

## Target 3: Conserved areas

### Main elements to be addressed in this target:

- Purpose and total area

The purpose of conserved areas is to maintain species and habitats in good conservation status. A sufficient total amount of area-based conservation measures are required to ensure adequate protection for all threatened species and ecosystems and to remain within planetary boundaries. At the same time there should be a specific focus on the purpose of area-based conservation, which is “to ensure that wild flora, fauna and habitats are maintained at, or restored to a favourable conservation status”.

- Equitably governed and effectively managed

Protected areas can only deliver when governed and managed in an equitable, gender-just and effective manner that fully respects all human rights, thereby fulfilling site-specific conservation objectives. Unfortunately, too many conserved areas are neither equitably nor effectively managed and therefore are no more than paper parks. Moreover, many Indigenous Peoples’ and local communities’ lands, waters and territories are overlapped by protected areas, which are too often organised in ways that disrespect their governance and tenure rights.

- ICCAs as a specific and priority category in area-based conservation

Given the critical role of areas governed by IPLCs in conserving biodiversity (cf. [IPBES global assessment report](#)), ICCAs and traditional territories need to have priority over classical protected areas. The target should also recognise the contributions of other community-based conservation measures, wherever applicable.

- Full respect for human rights and UNDRIP, including FPIC

In many countries, the top-down installation of protected areas has led to evictions, violence, and other human rights abuses. These must be avoided, by highlighting them in the target (including the need for free prior and informed consent) and monitoring the respect for Human Rights obligations related to protected areas by all Parties, with a specific headline indicator.

### Elements that should NOT be part of the target

- Any reference to, or possibility of, conservation which excludes IPLCs, or people in general (often referred to as “Fortress conservation”)

Protected and conserved areas should be made conditional on the recognition of the rights of IPLC, including FPIC, and other rightsholders. The definition of conserved areas must include Indigenous territories and local communities’ lands, ensuring that designation and governance are inclusive, gender-just and participatory everywhere.

## Elements that should be part of the target

- Respect for the rights of IPLCs with explicit reference to UNDRIP and UNDROP.

IPLCs and ICCAs have demonstrated themselves to be the best guardians of nature, wherever this is applicable. However, their rights have often been violated in the name of nature conservation. Therefore, all future area-based conservation needs to take their rights into account.

- Governance by IPLCs
  - Recognition of the importance of IPLCs in the equitable, gender-just governance and effective management of such areas
  - Recognition of the areas governed by them

Governance by IPLCs is essential as this is the main way in which they can ensure conservation. Furthermore, this is the only fair and equitable way. To govern their areas effectively, their traditional governance structures and territories need to be adequately recognised. In some cases, shared governance between IPLCs and governments is the best solution, particularly for marine.

- Participatory, equitable and gender-just governance, as well as effective management

Protected areas only deliver when developed and governed participatively, equitably, and in a gender-just way.

- Ecological representativity

Conserved areas should be designated where the species and habitats under threat occur and should represent all the diversity of habitats and species in all regions.

- Ecological connectivity

By definition, the isolated “islands” of conserved areas surrounded by degraded areas or areas undergoing potentially biodiversity-destructive activities cannot be effective. Thus, the designation/recognition of conservation measures should constitute a broader ecologically coherent network.

## Further reading on this target:

*Simon Counsell, 'Conservationists claim that their aim to place thirty per cent of the planet in protected areas by 2030 is supported by science. It isn't. What the science does and doesn't say about 30x30', REDDmonitor March 2022 <https://redd-monitor.org/2022/03/07/conservationists-claim-that-their-aim-to-place-thirty-per-cent-of-the-planet-in-protected-areas-by-2030-is-supported-by-science-it-isnt-what-the-science-does-and-doesnt-say-about-3/>*

*Why a 30 per cent blanket target on protected areas is not enough - F. Wulf in rural 21, June 2021 [https://www.rural21.com/english/current-issue/detail/article/why-a-30-per-cent-blanket-target-on-protected-areas-is-not-enough.html?no\\_cache=1](https://www.rural21.com/english/current-issue/detail/article/why-a-30-per-cent-blanket-target-on-protected-areas-is-not-enough.html?no_cache=1)*

*Global report of the Community Conservation Resilience Initiative, Global Forest Coalition, 2018, <https://globalforestcoalition.org/ccri-global-report/>*