give due attention for conservation of natural resources.

Protected area valuation assessment

Protected area valuation assessment have been conducted and the assessment revealed that

- The value of protected areas is far greater in terms of environmental services (e.g. climate stabilization, electricity production, water services, etc.) than the value of direct benefits through tourism and employment.
- The value of benefits provided by protected areas to the national economy by far exceed the current budget provided by central government of US$ 1.3 million (ETB 16.1 million, budget 2009/10) and warrants increased investment to raise management effectiveness in order to ensure the continuous flow of services, provided by protected areas.
- Benefits derived from protected areas in the form of environmental services, and their importance for sustainable economic development and poverty reduction, have been undervalued and have not received due attention.

Climate change resilience and adaptation assessment

Climate change has become a global challenge for nature conservation due to its impacts on species, habitats and ecosystems. A vulnerability assessment of on some protected areas in Ethiopia was conducted by a team of experts from Ethiopian wild life conservation Authority (EWCA). Based on the assessment four protected areas, namely, Bale Mountain National Park, Simien Mountain National Park, Abijatta-Shalla Lakes National Park and Awash National Park was selected for climate change adaptation. Accordingly, four strategic adaptation themes were developed.