

Protected Areas for a Living Planet

delivering on CBD commitments

The CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas



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In February 2004, 188 countries made a huge step towards protecting the world's 15 million unique species. For the first time, the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) — the first united effort by governments to address the rate at which the world's natural resources are being degraded and destroyed — approved a programme focused solely on the *in situ* conservation of biodiversity. Also for the first time, they committed to a set of tangible targets to deliver a global network of comprehensive, well-managed, and representative terrestrial and marine protected areas — with a deadline of 2010 and 2012, respectively, for their delivery.

This Programme of Work on Protected Areas (PoWPA) adopted by the 7th Conference of the Parties to the CBD (COP7) is a monumental event — a one-in-ten-year opportunity to ensure on-the-ground conservation action around the world.

The PoWPA is considered to be the main instrument for achieving the CBD '2010 Target' to significantly reduce the current rate of biodiversity loss by 2010 (see Box 1). It is also linked to the sustainable development concerns of the World Summit for Sustainable Development (WSSD) Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly goal 7 on ensuring environmental stability (see Box 1), allowing protected areas to feed into national poverty reduction strategies.

PoWPA structure

The PoWPA has 16 goals, each with specific, time-bound targets, which are organized under four Programme Elements:

1. Direct actions for planning, selecting, establishing, strengthening, and managing protected area systems and sites

Protected areas are one of the most effective tools for conserving biodiversity and natural habitats. They also contribute to the livelihoods and well-being of local communities and society at large.

2. Governance, participation, equity, and benefit sharing
3. Enabling Activities
4. Standards, assessment, and monitoring

Each goal and target has a list of suggested activities (see Box 2) for CBD Parties. At COP7, Parties committed to meeting all of the PoWPA goals and targets, while implementing those suggested activities that are most appropriate at the national level.

Box 1. Overall purpose of the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas

'The overall purpose of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas is to support the establishment and maintenance by 2010 for terrestrial and by 2012 for marine areas of comprehensive, effectively managed, and ecologically representative national and regional systems of protected areas that collectively, *inter alia* through a global network contribute to achieving the three objectives of the Convention and the 2010 target to significantly reduce the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional, national and sub-national levels and contribute to poverty reduction and the pursuit of sustainable development, thereby supporting the objectives of the Strategic Plan of the Convention, the World Summit on Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Development Goals.'

Box 2. Sample goal, target, and activities from the PoWPA

PROGRAMME ELEMENT 1: Direct actions for planning, selecting, establishing, strengthening, and managing, protected area systems and sites

Goal 1.1: To establish and strengthen national and regional systems of protected areas integrated into a global network as a contribution to globally agreed goals

Target: By 2010, terrestrially and 2012 in the marine area, a global network of comprehensive, representative and effectively managed national and regional protected area system is established

Suggested activities for CBD Parties:

1.1.2 As a matter of urgency, by 2006, take action to establish or expand protected areas in any large, intact or relatively unfragmented or highly irreplaceable natural areas.

1.1.3 As a matter of urgency, by 2006 terrestrially and by 2008 in the marine environment, take action to address the under-representation of marine and inland water ecosystems in existing national and regional systems of protected areas.

1.1.5 By 2006 complete protected area system gap analyses at national and regional levels.

1.1.6 By 2009, designate the protected areas as identified through the national or regional gap analysis.

Action Guide to implement the PoWPA: www.biodiv.org/doc/

Support for PoWPA implementation

COP7 established a **Working Group on Protected Areas** to assist with the implementation of the PoWPA. One of its main tasks is, 'as a matter of urgency', to explore options for mobilizing financial resources for PoWPA implementation by developing countries. The working group will also look at reviewing implementation and building government capacity. COP7 decided that Parties should report on their implementation progress to each COP until 2010.

Also at COP7, seven **large international NGOs** (BirdLife International, Conservation International, Flora and Fauna International, the Nature Conservancy (TNC), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), World Resources Institute (WRI), and WWF) made a commitment to promote government implementation of the PoWPA. Since then, these NGOs have been working together with IUCN–The Conservation Union to support PoWPA implementation at both the national and international level, and to develop specific tools and guidance to assist governments in their work.

In March 2006, the **8th Conference of the Parties** to the CBD (COP 8) made a series of decisions to support PoWPA implementation by governments. Specifically, COP8 decided to:

- Put in place a system to support and monitor implementation, including regional capacity building workshops
- Promote donor involvement in implementation through a variety of regional donor roundtables as well as a global-level dialogue

- Explore innovative mechanisms for funding protected areas such as international payment for environmental services and the sharing of benefits from genetic resources.

WWF's Protected Areas for a Living Planet programme

The PoWPA provides a unique opportunity for civil society to both work with governments to ensure PoWPA implementation on the ground, and to lobby for government action where CBD Parties are not fulfilling their commitments. The short timescale for many of the deadlines also means that effective action over the next two years to implement the PoWPA is paramount.

WWF, with the support of MAVA *Fondation pour la Protection de la Nature*, developed *Protected Areas for a Living Planet* to support CBD Parties to meet their PoWPA targets — in particular to establish regional networks of well-managed protected areas that are sustainably financed, ensure effective participation of local communities, and provide social and economic benefits. This five-year programme is already being implemented in the Altai-Sayan, Carpathian, Caucasus, and Dinaric Arc ecoregions, with activities expected to start in the West Africa Marine and European Alps ecoregions later in 2007. Partners are being sought to replicate the approach in Asia, the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, and on a wider scale in Africa.



Natural habitats provide food, fuel, and building materials, especially for the world's poorest people, as well as a range of environmental services such as climate regulation, nutrient and waste management, flood control, and freshwater. Protected areas are vital to conserve these habitats and services.

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