



Convention on
Biological Diversity



Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 Country Dossier: ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

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GLOSSARY

AZEs	Alliance for Zero Extinction sites
CEPF	Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
EBSA	Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GD-PAME	Global Database on Protected Area Management Effectiveness
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IBA	Important Bird and Biodiversity Area
ICCAs	Indigenous and Community Conserved Area Area (may also be referred to as territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples and local communities or “territories of life”)
IPLC	Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
KBA	Key Biodiversity Area
MEOW	Marine Ecosystems of the World
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
OECD	Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures
PA	Protected Area
PAME	Protected Area Management Effectiveness
PPA	Privately Protected Area
PPOW	Pelagic Provinces of the World
ProtConn	Protected Connected land indicator
SOC	Soil Organic Carbon
TEOW	Terrestrial Ecosystems of the World
WDPA	World Database on Protected Areas
WD-OECD	World Database on Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures

Disclaimer

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This country dossier is compiled by the UNDP and SCBD from publicly available information. It is prepared, within the overall work of the Global Partnership on Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, for the purpose of attracting the attention of the Party concerned and other national stakeholders to facilitate the verification, correcting, and updating of country data. The statistics might differ from those reported officially by the country due to differences in methodologies and datasets used to assess protected area coverage and differences in the base maps used to measure terrestrial and marine area of a country or territory. Furthermore, the suggestions from the UNDP and SCBD are based on analyses of global datasets, which may not necessarily be representative of national policy or criteria used at the national level. The analyses are also subject to the limits inherent in global indicators (precision, reliability, underlying assumptions, etc.). Therefore, they provide useful information but cannot replace analyses at a national level nor constitute a future benchmark for national policy or decision-making.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document provides information on the coverage of protected areas (PAs) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs), as currently reported in global databases (the World Database on Protected Areas ([WDPA](#)) and World Database on Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures ([WD-OECM](#))). It also includes details on the status of the other qualifying elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 based on this data. These statistics might differ from those reported officially by countries due to difference in methodologies and datasets used to assess protected area coverage, differences in the base maps used to measure terrestrial and marine area of a country or territory, or if global datasets differ from the criteria and indicators used at the national level. This dossier also provides a summary of commitments made under Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, and a summary of potential opportunities regarding elements of the target for future planning.

The dossier has been developed in consultation with the UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), which manages the WDPA, WD-OECM and Global Database on Protected Area Management Effectiveness ([GD-PAME](#)). Parties to the CBD are requested to contact protectedareas@unep-wcmc.org with any updates to the information in these databases.

Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 Elements: Current status and opportunities for action

Coverage - Terrestrial & Marine

- **Status:** as of May 2021, terrestrial coverage in Iran (Islamic Republic of) is 140,225.8 km² (8.6%) and marine coverage is 1,808.6 km² (0.8%).
- **Opportunities for action:** opportunities for the near-term include updating the WDPA with any unreported PAs, and the recognizing and reporting OECMs to the WD-OECM. In the future, focus on relatively intact areas, while addressing the elements in the following sections, could be considered when planning new PAs or OECMs.

Ecological Representativeness— Terrestrial & Marine

- **Status:** Iran (Islamic Republic of) contains 19 terrestrial ecoregions, 2 marine ecoregions, and 1 pelagic province: the mean coverage by reported PAs and OECMs is 4.8% (terrestrial), 1.1% (marine), and 0.0% (pelagic); 6 terrestrial ecoregions and 1 pelagic province have no coverage by reported PAs and OECMs.
- **Opportunities for action:** there is opportunity for Iran (Islamic Republic of) to increase protection in terrestrial and marine ecoregions and pelagic provinces that have lower levels of coverage by PAs or OECMs. Ecoregions which currently have no coverage by PAs or OECMs are key areas for action.



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Areas Important for Biodiversity

- **Status:** Iran (Islamic Republic of) has 114 Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs): the mean protected coverage of KBAs by reported PAs and OECMs is 45.2%, while 51 KBAs have no coverage by reported PAs and OECMs.
- **Opportunities for action:** there is opportunity for Iran (Islamic Republic of) to increase protection of KBAs that have lower levels of coverage by PAs and OECMs; priority could be given to those with no current coverage.

Areas Important for Ecosystem Services

- **Status:** coverage of areas important for ecosystem services: In Iran (Islamic Republic of), 11.7% of aboveground biomass carbon, 9.0% of belowground biomass carbon, 7.4% of soil organic carbon, 1.7% of carbon stored in marine sediments is covered by PAs and OECMs.
- **Opportunities for action:** for carbon, there is opportunity for Iran (Islamic Republic of) to increase PA and OECM coverage in both marine and terrestrial areas with high carbon stocks. Protecting areas with high carbon stocks secures the benefits of carbon sequestration in the area.
- For water, there is opportunity to increase the area of the water catchment under protection by PAs and OECMs, or in cases where there is high levels of protection, focus on effective management for these areas. Protecting the current area of forested land and potentially reforesting would have benefits for improving water security.

Connectivity and Integration

- **Status:** coverage of protected-connected lands is 2.1%.
- **Opportunities for action:** there is opportunity for a general increase of PAs or OECMs and to focus on PA and OECM management for enhancing and maintaining connectivity. Improving connectivity increases the effectiveness of PAs and OECMs and reduces the impacts of fragmentation.
- As well, a range of suggested steps for enhancing and supporting integration are included in the voluntary guidance on the integration of PAs and OECMs into the wider land- and seascapes and mainstreaming across sectors to contribute, inter alia, to the SDGs (Annex I of COP Decision 14/8).

Governance Diversity

- **Status:** the most common governance type(s) for reported PAs in Iran (Islamic Republic of) is: 5.9% under Government (Federal or national ministry or agency).
- **Opportunities for action:** increase efforts to identify the governance types for the 94.1% of sites that do not have their governance type reported. If applicable, explore opportunities for governance types that have lower representation



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- There is also opportunity for Iran (Islamic Republic of) to complete governance and equity assessments, to establish baselines and identify relevant actions for improvement. As well, a range of suggested actions are included in the voluntary guidance on effective governance models for management of protected areas, including equity (Annex II of COP Decision 14/8).

Protected Area Management Effectiveness

- **Status:** 9.5% of terrestrial PAs and 63.6% of marine PAs have completed Protected Area Management Effectiveness (PAME) assessments reported.
- **Opportunities for action:** the 60% target for completed management effectiveness assessments (per COP Decision X/31) **has not** been met for terrestrial PAs and **has** been met for marine PAs. Therefore, there is opportunity to increase protected area management effectiveness (PAME) evaluations for terrestrial PAs to achieve the target.
- There is also opportunity to implement the results of completed PAME evaluations, to improve the quality of management for existing PAs and OECMs (e.g. through adaptive management and information sharing, increasing the number of sites reporting 'sound management') and to increase reporting of biodiversity outcomes in PAs and OECMs.



INTRODUCTION

The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 was adopted at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) held in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan from 18-29 October 2010. The vision of the Strategic Plan is one of “Living in harmony with nature” where *“By 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people”* (CBD, 2010). In addition to this vision, the Strategic Plan is composed of 20 targets, under five strategic goals. Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 states that *“By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes.”*

With the conclusion of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets in 2020, Target 11 on area-based conservation has seen success in the expansion of the global network of protected areas (PA) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs). The negotiation of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and its future targets provide an essential opportunity to further improve the coverage of PAs and OECMs, to improve other aspects of area-based conservation, to accelerate progress on biodiversity conservation more broadly, while also addressing climate change, and the Sustainable Development Goals. This next set of global biodiversity targets are to be adopted at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. These new targets must aim to build upon lessons learned from the last decade of progress to deliver transformative change for the benefit of nature and people, to realize the 2050 Vision for biodiversity.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity have developed the Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 Country Dossiers, which provide countries with an overview of the status of Target 11 elements, opportunities for action, and a summary of commitments made by Parties over the last decade. Each dossier can support countries in assessing their progress on key elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 and identifying opportunities to prioritize new protected areas and OECMs.

This dossier provides an overview of area-based conservation in Iran (Islamic Republic of). Section I of the dossier presents data on the current status of Iran (Islamic Republic of)’s PAs and OECMs. The data presented in Section I relates to each element of Target 11. Section I also presents the PA and OECM coverage for two critical ecosystem services: water security and carbon stocks. In addition, the dossier presents potential opportunities for action for Iran (Islamic Republic of), in relation to each Target 11 element. The analyses present options for improving Iran (Islamic Republic of)’s area-based conservation network to achieve enhanced protection and benefits for livelihoods and climate change. Section II presents details on Iran (Islamic Republic of)’s existing PA and OECM commitments as a summary of existing efforts towards achieving Target 11. This gives

focus not only to national policy and actions but also voluntary commitments to the UN. Furthermore, where data is available, this dossier provides information on potential OECMs, Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs; also, often referred to as territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples and local communities or “territories of life”) and Privately Protected Areas (PPAs) and the potential contribution they will have in achieving the post-2020 targets.

The information on PAs and OECMs presented here is derived from the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) and World Database on Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (WD-OECM). These databases are joint products of UNEP and IUCN, managed by UNEP-WCMC, and can be viewed and downloaded at www.protectedplanet.net. Parties are encouraged to provide data on their PAs and OECMs to UNEP-WCMC for incorporation into the databases (see e.g., Decisions 10/31 and 14/8). The significant efforts of Parties in updating their data in the build up to the publication of the Protected Planet Report 2020 (UNEP-WCMC and IUCN, 2021) were greatly appreciated. UNEP-WCMC welcomes further updates, following the data standards described here (www.wcmc.io/WDPA_Manual), and these should be directed to protectedareas@unep-wcmc.org. The statistics presented in this dossier are derived from the May 2021 WDPA and WD-OECM releases, unless explicitly stated otherwise. Readers should consult www.protectedplanet.net for the latest coverage statistics (updated monthly).

Some data from the WDPA and WD-OECM are not made publicly available at the request of the data-provider. This affects some statistics, maps, and figures presented in this dossier. Statistics provided by UNEP-WCMC (terrestrial and marine coverage) are based upon the full dataset, including restricted data. All other statistics, maps, and figures are based upon the subset of the data that is publicly available.

Where data is less readily available, such as for potential OECMs, ICCAs and PPAs, data has also been compiled from published reports and scientific literature to provide greater awareness of these less commonly recorded aspects. These data are provided to highlight the need for comprehensive reporting on these areas to the WDPA and/or WD-OECM. Parties are invited to work with indigenous peoples, local communities and private actors to submit data under the governance of these actors, with their consent, to the WDPA and/or WD-OECM.

Overall, PAs and OECMs are essential instruments for biodiversity conservation and to sustain essential ecosystem services that support human well-being and sustainable development, including food, medicine, and water security, as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation and disaster risk reduction. The data in this dossier, therefore, aims to celebrate the current contributions of PAs and OECMs, whilst the gaps presented hope to encourage greater progress, not just for the benefit of biodiversity and the post-2020 GBF, but also to recognize the essential role of PAs and OECMs to the Sustainable Development Goals and for addressing the climate crisis.



SECTION I: CURRENT STATUS

Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 refers to both protected areas (PAs) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs). This section provides the current status for all elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 where indicators with global data are available. Statistics for all elements are presented using data on both PAs and OECMs (where this data is available and reported in global databases like the WDPA and WD-OECM). It is recognized that statistics reported in the WPDA and WD-OECM might differ from those reported officially by countries due to differences in methodologies and datasets used to assess protected area coverage and differences in the base maps used to measure terrestrial and marine area of a country or territory. Details on UNEP-WCMC's methods for calculating PA and OECM coverage area available [here](#). The global indicators adopted here for presenting the status of other elements of Target 11 may also differ from those in use nationally.



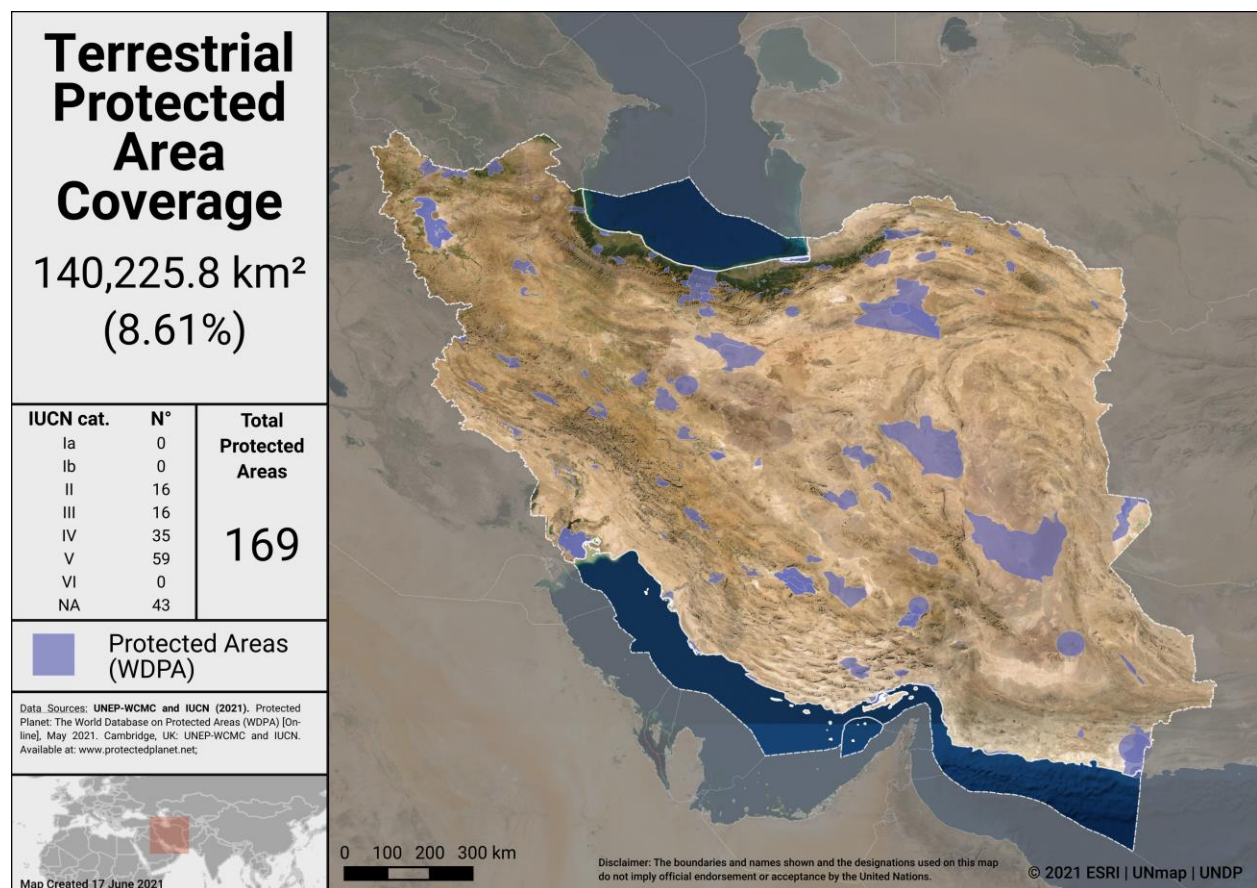
COVERAGE - TERRESTRIAL & MARINE

As of May 2021, Iran (Islamic Republic of) has **185** protected areas reported in the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA). 5 proposed PAs, 1 additional PA that has no spatial boundary and no area listed in the WDPA, and a further 10 UNESCO-MAB Biosphere Reserves, are not included in the following statistics (see details on UNWP-WCMC's methods for calculating PA and OECM coverage [here](#)).

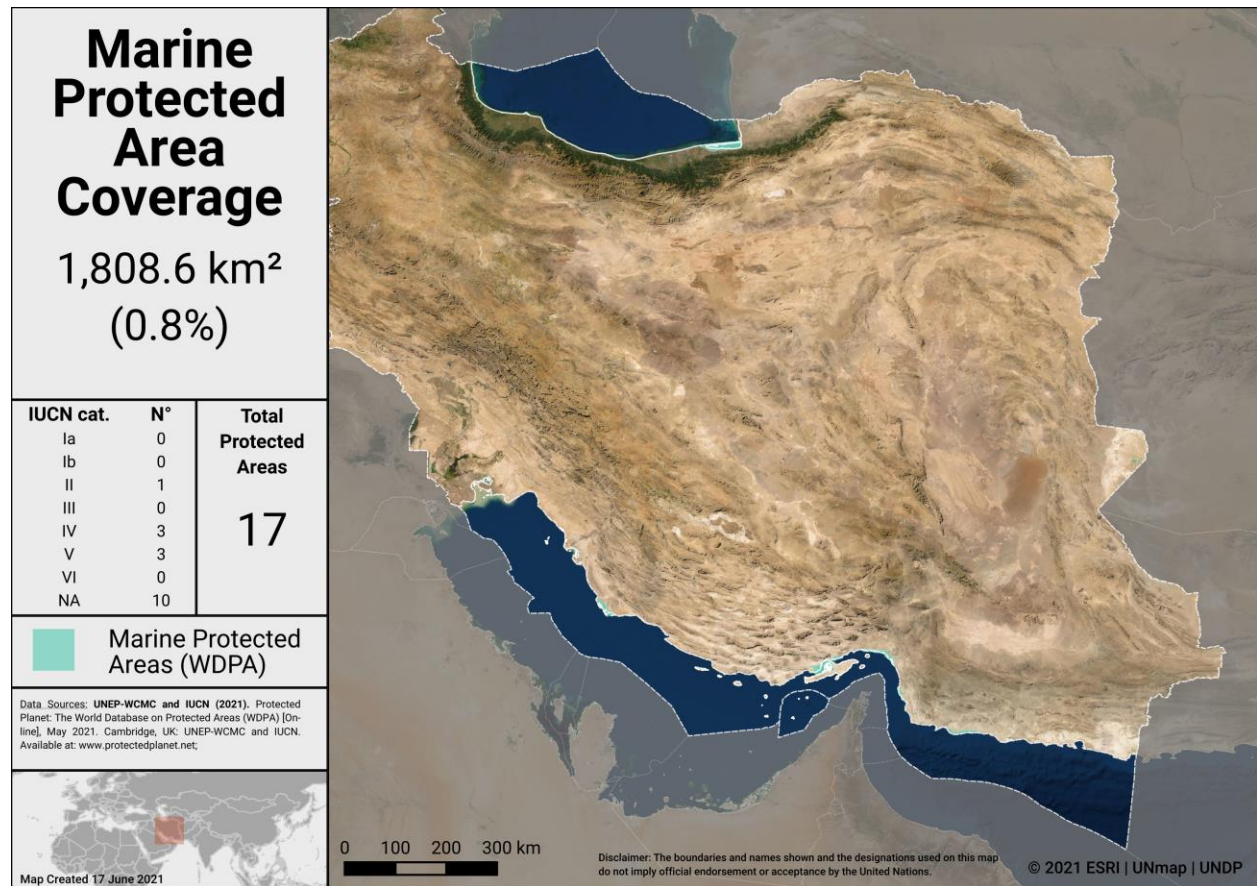
As of May 2021, Iran (Islamic Republic of) has **0** OECMs reported in the world database on OECMs (WD-OECM).

Current coverage for Iran (Islamic Republic of):

- 8.6% terrestrial (169 protected areas, 140,225.8 km²)
- 0.8% marine (17 protected areas, 1,808.6 km²)



Terrestrial Protected Areas in Iran (Islamic Republic of)



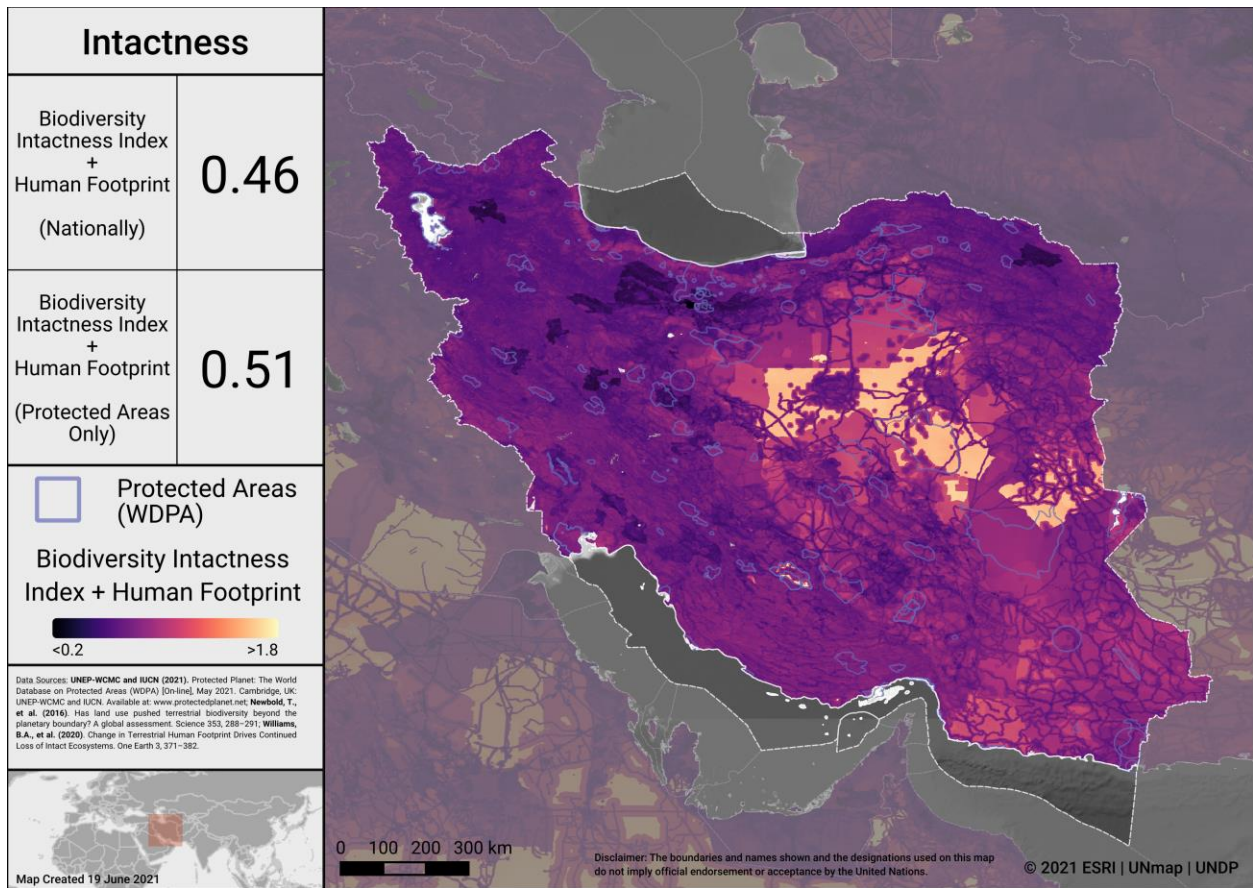
Marine Protected Areas in Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Potential OECMs

There are currently no potential OECM examples for Iran (Islamic Republic of).

Opportunities for action

Opportunities for the near-term include updating the WDPA with any unreported PAs, and the recognizing and reporting OECMs to the WD-OECM. In the future, as Iran (Islamic Republic of) considers where to add new PAs and OECMs, the map below identifies areas in Iran (Islamic Republic of) where intact terrestrial areas are not currently protected. Focus on relatively intact areas, while addressing the elements in the following sections, could be considered when planning new PAs or OECMs.



Intactness in Iran (Islamic Republic of)

To explore more on intactness visit the UN Biodiversity Lab: map.unbiodiversitylab.org.

ECOLOGICAL REPRESENTATIVENESS – TERRESTRIAL & MARINE

Ecological representativeness is assessed based on the PAs and OECMs coverage of broad-scale biogeographic units. Globally, ecoregions have been described for terrestrial areas (Dinerstein et al, 2017), marine coastal and shelf ecosystems (to a depth of 200m; Spalding et al 2007) and surface pelagic waters (Spalding et al 2012).

Iran (Islamic Republic of) has 19 **terrestrial** ecoregions. Out of these:

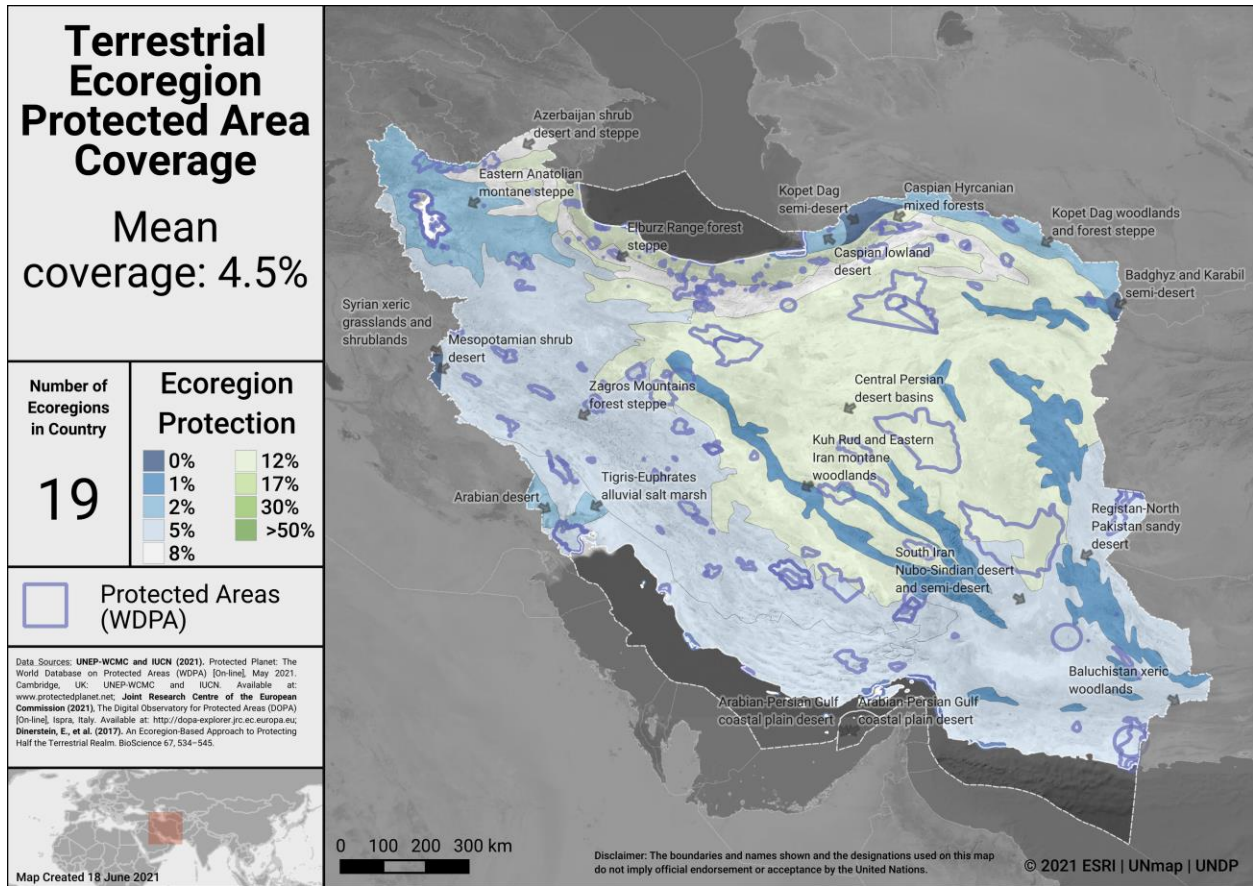
- 13 ecoregions have at least some coverage from PAs and OECMs.
- 0 ecoregions have at least 17% protected within the country.
- The average terrestrial coverage of ecoregions is 4.8%.

Iran (Islamic Republic of) has 2 **marine** ecoregions and 1 **pelagic provinces**. Out of these:

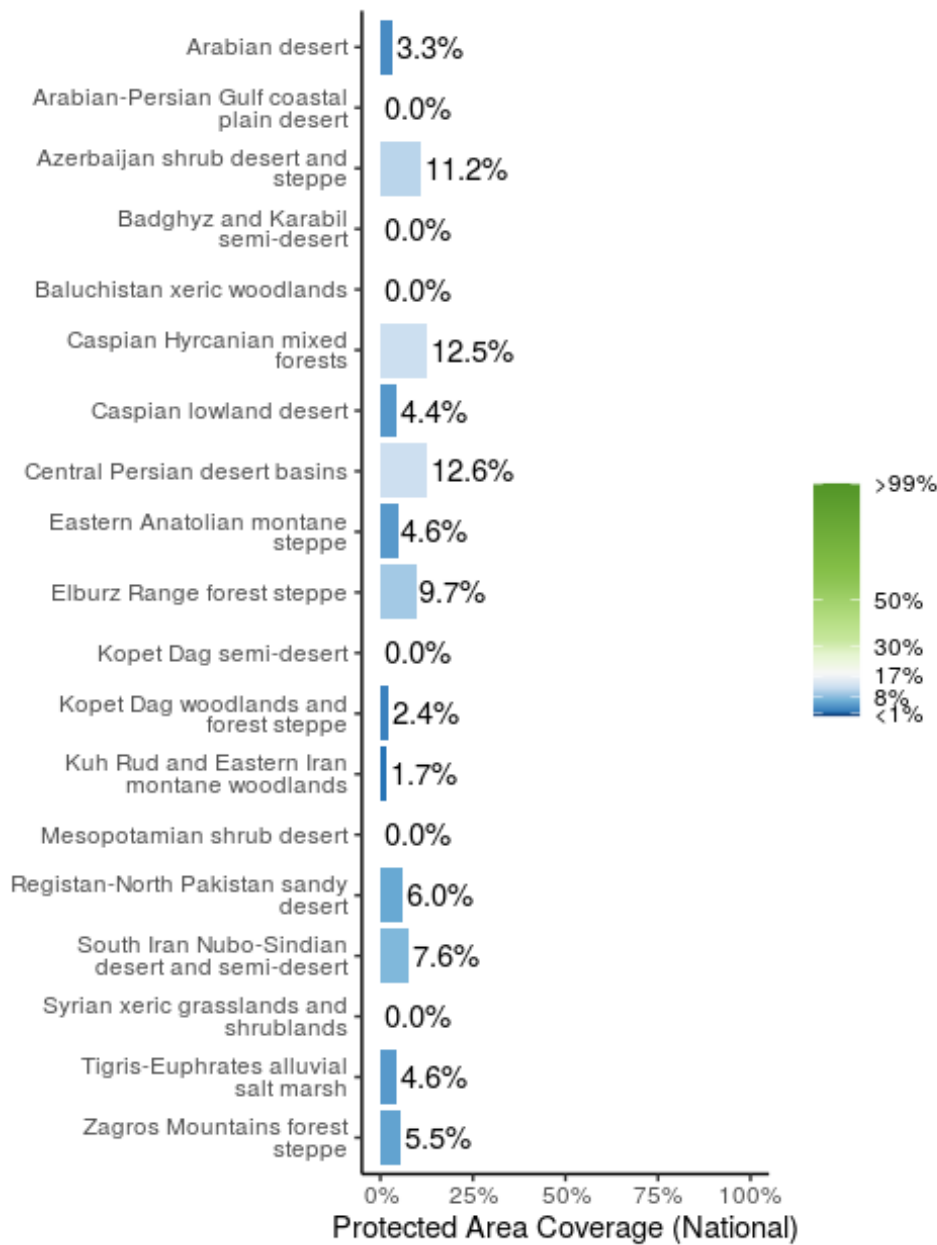
- 2 marine ecoregions and 0 pelagic provinces have at least some coverage from reported PAs and OECMs.
- 0 marine ecoregions and 0 pelagic provinces have at least 10% protected within Iran (Islamic Republic of)'s exclusive economic zone (EEZ).
- The average protected area coverage of marine ecoregions is 1.1% and the average protected area coverage of Pelagic Provinces is 0.0%.

A full list of terrestrial ecoregions in Iran (Islamic Republic of) is available in Annex I.



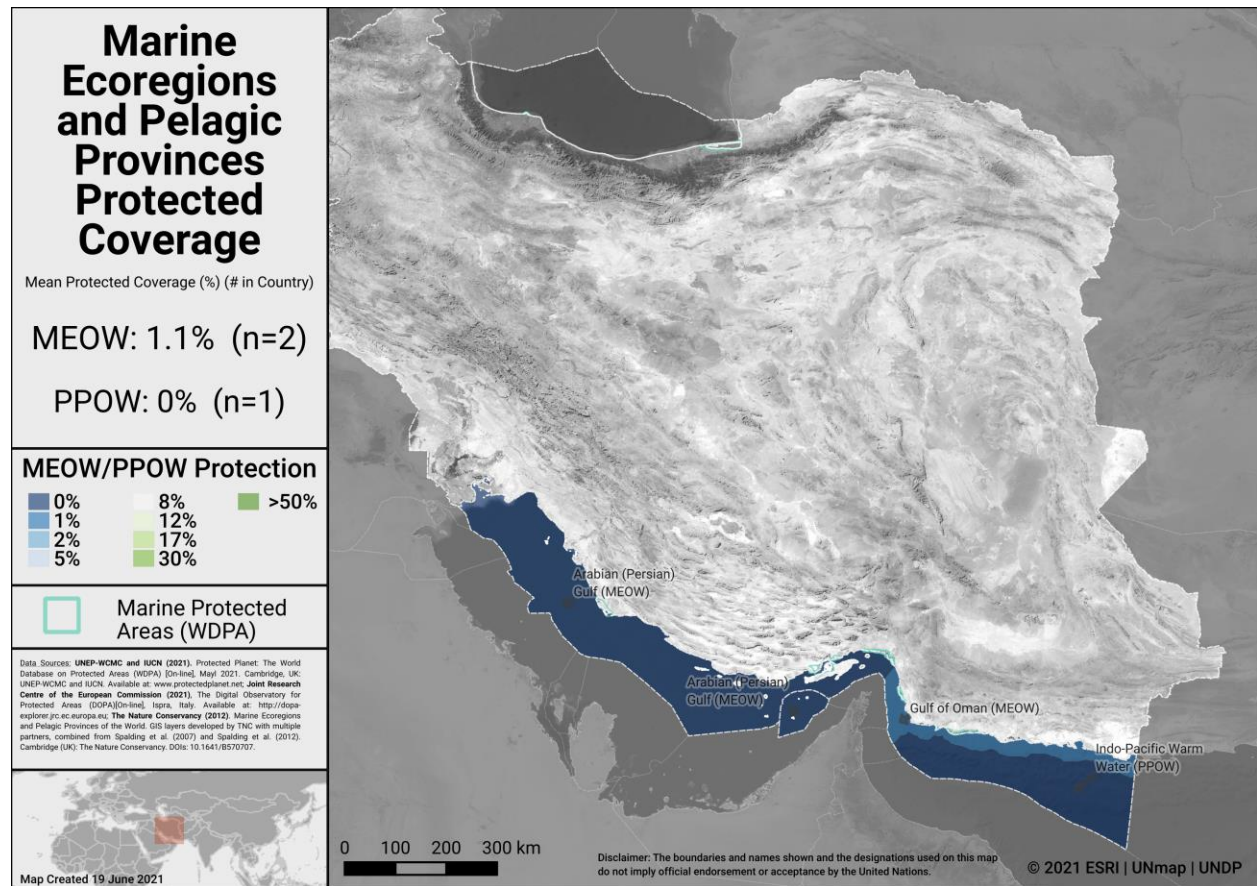


Terrestrial ecoregions in Iran (Islamic Republic of)

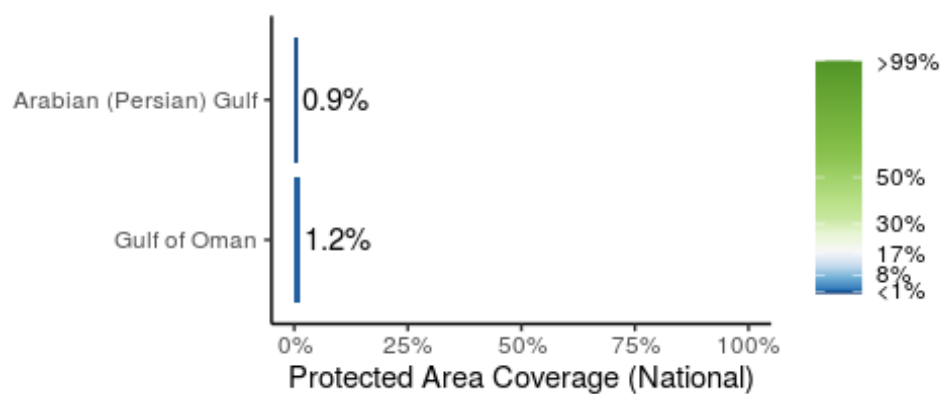


Terrestrial ecoregions of the World (TEOW) in Iran (Islamic Republic of)

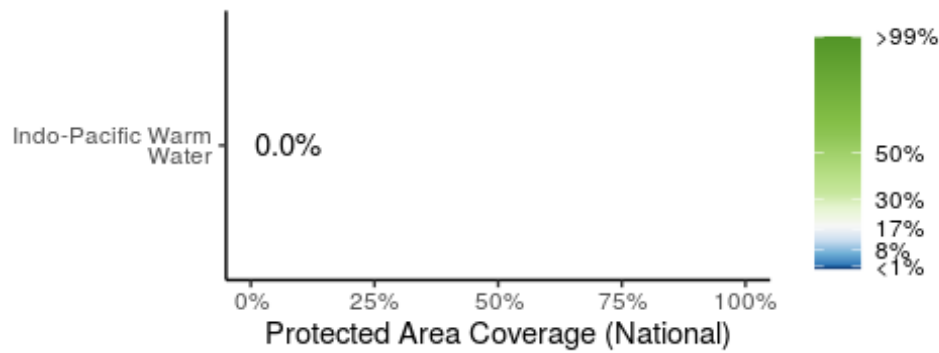




Marine ecoregions and pelagic provinces



Marine Ecoregions of the World (MEOW) in Iran (Islamic Republic of):



Pelagic Provinces of the World (PPOW) in Iran (Islamic Republic of):

Opportunities for action

There is opportunity for Iran (Islamic Republic of) to increase protection in terrestrial and marine ecoregions and pelagic provinces that have lower levels of coverage by PAs or OECMs. Ecoregions which currently have no coverage by PAs or OECMs are key areas for action.

AREAS IMPORTANT FOR BIODIVERSITY

Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs)

Protected area and OECM coverage of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) provide one proxy for assessing the conservation of areas important for biodiversity at national, regional and global scales. KBAs are sites that make significant contributions to the global persistence of biodiversity (IUCN, 2016). The KBA concept builds on four decades of efforts to identify important sites for biodiversity, including Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas, Alliance for Zero Extinction sites, and KBAs identified through Hotspot ecosystem profiles supported by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund. Incorporating these sites, the dataset of internationally significant KBAs includes Global KBAs (sites shown to meet one or more of 11 criteria in the Global Standard for the Identification of KBAs, clustered into five categories: threatened biodiversity; geographically restricted biodiversity; ecological integrity; biological processes; and irreplaceability), Regional KBAs (sites identified using pre-existing criteria and thresholds, that do not meet the Global KBA criteria based on existing information), and KBAs whose Global/Regional status is Not yet determined, but which will be assessed against the global KBA criteria within 8-12 years. Regional KBAs are often of critical international policy relevance (e.g., in EU legislation and under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands), and many are likely to qualify as Global KBAs in future once assessed for their biodiversity importance for other taxonomic groups and ecosystems. To date, nearly 16,000 KBAs have identified globally, and information on each of these is presented in the World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas: www.keybiodiversityareas.org.

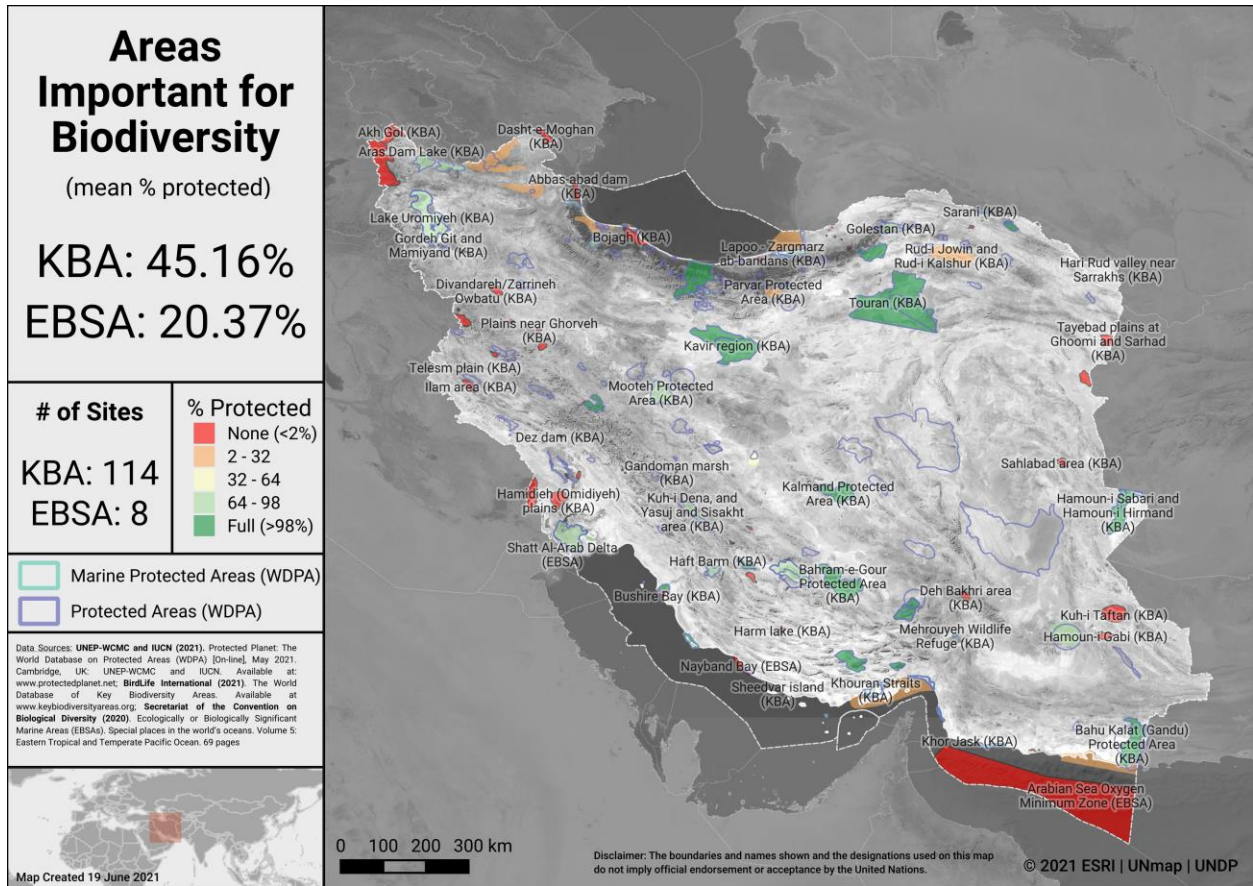
Iran (Islamic Republic of) has **114** Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs).

- Mean percent coverage of all KBAs by PAs and OECMs in Iran (Islamic Republic of) is **45.2%**.
- **26** KBAs have full (>98%) coverage by PAs and OECMs.
- **37** KBAs have partial coverage by PAs and OECMs.
- **51** KBAs have no (<2%) coverage by PAs and OECMs.

Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs)

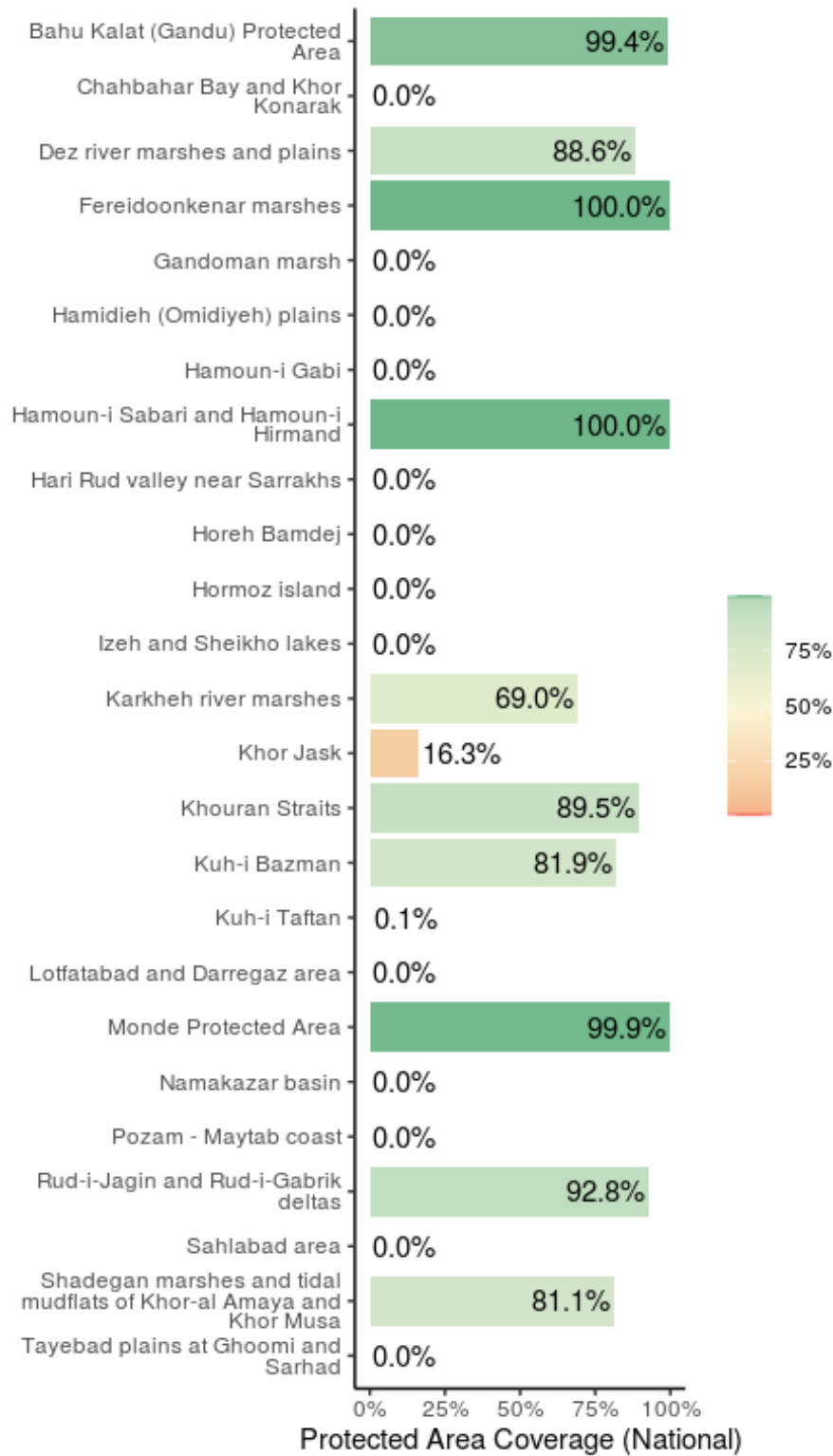
Other important areas for biodiversity may also include Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs), which were identified following the scientific criteria adopted at COP-9 (Decision IX/20; see more at: <https://www.cbd.int/ebsa/>). Sites that meet the EBSA criteria may require enhanced conservation and management measures; this could be achieved through means including MPAs, OECMs, marine spatial planning, and impact assessment.

There are 8 EBSAs with some portion of their extent within Iran (Islamic Republic of)'s EEZ, of which 2 EBSAs have no coverage from PAs or OECMs.

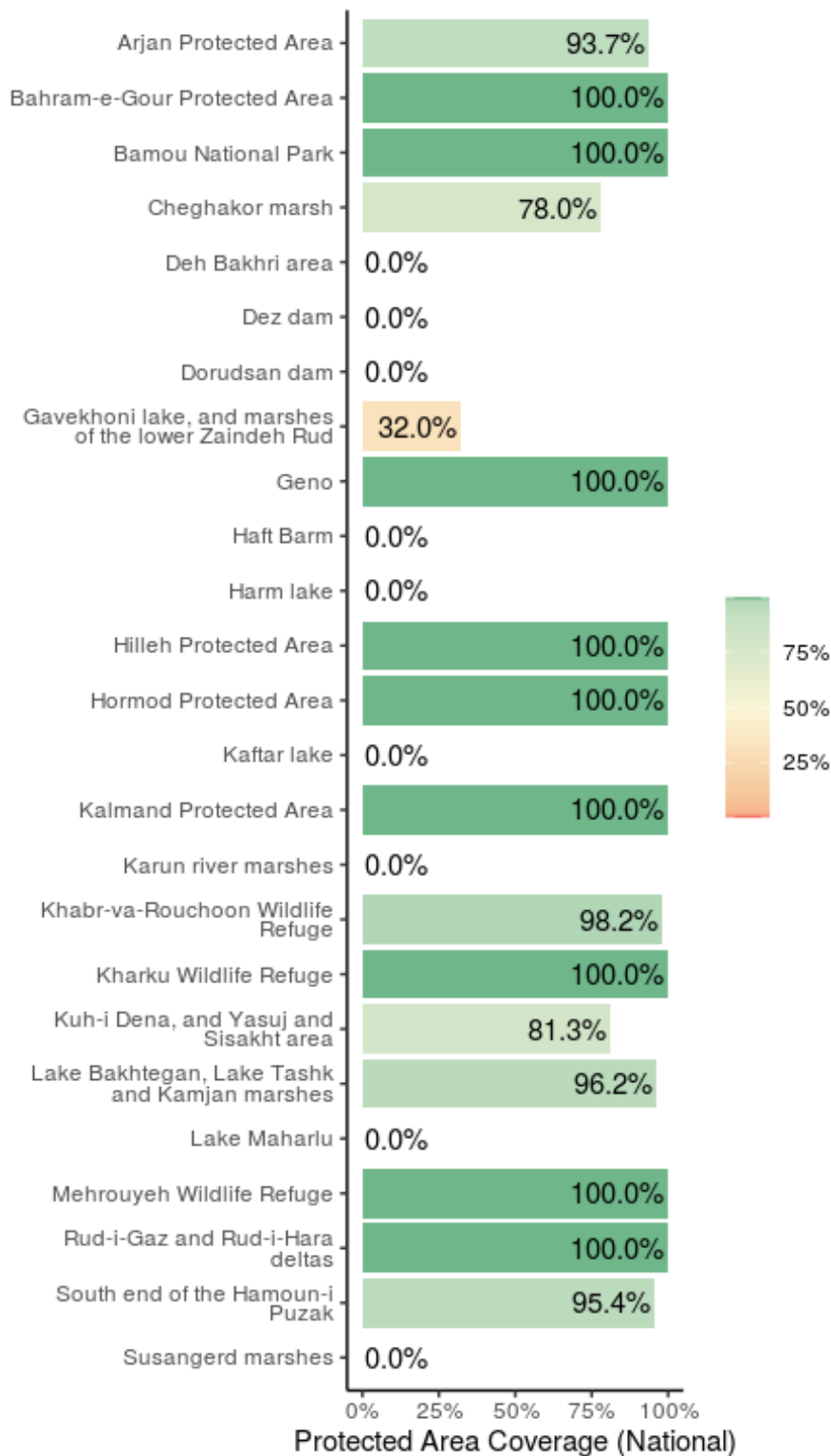


Areas Important for Biodiversity in Iran (Islamic Republic of)

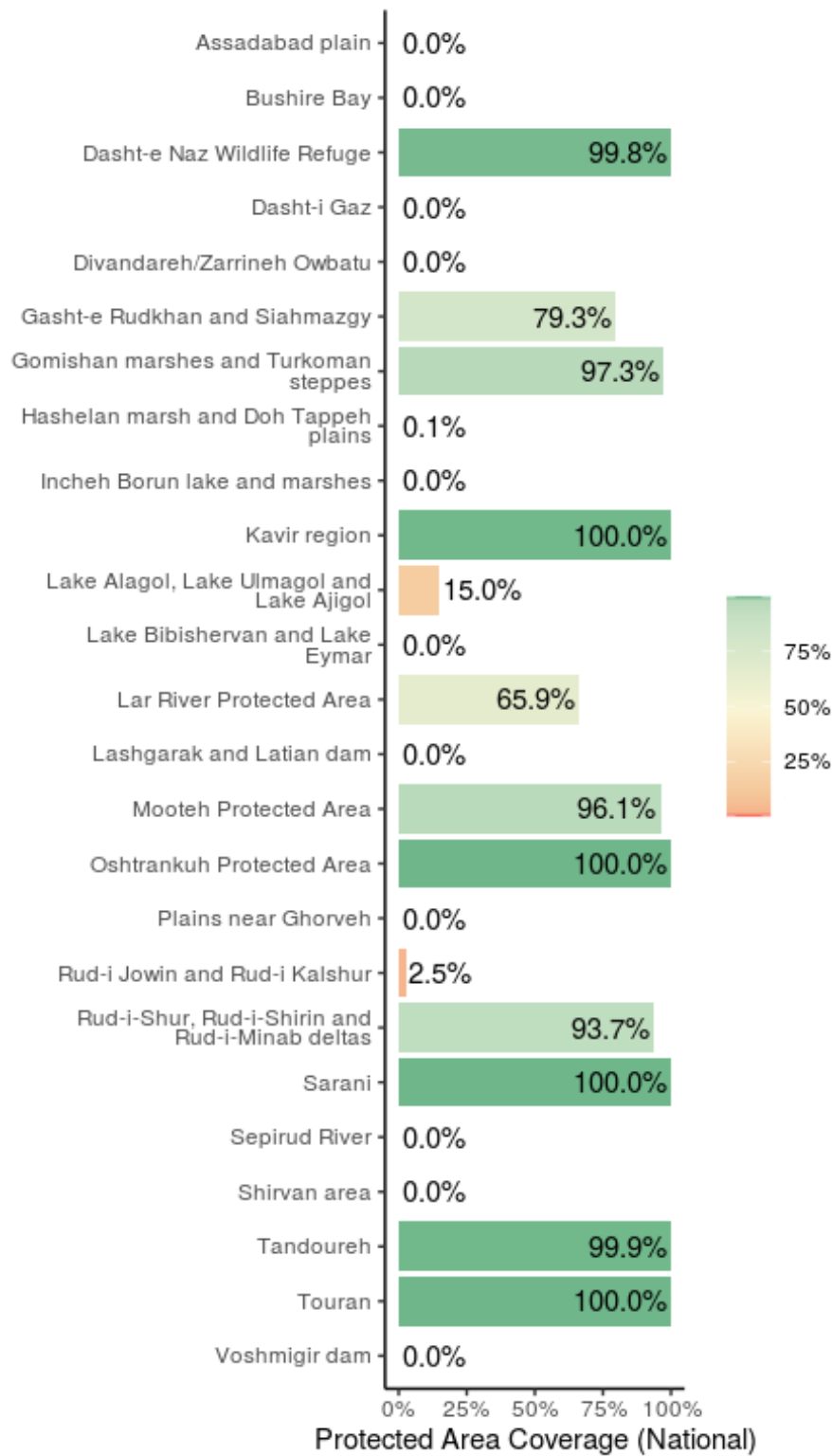




Key Biodiversity Area Coverage (KBA) in Iran (Islamic Republic of)

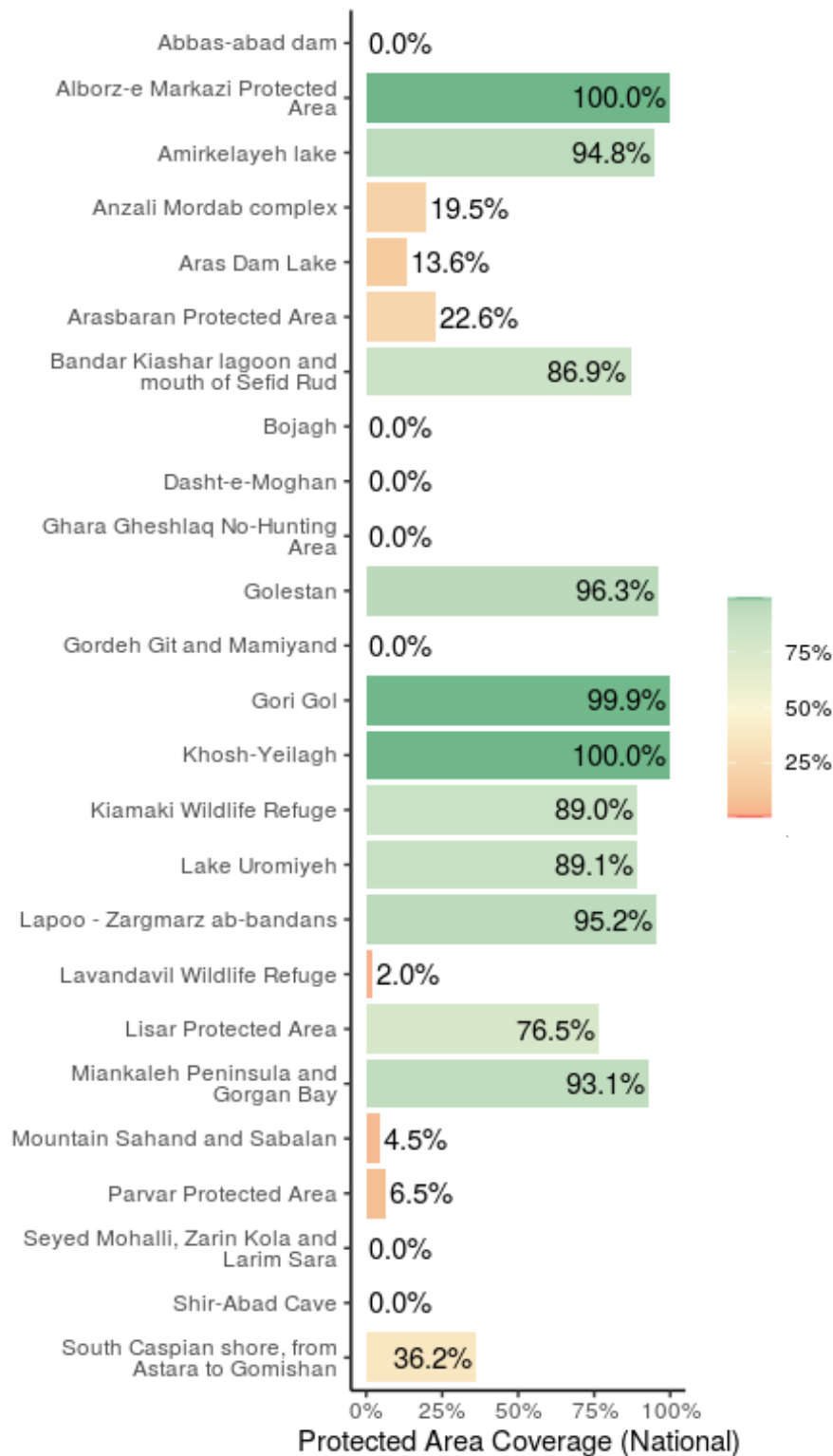


Key Biodiversity Area Coverage (KBA) in Iran (Islamic Republic of)

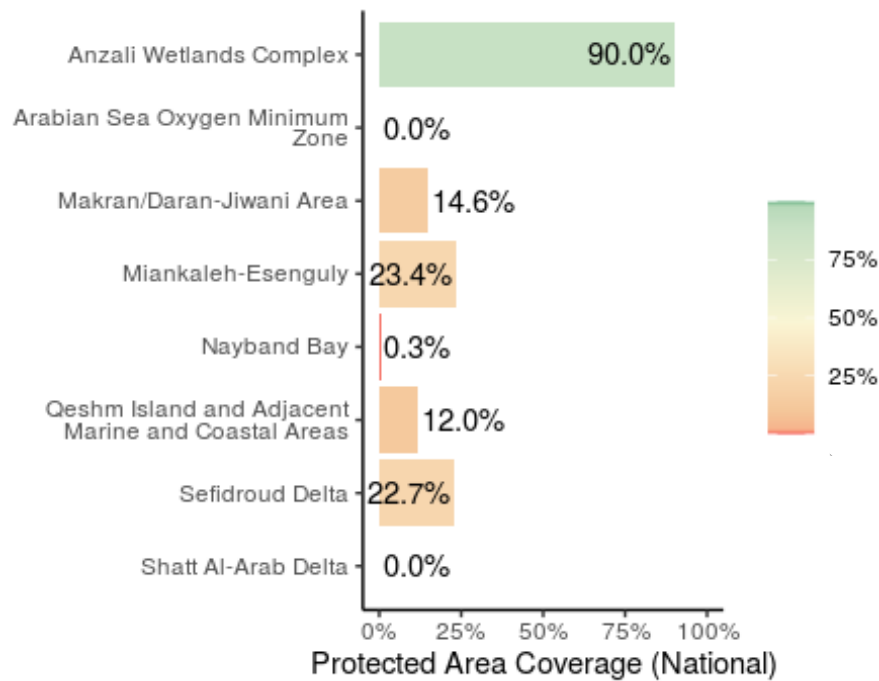


Key Biodiversity Area Coverage (KBA) in Iran (Islamic Republic of)





Key Biodiversity Area Coverage (KBA) in Iran (Islamic Republic of)



Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) in Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Opportunities for action

There is opportunity for Iran (Islamic Republic of) to increase protection of KBAs that have lower levels of coverage by PAs and OECMs; priority could be given to those with no current coverage

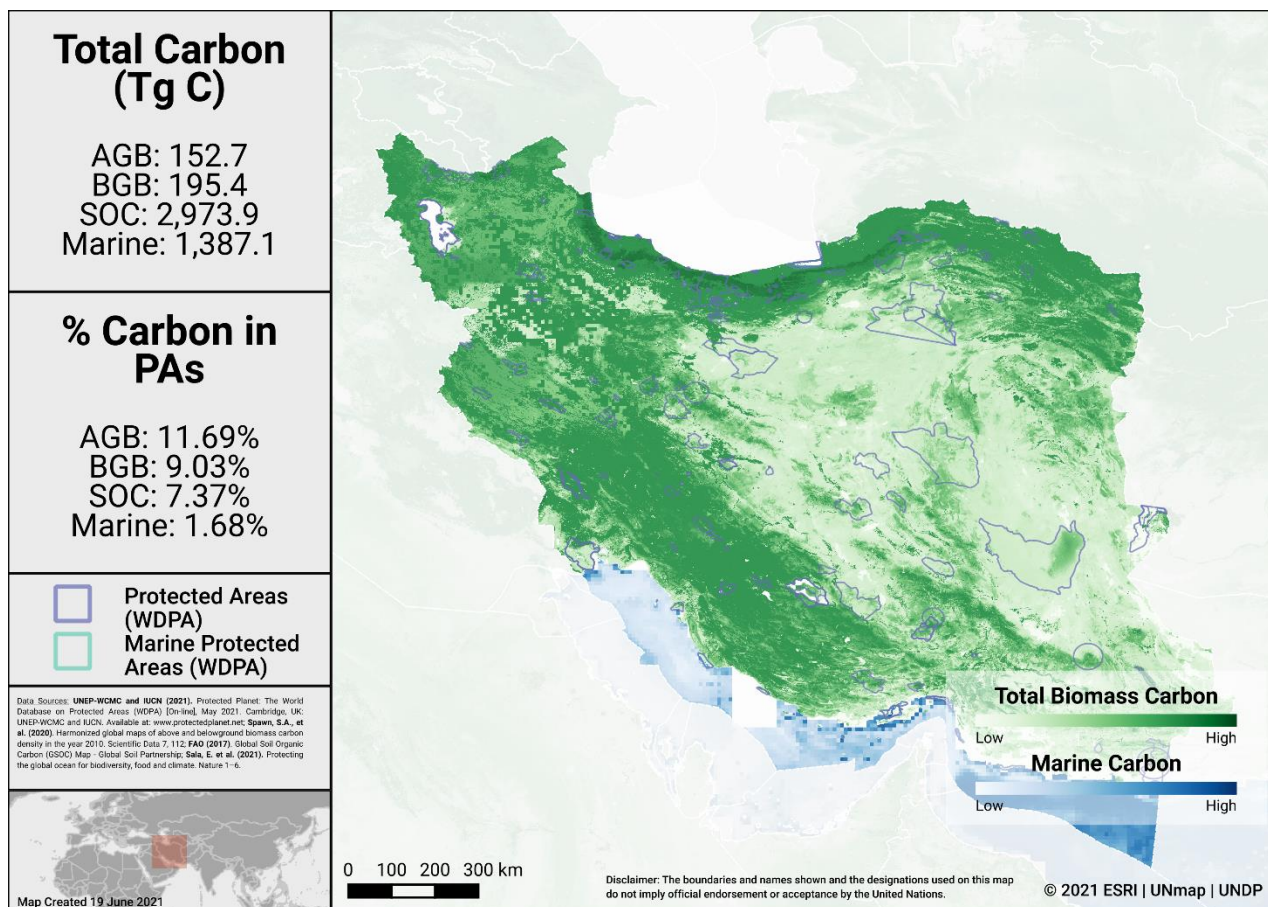
AREAS IMPORTANT FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

There is no single indicator identified for assessing the conservation of areas important for ecosystem services. For simplicity, two services with available global datasets are assessed here (carbon and water). In future, other critical ecosystem services could be explored.

Carbon

Data for biomass carbon comes from temporally consistent and harmonized global maps of aboveground biomass and belowground biomass carbon density (at a 300-m spatial resolution); the maps integrate land-cover specific, remotely sensed data, and land-cover specific empirical models (see Spawn et al., 2020 for details on methodology). The Global Soil Organic Carbon Map present an estimation of SOC stock from 0 to 30 cm (see FAO, 2017). Data is also presented from global maps of marine sedimentary carbon stocks, standardized to a 1-meter depth (see Sala et al., 2021, and Atwood et al., 2020).

The map below presents the total carbon stocks in Iran (Islamic Republic of) and the percent of carbon in protected areas. The total carbon stocks is 152.7 Tg C from aboveground biomass (AGB), with 11.7% in PAs; 195.4 Tg C from below ground biomass (BGB), with 9.0% in PAs; 2,973.9 Tg C from soil organic carbon (SOC), with 7.4% in PAs; and 1,387.1 Tg C from marine sediment carbon, with 1.7% in PAs.



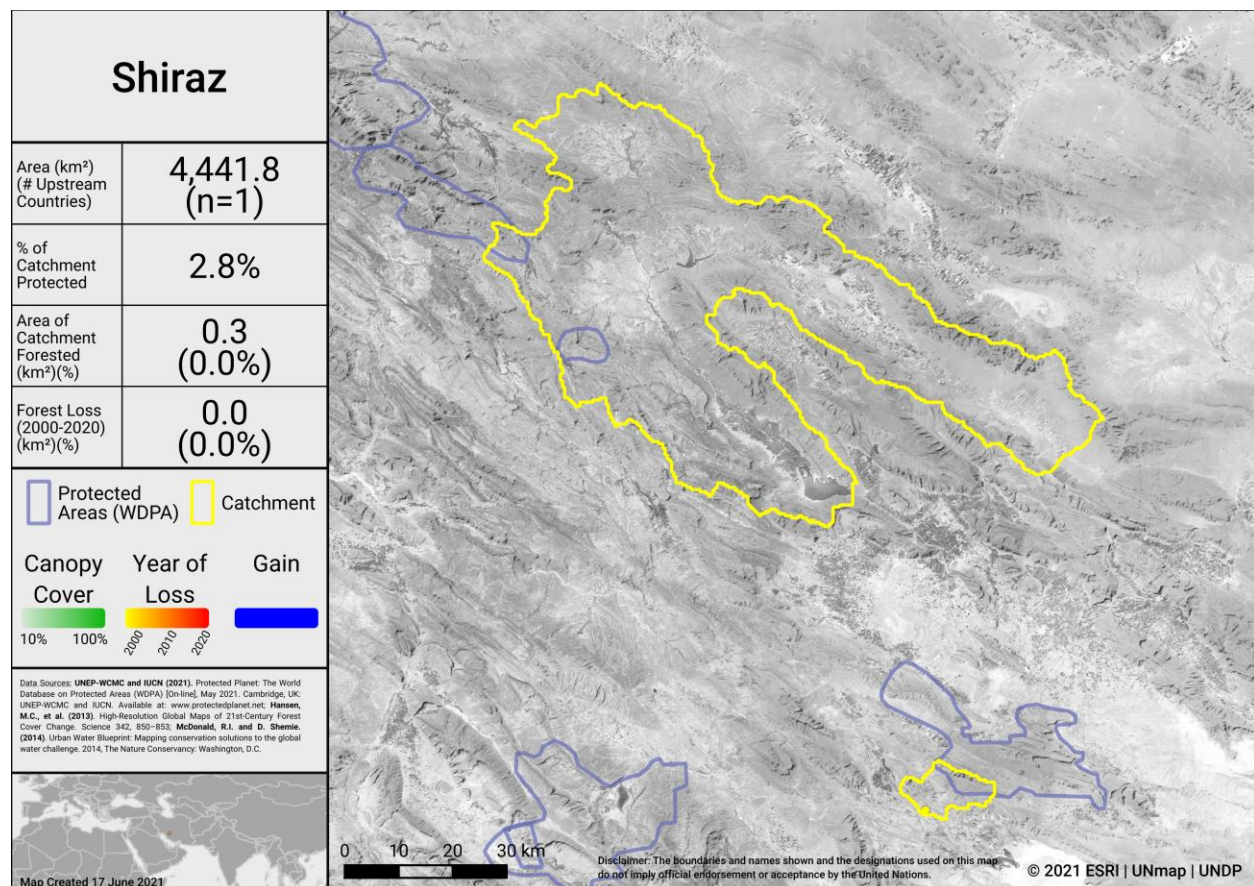
Carbon Stocks in Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Water

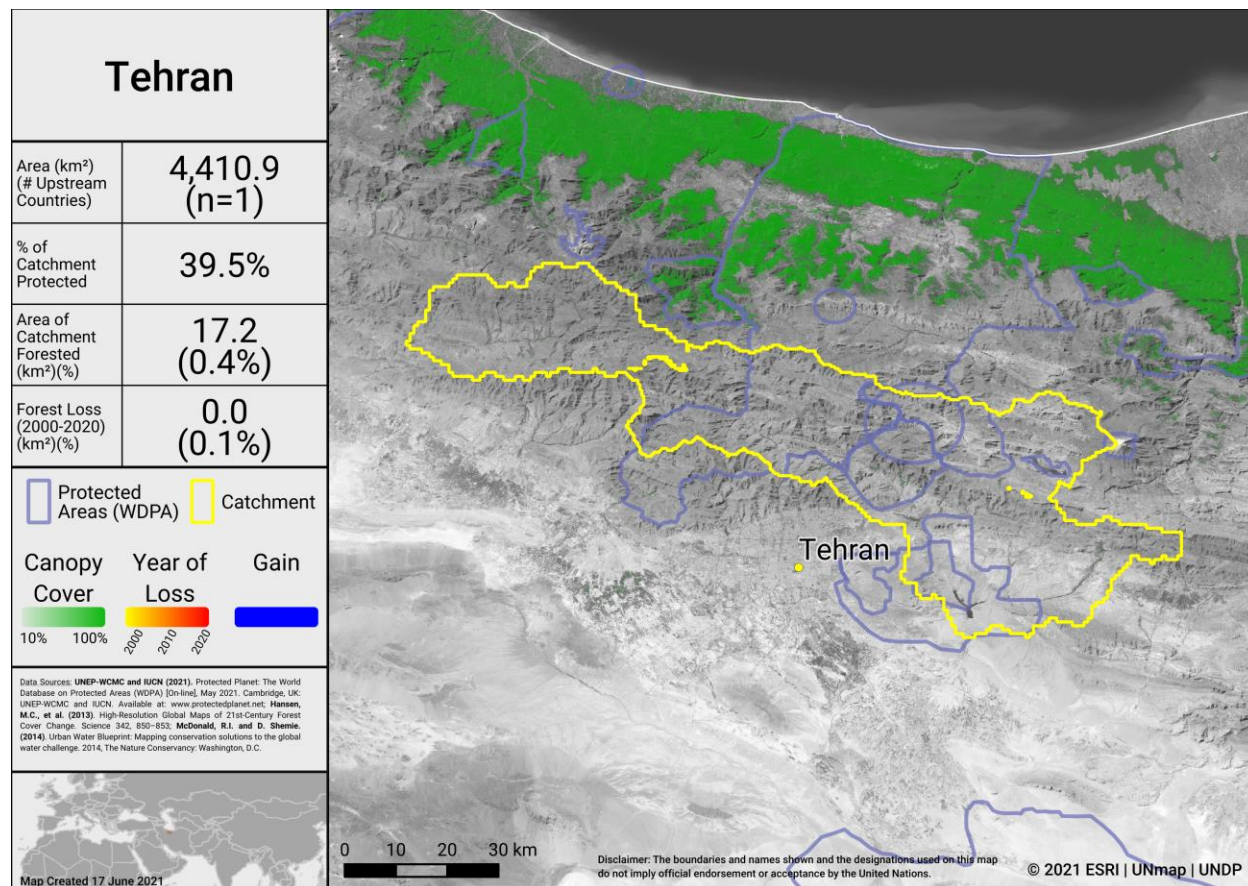
Information on the water sources for 534 cities is available via the City Water Map (CWM) and provides details on the catchment area of the watershed that supplies these cities (see McDonald et al., 2014 for details on methodology).

Forests and intact ecosystems support stormwater management and clean water availability, especially for large urban populations. Research that has examined the role of forests for city drinking water supplies shows that of the world’s 105 largest cities, more than 30% (33 cities) rely heavily on the local protected forests, which provide ecosystem services that underpin local drinking water availability and quality (Dudley & Stolton, 2003).

Drinking water supplies for cities in Iran (Islamic Republic of) may similarly depend on protected areas within and around water catchments. The maps below show the percentage forest cover and the forest loss from 2000-2020 in the most heavily populated water catchments of Iran (Islamic Republic of). Intact catchments can support more consistent water supply and improved water quality.



Water supply area for the city of Shiraz



Water supply area for the city of Tehran

Opportunities for action

For carbon, there is opportunity for Iran (Islamic Republic of) to increase PA and OECM coverage in both marine and terrestrial areas with high carbon stocks, as identified in the map above. Protecting areas with high carbon stocks secures the benefits of carbon sequestration in the area.

For water, there is opportunity to increase the area of the water catchment under protection by PAs and OECMs, or in cases where there is high levels of protection, focus on effective management for these areas. Protecting the current area of forested land and potentially reforesting would have benefits for improving water security.

CONNECTIVITY & INTEGRATION

Two global indicators, the Protected Connected land indicator (ProtConn; EC-JRC, 2021; Saura et al., 2018) and the PARC-Connectedness indicator (CSIRO, 2019), have been proposed for assessing the terrestrial connectivity of PA and OECM networks. To date there is no global indicator for assessing marine connectivity, though some recent developments include proposed guidance for the treatment of connectivity in the planning and management of MPAs (see Lausche et al., 2021).

Protected Connected Land Indicator (Prot-Conn)

As of January 2021, as reported in the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission's Digital Observatory for Protected Areas (DOPA) (JRC, 2021), the coverage of protected-connected lands (a measure of the connectivity of terrestrial protected area networks, assessed using the ProtConn indicator) in Iran (Islamic Republic of) was 2.1%.

PARC-Connectedness Index

In 2019, as assessed using the PARC-Connectedness Index (values ranging from 0-1, indicating low to high connectivity), connectivity in Iran (Islamic Republic of) is 0.39. This represents an increase from 0.37 in 2010.

Corridor case studies

There are currently no corridor case studies available for Iran (Islamic Republic of) (but see general details on conserving connectivity through ecological networks and corridors in Hilty et al 2020).

Opportunities for action

There is opportunity for a general increase of PAs or OECMs and to focus on PA and OECM management for enhancing and maintaining connectivity. Improving connectivity increases the effectiveness of PAs and OECMs and reduces the impacts of fragmentation.

As well, a range of suggested steps for enhancing and supporting integration are included in the voluntary guidance on the integration of PAs and OECMs into the wider land- and seascapes and mainstreaming across sectors to contribute, inter alia, to the SDGs (Annex I of COP Decision 14/8).



GOVERNANCE DIVERSITY

There is a lack of comprehensive global data on governance quality and equity in PAs and OECMs. Here, we provide data on the diversity of governance types for reported PAs and OECMs.

As of May 2021, PAs in Iran (Islamic Republic of) reported in the WDPA have the following governance types:

- 5.9% are governed by **governments** (by federal or national ministry or agency)
- 0.0% are under **shared** governance
- 0.0% are under **private** governance
- 0.0% are under **IPLC** governance
 - 0.0% by Indigenous Peoples
 - 0.0% by local communities
- 94.1% **do not** report a governance type

OECMs

As of May 2021, there are **0** OECMs in Iran (Islamic Republic of) reported in the WD-OECM, therefore there is no data available on OECM governance types.

Privately Protected Areas (PPAs)

There is currently no data available on PPAs for Iran (Islamic Republic of) (see Gloss et al., 2019, and Stolton et al., 2014 for details).

Information on territories and areas conserved by Indigenous Peoples and local communities (ICCAs) reported from CBD technical series case studies:

From Kothari et al. (2012), potential ICCAs (or similar designations) in Iran (Islamic Republic of) include:

- Several hundred grassland, wetland, coastal/marine, forest ICCAs.
 - There is no overall estimate (for the total number and total cover), documented cases range from few ha to 2 million ha
 - There are substantial areas of large rangelands under tribal confederacies that are *de facto* ICCAs.

Other Indigenous lands

Lands managed and/or controlled by Indigenous Peoples cover an area of 239,845.0 km², of which 220,235.0 km² falls outside of formal protected areas. Indigenous lands with a human footprint less than 4 (considered as 'natural landscapes') cover an area of 40,245.0 km² (for details on analysis see Garnett et al., 2018).

For Iran (Islamic Republic of) evidence for the presence of Indigenous Peoples comes from: Emadi, M. H. Pastoralists, participation and policy: an action oriented, systemic and participatory approach to improve the relationships between pastoralist nomads, government and natural resources in Iran (University of Western Sydney, 1995).

Boundaries of the lands Indigenous Peoples manage or have tenure rights over come from: Cenesta. Images from initiatives of Cenesta, UNINOMAD and UNICAMEL in Iran. <https://www.iccaconsortium.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/event-2013-ga-pres04-Images-from-initiatives-of-Cenesta-in-Iran.pdf> (2013).

Opportunities for action

Increase efforts to identify the governance types for the 94.1% of sites that do not have their governance type reported. If applicable, explore opportunities for governance types that have lower representation.

There is also opportunity for Iran (Islamic Republic of) to complete governance and equity assessments, to establish baselines, and identify relevant actions for improvement. Examples of existing tools and methodologies include: Governance Assessment for Protected and Conserved Areas (Franks & Brooker, 2018), Social Assessment of Protected Areas (Franks et al 2018), and Site-level assessment of governance and equity (IIED, 2020). As well, a range of suggested actions are included in the voluntary guidance on effective governance models for management of protected areas, including equity (Annex II of COP Decision 14/8).



PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS

This section provides information on the coverage of PAs and OECMs with completed protected area management effectiveness (PAME) assessments as reported in the global database (GD-PAME). The proportion of terrestrial and marine PAs with completed PAME assessments is also calculated and compared with the 60% target agreed to in COP-10 Decision X/31. Information is also included regarding changes in forest cover nationally within PAs and OECMs.

Protected area management effectiveness (PAME) assessments

As of May 2021, Iran (Islamic Republic of) has 185 PAs reported in the WDPA; of these PAs, 21 (11.4%) have management effectiveness evaluations reported in the global database on protected area management effectiveness (GD-PAME).

- 0.8% (13,310 km²) of the terrestrial area of the country is covered by PAs with completed management effectiveness evaluations.
 - 9.5% of the area of terrestrial PAs have completed evaluations.
- 0.5% (1,151 km²) of the marine area of the country is covered by PAs with completed management effectiveness evaluations.
 - 63.6% of the area of marine PAs have completed evaluations.

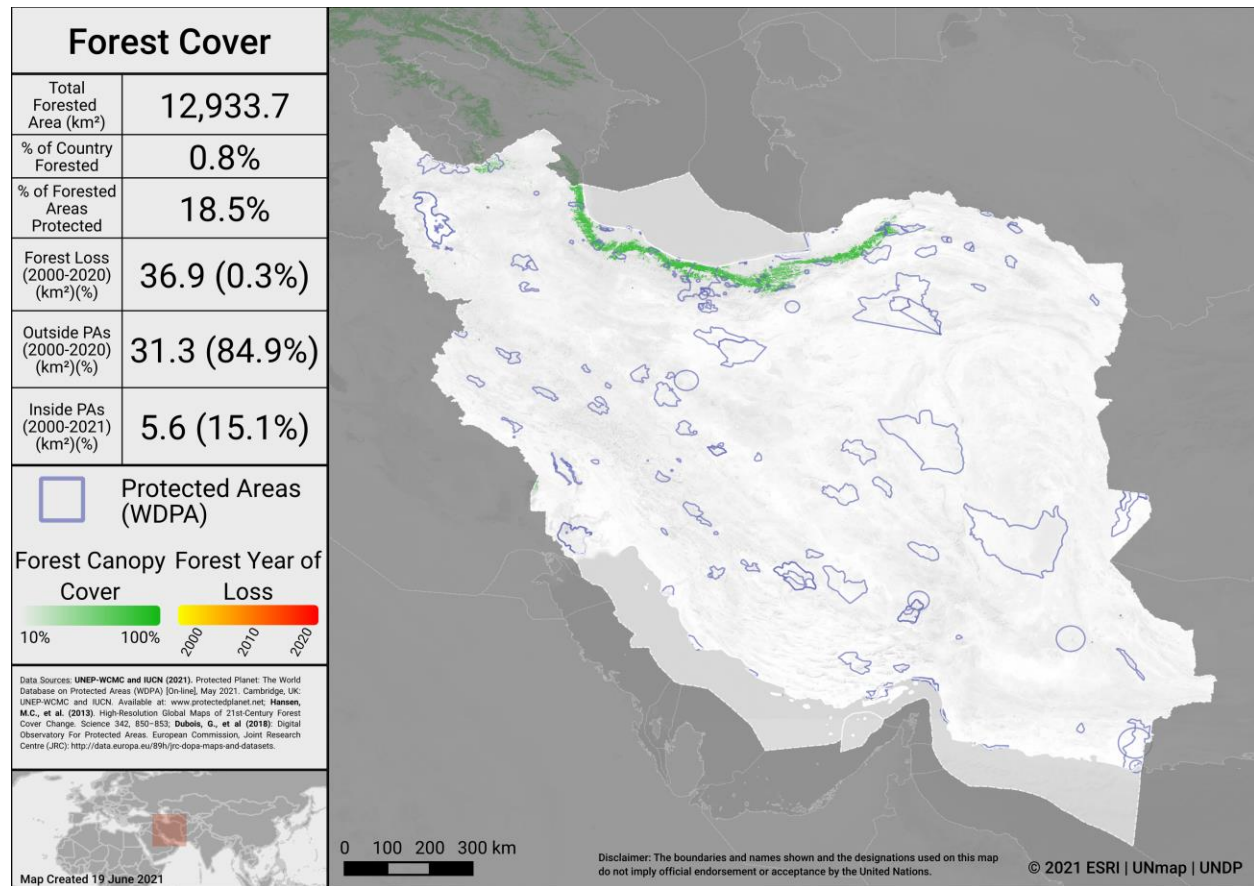
The 60% target for completed management effectiveness assessments (per COP Decision X/31) **has not** been met for terrestrial PAs and **has** been met for marine PAs.

As of May 2021, there are 0 OECMs in Iran (Islamic Republic of) reported in the WD-OECM and no information available on the management effectiveness of potential OECMs.

Changes in forest cover in protected areas and OECMs

Forested areas in Iran (Islamic Republic of) cover approximately 0.8% of the country, an area of 12,933.7 km². Approximately 18.5% (2,397.0 km²) of this is within the protected area estate of Iran (Islamic Republic of). Over the period 2000-2020 loss of forest cover amounted to over 36.9 km², or <0.01% of the country (0.3% of forest area), of which 5.6 km² (15.1%) occurred within protected areas. The map below shows how forest cover has changed in Iran (Islamic Republic of) from 2000-2020 both inside and outside of PAs. This can indicate how effective PAs are in reducing forest cover loss





Forest Cover and Forest Loss in Iran (Islamic Republic of)

Opportunities for action

The 60% target for completed management effectiveness assessments (per COP Decision X/31) **has not** been met for terrestrial PAs and **has** been met for marine PAs. Therefore, there is opportunity to increase protected area management effectiveness (PAME) evaluations for terrestrial PAs to achieve the target.

There is also opportunity to implement the results of completed PAME evaluations, to improve the quality of management for existing PAs and OECMs (e.g. through adaptive management and information sharing, increasing the number of sites reporting 'sound management') and to increase reporting of biodiversity outcomes in PAs and OECMs.

SECTION II: EXISTING PROTECTED AREA AND OECM COMMITMENTS

PRIORITY ACTIONS FROM 2015-2016 REGIONAL WORKSHOPS

National priority actions for Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 were provided by Parties following a series of regional workshops in 2015 and 2016. The Capacity-building workshop for South, Central and West Asia on achieving Aichi Biodiversity Targets 11 and 12 took place 7 - 10 December 2015 in New Delhi, India. Progress towards the quantitative targets for marine and terrestrial coverage has been assessed based on data reported in the WDPA and WD-OECM as of 2021. For more information, see the workshop report at: <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/>

The following actions were identified during the workshops:

Terrestrial and marine coverage: Increase PAs, implementation of MPAs develop quality of the PAs, Management Plan for all PAs, number of species with Action Plans

Ecological representation:

- 1) protection of most important habitats
- 2) protection of habitat most important to ecosystem services and local livelihoods
- 3) protection of the unique areas
- 4) wetlands and important bird areas
- 5) review on the PAs.

Areas Important for biodiversity and ecosystem services:

- 1) Identification of KBA
- 2) Public awareness and education
- 3) proposing for more protection on the areas important for BD
- 4) NGOs and local community engagement
- 5) MP for Zagros Mountain Region
- 6) Int. project on Wetlands
- 7) Enhance surveys.

Connectivity: keeping the integrity of the habitats.

No actions were identified for the following elements of Target 11: Management effectiveness; Governance and Equity; Integration into the wider landscape and seascape



NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLANS (NBSAPs)

Iran (Islamic Republic of) has submitted an NBSAP during the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (most recent NBSAP is available at: <https://www.cbd.int/nbsap/search/>).

National Target 19: By 2030, at least 20% of terrestrial and inland water ecosystems, and 5% of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are protected.

This NBSAP **did** include a quantitative target for **terrestrial** PAs or OECMs.

- As of May 2021 (based on the WDPA/WD-OECM) has the target been met: **No (but post-2020 target date)**
- Accounting for other projects, actions and commitments, if this target is met, coverage in the country will increase by **185,345 km²** by 2030.

This NBSAP **did** include a quantitative target for **marine** protected areas or OECMs.

- As of May 2021 (based on the WDPA/WD-OECM) has the target been met: **No (but post-2020 target date)**
- Accounting for other projects, actions and commitments, if this target is met, coverage in the country will increase by **9,431 km²** by 2030.

Related Actions:

- 66. Strengthening legal structures and mobilisation of financial resources in protected areas.
- 67. Identifying necessary wildlife corridors to facilitate their migration within and between protected areas.
- 68. Updating the protected areas' comprehensive management plans.
- 69. Increasing protected areas from 10.3% in 2016 of the country's area to 20% in 2030



APPROVED GEF-5 PROTECTED AREA PROJECTS

Approved GEF-5 and GEF-6 PA-related biodiversity projects

This includes biodiversity projects from the fifth and sixth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility (GEF-5 and GEF-6) with a clear impact of the quantity or quality of PAs; also including some projects occurring within the wider landscapes/seascapes around PAs. Only those with a status of 'project approved' or 'concept approved' as of June 2019 were considered. The qualifying elements likely benefiting from each GEF project is assessed based on a keyword search of Project Identification Forms (PIF). Where spatial data for the proposed PAs was available, further details (based on an analysis by UNDP) regarding their impacts for ecological representation, coverage of KBAs, and coverage of areas important for carbon storage is included.

GEF ID	PA increase?	Area to be added (km ²)	Type of new protected area	Qualitative elements potentially benefitting (based on keyword search of PIFs)
4470	No	N/A	N/A	All except Ecosystem services and Connectivity



UN OCEAN CONFERENCE VOLUNTARY COMMITMENTS

Voluntary commitments for the UN Ocean Conference are initiatives voluntarily undertaken by governments, the UN system, non-governmental organizations, among other actors—individually or in partnership—that aim to contribute to the implementation of SDG 14 (here we focus in particular on SDG 14.5). The registry of commitments was opened in February 2017, in the lead up to the first UN Ocean Conference (5 to 9 June 2017).

Other Ocean Actions

Other Ocean Actions submitted as voluntary commitments for SDG 14.5, will also create benefits for the qualifying elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11:

#OceanAction19489: Qeshm Island Environmental Management Office, by Department of Environment Qeshm Free Area (Government).

- Types of actions involved: management actions; Locally or community managed marine areas.
- Target 11 element addressed: Effectively managed.
- Progress report: No progress report submitted (as of May 2021).
- Further details available at:
<https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/?id=19489>



OTHER ACTIONS/COMMITMENTS

Commitments for PAs and OECMs from Other National Policies

Policy document	Ecosystem	Policy text
Nationally Determined Contribution	Wetland ecosystems	Avoided peat impacts: 0.03 Tg CO ₂ e/yr
Nationally Determined Contribution	Forest ecosystems	Reduction of gas flaring
Nationally Determined Contribution	Forest ecosystems	Forestry conservation
National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan	Forest ecosystems	Moving livestock out of forests, based on forests' carrying capacity
National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan	Forest ecosystems	A halt to any type of construction within primary forests
National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan	Forest ecosystems	A halt to industrial exploitation of primary forest and an increase in development of timber plantations from 900,000 ha to 2.9 million
National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan	Forest ecosystems	Reducing the utilisation of primary forests up to 30% per year, leading to a halt primary forest use in the fourth year of the 6th National Development Program



ANNEX I

FULL LIST OF TERRESTRIAL ECOREGIONS

Ecoregion Name	Area (km ²)	% of Global Ecoregion in Country	% of Country in Ecoregion	Area Protected (km ²)	% Protected in Country
Arabian desert	2,877.4	0.4	0.2	96.0	3.3
Arabian-Persian Gulf coastal plain desert	24.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Azerbaijan shrub desert and steppe	5,991.0	9.3	0.4	668.2	11.2
Badghyz and Karabil semi-desert	1,803.9	1.3	0.1	0.0	0.0
Baluchistan xeric woodlands	18.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Caspian Hyrcanian mixed forests	51,147.1	92.8	3.2	6,389.1	12.5
Caspian lowland desert	4,765.4	1.8	0.3	210.4	4.4
Central Persian desert basins	558,034.7	96.1	34.4	70,356.6	12.6
Eastern Anatolian montane steppe	64,298.4	38.2	4.0	2,982.2	4.6
Elburz Range forest steppe	63,289.5	100.0	3.9	6,118.9	9.7
Kopet Dag semi-desert	6,583.6	25.0	0.4	0.0	0.0
Kopet Dag woodlands and forest steppe	23,895.2	41.0	1.5	571.6	2.4
Kuh Rud and Eastern Iran montane woodlands	124,140.1	98.3	7.6	2,151.5	1.7
Mesopotamian shrub desert	1,790.4	0.9	0.1	0.0	0.0

Ecoregion Name	Area (km²)	% of Global Ecoregion in Country	% of Country in Ecoregion	Area Protected (km²)	% Protected in Country
Registan-North Pakistan sandy desert	50,078.7	18.1	3.1	3,016.3	6.0
South Iran Nubo-Sindian desert and semi-desert	301,866.8	86.0	18.6	22,879.9	7.6
Syrian xeric grasslands and shrublands	12.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Tigris-Euphrates alluvial salt marsh	7,296.2	20.5	0.4	333.2	4.6
Zagros Mountains forest steppe	351,336.5	88.4	21.6	19,173.3	5.5



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For any questions please contact support@unbiodiveristylab.org.

