

KEY BIODIVERSITY AREAS

*A Programme for
Sustaining the Most
Important Sites for Nature*



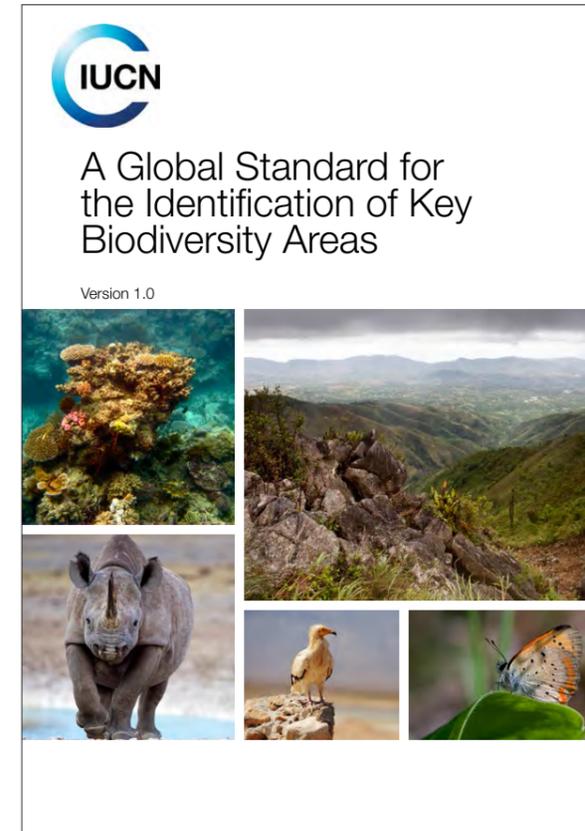
KEY BIODIVERSITY AREAS

Biodiversity loss is occurring at an alarming rate across the world's terrestrial, freshwater and marine environments. A crisis in its own right, the evidence also indicates that the loss of biodiversity jeopardizes the delivery of vital services biodiversity provides to people, such as crop pollination, fisheries, and cultural heritage. Reversing this trend requires addressing the destruction and degradation of natural habitats. Therefore, identifying and safeguarding sites of particular importance for biodiversity is urgent. Private industry, governments and many others need a reliable, scientifically valid, and globally representative source of information on sites that are critical for biodiversity conservation, to help them make management, development, and investment decisions. These sites are called Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs for short).

For the first time, the conservation community has rallied around a standard approach to identifying sites that contribute significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity. National Coordination Groups identify KBAs using the best available scientific data and globally standardised criteria. To date, the partnership has mapped 15,000 KBAs worldwide, though there are many gaps. KBA maps and associated biodiversity data help guide the strategic expansion of protected area networks by governments, inform the implementation of international environmental agreements, support national and regional spatial planning, inform private sector safeguard policies and investments, and inform conservation efforts of local and indigenous communities.

To date KBAs have been most comprehensively identified for birds. Over the next 10 years, the KBA Partnership will map KBAs for ecosystems as well as many other animal and plant species, and thereby identify the most important marine, freshwater, and terrestrial sites to conserve on the planet.

Front Cover: Large Headed Forest Treefrog (*Leptopelis grandiceps*, VU) in Kimboza Forest Reserve, Tanzania © Michele Menegon; Below: Giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis*, VU) in Masai Mara, Kenya © Robin Moore



IUCN (2016) *A Global Standard for the Identification of Key Biodiversity Areas, Version 1.0*. First edition. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN.

A Global Standard for the Identification of Key Biodiversity Areas establishes a consultative, science-based process for KBA identification, founded on a standard methodology. It builds on four decades of experience in identifying important sites for different subsets of biodiversity, including Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas, Alliance for Zero Extinction sites, Important Plant Areas, Prime Butterfly Areas, and key biodiversity areas for freshwater and marine species. The KBA Standard harmonises these existing approaches and provides a common currency for the identification and safeguard of sites important for threatened biodiversity, geographically restricted biodiversity, ecological integrity and ecosystem intactness, biological processes, and irreplaceability in terrestrial, inland water, and marine environments.

Left to Right: Atlantic Puffin (*Fratercula arctica*, VU) on the Farne Islands, United Kingdom © Paul Donald; Monarch Butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*, NE) © WWF-US/Clay Bolt; Sumatran Tiger (*Panthera tigris*, EN) © Roger Smith



KBA PARTNERSHIP

Twelve of the world's leading nature conservation organizations have launched an ambitious new partnership to identify, map, monitor and conserve the most important places for life on Earth.

The KBA Partnership mobilizes the expertise, experience and resources of the partner organizations to:

- Identify, map and document Key Biodiversity Areas worldwide that, when conserved, will help ensure the long-term survival of the majority of the biodiversity that we know of on Earth;
- Promote targeted conservation action in KBAs; and
- Inform and influence public policy and private sector decision-making that impacts KBAs.

Partnership Structure —

The KBA Committee is responsible for the governance and strategic direction of the partnership. The KBA Secretariat coordinates the partnership and ensures the delivery and promotion of the KBA Programme and the World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas™.

The KBA Community provides a platform for collaboration and exchange between experts and organisations involved in KBA identification, review and monitoring, with a particular focus on national and local organizations and communities.

The KBA Consultative Forum brings together users of KBA data, including governments, businesses, and indigenous and local communities.

Experts can contribute to the identification of KBAs by participating in KBA National Coordination Groups, nominating candidate sites, and/or participating in the review process for proposed sites.

Identifying & Documenting Sites —

United by the global KBA Standard, the KBA Partnership is working to ensure that KBAs are appropriately identified through local, national and international consultation and correctly documented, and that the global KBA network is taxonomically, ecologically and geographically comprehensive.

Targeting Conservation Action —

The KBA Partnership is helping to target conservation efforts worldwide by systematically identifying and mapping internationally important sites and ensuring that scarce resources are directed to the most important places for nature. Through their conservation programmes, the KBA Partners contribute directly to the conservation of KBAs in more than 150 countries worldwide, both on land and in the water.

Informing Policy & Decision Making —

The KBA Partners engage actively and constructively with public and private sector policymakers to promote conservation and the sustainable and equitable management of KBAs, whether on land, in freshwater systems, or in the sea. Key policy priorities include: targeted expansion of protected area and conservation area networks, including state, private and community-owned or managed lands and waters; guidance for businesses and governments on commercial operations in KBAs and managing risks to biodiversity; and safeguards for corporations and financial institutions for critical habitats.

Facing Page (clockwise from top): Great Barrier Reef, Australia © Holobionics; Jamaican Iguana (*Cyclura collei*, CR), a species endemic to Jamaica © Robin Moore; Aggregation of Lesser Flamingoes (*Phoeniconaias minor*, NT) at Olodien Bay, Lake Naivasha, Kenya © Robin Moore; A giant lobelia (*Lobelia mildbraedii*, NE) endemic to the Albertine Rift © Andy Plumprtre



A GLOBAL RESOURCE

Facing Page (top): © Andy Plumtre
Facing Page (bottom): © Robin Moore
This page (top): © Richard Barrett / WWF-UK
This Page (bottom): © Jürgen Freund / WWF

The World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas™ is an interactive online database and map of KBAs with links to detailed documentation for each site. The database is managed by BirdLife International on behalf of the KBA Partnership.

To learn more about these remarkable places, visit www.keybiodiversityareas.org.



Rwenzori Mountains, Uganda

The Rwenzori massif, straddling the border of Uganda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, includes three of Africa's highest peaks with a montane vegetation that has evolved in isolation of other mountains. It contains two endemic chameleons as well as several unique plant species.



Nordaut-Svalbard nature reserve, Norway

The Nordaut-Svalbard nature reserve is a globally important site for Polar Bear (*Ursus maritimus*, VU) and several species of migratory birds including Thick-billed Murre (*Uria lomvia*, LC), where over 140,000 individuals aggregate seasonally.



Massif de la Hotte, Haiti

This mountain range holds many globally threatened and restricted range species, including 8 Critically Endangered or Endangered frog found nowhere else in the world, making it both an Alliance for Zero Extinction site and a KBA.



Tubbataha Reef National Marine Park, Philippines

Tubbataha Reef National Marine Park in the Philippines is an important rookery site for seabirds and marine turtles (*Chelonia mydas*, EN and *Eretmochelys imbricata*, CR). In addition to being a KBA, it is both a World Heritage site and a Ramsar site.

GET INVOLVED

Please help us deliver on this landmark new global effort to conserve the most important places on our planet for biodiversity—for wildlife and wild places. Together, we can:

1. Identify and map the most important sites on Earth for biodiversity
2. Engage governments, businesses, civil society, and local and indigenous communities in this global effort
3. Monitor the health and conservation status of these important sites
4. Collaborate to conserve, protect, and safeguard these important places, for today and for posterity.



Conservation practitioners can work to establish National Coordination Groups and identify KBAs in their country

Donors can support the KBA Programme through the KBA Secretariat
Contact Andy Plumptre at aplumptre@keybiodiversityareas.org

Companies can work to minimize their impacts on KBAs by visiting ibat-alliance.org & www.keybiodiversityareas.org/business-guidelines