

Protected Planet Report 2016

How protected areas contribute to achieving global targets for biodiversity



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Foreword

At a time when human pressures on the world's species and ecosystems are intensifying, there is also a growing recognition that natural ecosystems make an essential contribution to human health and wellbeing. The integration of environmental sustainability into more than half of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals clearly reflects this trend. Never has the need to conserve biodiversity and cultural heritage been greater, and more universally accepted, than today. This increased awareness has led to investments in new systems of protection around the world.

Previous Protected Planet Reports, from 2012 and 2014, focused on assessing progress towards the achievement of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, in particular Aichi Biodiversity Target 11. By highlighting current research and case studies, this Protected Planet Report assesses how protected contribute to the achievement of 15 of the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets and relevant Targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The report underscores the importance of protected areas in sustaining the functions and values of natural ecosystems as well as the needs of human society. It highlights the nature-based solutions that protected areas make to critical environmental and societal challenges including climate change, food and water security, human health and well-being, and natural disasters. These functions will become ever more valuable as terrestrial, marine, coastal, and inland water ecosystems outside protected areas become compromised by over-exploitation, habitat loss and degradation.

The 2016 Protected Planet Report is a call to build a better understanding of the value of investing in protected areas managed under a broad range of governance arrangements. This will require a concerted and coordinated engagement by all sectors, including expert organizations, civil society, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, governments, and business. Such a commitment is a fundamental component of success in the search to make protected and other conserved areas core elements of sustainable landscapes.




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