

*Thematic report on protected areas or areas where special measures need to be taken to conserve biological diversity*

*Please provide the following details on the origin of this report.*

Contracting Party:	<b>Oman (Sultanate of)</b>
<i>National Focal Point</i>	
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Signature of officer responsible for submitting national report:	
Date of submission:	

*Please provide summary information on the process by which this report has been prepared, including information on the types of stakeholders who have been actively involved in its preparation and on material which was used as a basis for the report.*

This document was prepared under the supervision of:-

Mr Salim Al-Saadi - National-Coordinator of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan of the Sultanate of Oman;

and the participation of the following stakeholders:-

Mrs. Fatma Al-Farsi - Environmental Planning Expert ( DG of Environment – Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment and Water Resources )

Mr. Ahmed Al-Shukaili – Nature Reserves Specialist ( DG of Nature Conservation - Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment and Water Resources )

Mr. Salah Al-Saadi – Head of Endangered Wildlife Permits Section ( DG of Nature Conservation - Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment and Water Resources )

Mrs. Samira Al-Ojaili – Head of Biodiversity Database Section ( DG of Nature Conservation - Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment and Water Resources )

And it was reviewed by :-

- Mr. Ali Al-Kiyumi – Director-General of Nature Conservation ( Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment and Water Resources ).

A discussion approach were adopted in the preparation of this report whereby all the above mentioned stakeholders were actively involved.

**Protected areas or areas where special measures need to be taken to conserve biological diversity**

**System of protected areas**

1. What is the relative priority afforded to development and implementation of a national system of protected areas in the context of other obligations arising from the Convention and COP Decisions?				
a) High	X	b) Medium		c) Low
2. Is there a systematic planning process for development and implementation of a national system of protected areas?				
a) no				
b) in early stages of development				
c) in advanced stages of development				
d) yes, please provide copies of relevant documents describing the process				X
3. Is there an assessment of the extent to which the existing network of protected areas covers all areas that are identified as being important for the conservation of biological diversity?				
a) no				
b) an assessment is being planned for				
c) an assessment is being undertaken				X
d) yes, please provide copies of the assessments made				

**Regulatory framework**

4. Is there a policy framework and/or enabling legislation in place for the establishment and management of protected areas?	
a) no	
b) in early stages of development	
c) in advanced stages of development	
d) yes, please provide copies of relevant documents	X
5. Have guidelines, criteria and targets been adopted to support selection, establishment and management of protected areas?	
a) no	
b) in early stages of development	
c) in advanced stages of development	
d) yes, please provide copies of guidelines, criteria and targets	X

6. Does the management of protected areas involve the use of incentive measures, for instance, of entrance fees for park visitors, or of benefit-sharing arrangements with adjacent communities and other relevant stakeholders?	
a) no	
b) yes, incentive measures implemented for some protected areas (please provide some examples)	X
c) yes, incentive measures implemented for all protected areas (please provide some examples)	

**Management approach**

7. Have the principal threats to protected areas and the biodiversity that they contain been assessed, so that programmes can be put in place to deal with the threats, their effects and to influence the key drivers?	
a) no	X
b) an assessment is being planned for	
c) an assessment is in process	
d) yes, an assessment has been completed	
e) programmes and policies to deal with threats are in place (please provide basic information on threats and actions taken)	
8. Are protected areas established and managed in the context of the wider region in which they are located, taking account of and contributing to other sectoral strategies?	
a) no	
b) yes, in some areas	X
c) yes, in all areas (please provide details)	
9. Do protected areas vary in their nature, meeting a range of different management objectives and/or being operated through differing management regimes?	
a) no, most areas are established for similar objectives and are under similar management regimes	
b) many areas have similar objectives/management regimes, but there are also some exceptions	
c) yes, protected areas vary in nature (please provide details)	X
10. Is there wide stakeholder involvement in the establishment and management of protected areas?	
a) no	
b) with some, but not all protected areas	X
c) yes, always (please provide details of experience)	

11. Do protected areas established and managed by non-government bodies, citizen groups, private sector and individuals exist in your country, and are they recognized in any formal manner?	
a) no, they do not exist	X
b) yes, they exist, however are not formally recognized	
c) yes, they exist and are formally recognized (please provide further information)	

**Available resources**

12. Are the human, institutional and financial resources available adequate for full implementation of the protected areas network, including for management of individual protected areas?	
a) no, they are severely limiting (please provide basic information on needs and shortfalls)	
b) no, they are limiting (please provide basic information on needs and shortfalls)	X
c) Available resources are adequate (please provide basic information on needs and shortfalls)	
d) yes, good resources are available	
13. Has your country requested/received financial assistance from the Global Environment Facility or other international sources for establishment/management of protected areas?	
a) no	X
b) funding has been requested, but not received	
c) funding is currently being requested	
d) yes, funding has been received (please provide copies of appropriate documents)	

**Assessment**

14. Have constraints to implementation and management of an adequate system of protected areas been assessed, so that actions can be initiated to deal with these constraints?	
a) no	
b) yes, constraints have been assessed (please provide further information)	X
c) yes, actions to deal with constraints are in place (please provide further information)	
15. Is a programme in place or in development to regularly assess the effectiveness of protected areas management and to act on this information?	
a) no	X
b) yes, a programme is under development (please provide further information)	
c) yes, a programme is in place (please provide further information)	

16. Has any assessment been made of the value of the material and non-material benefits and services that protected areas provide?	
a) no	X
b) an assessment is planned	
c) an assessment is in process	
d) yes, an assessment has been made (please provide further information)	

***Regional and international cooperation***

17. Is your country collaborating/communicating with neighbouring countries in the establishment and/or management of transboundary protected areas?	
a) no	X
b) yes (please provide details)	
18. Are key protected areas professionals in your country members of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas, thereby helping to foster the sharing of information and experience?	
a) no	X
b) yes	
c) information is not available	
19. Has your country provided information on its protected areas to the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre in order to allow for a scientific assessment of the status of the world's protected areas?	
a) no	X
b) yes	
20. If your country has protected areas or other sites recognised or designated under an international convention or programme (including regional conventions and programmes), please provide copies of reports submitted to those programmes or summaries of them.	
21. Do you think that there are some activities on protected areas that your country has significant experience that will be of direct value to other Contracting Parties?	
a) no	X
b) yes (please provide details)	

*Further comments*

Q6: Incentive measures implemented for some protected areas include:

Entrance fees for some protected areas. The Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment and Water Resources is looking into applying the entrance fees to all protected areas.

Investigating the possibilities of assigning a committee involving all relevant stakeholders for every protected area responsible for management and supervision of the protected areas.

Creation of job opportunities for the local communities.

Q9: In the Sultanate of Oman the protected areas vary in their nature , meeting a range of different management objectives. For example, the Ras al-hadd Turtles Reserve is designated for the main purpose of protecting the turtles, Al-maha nature reserve mainly for the protection of the Arabian Oryx, the khawrs in the Southern region of Oman are designated for the whole lagoons ecosystem, and Dimanniyat islands nature reserve is regarded as marine protected area for the main purpose of conservation of turtles, corals and birds since it is unpopulated.

Q12: Needs and Shortfalls:

Lack of institutional set-up for all the protected areas.

Delay in the implementation of the nature reserves management plans.

Lack of specialization related to nature conservation especially in taxonomy at the national level accordingly few people have appropriate qualifications and background and experience in managing protected areas.

Shortage of human resources in the national authority supervising the protected areas.

Shortage of investment in income generating activities in the protected areas.

Q14: Yes, constraints have been assessed, but until now no action was taken to deal with these constraints.

Attachments:

A copy of a document describing the process for development and implementation of a national system of protected areas.

A copy of a legislation for the establishment and management of protected areas.

A copy of a report submitted to the UNESCO on Al-Maha nature reserve which is the site recognized as a National Heritage Site.

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