



# Target 3 of the Global Biodiversity Framework: What does 30x30 look like in practice?

## HEADLINES

THE BRIEFING  
OUTLINES SOME  
OF THE KEY  
IMPLICATIONS OF  
THE TARGET.

IT PROVIDES:

• FINAL  
WORDING OF THE  
TARGET

• ANALYSIS OF  
EACH CLAUSE  
AND WHAT IT  
IMPLIES

• SUGGESTED  
URGENT ACTIONS  
TO ENSURE  
EFFECTIVE  
IMPLEMENTATION

• KEY REFERENCES

Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity agreed a new Global Biodiversity Framework in December 2022. Target 3 includes a commitment to designate 30% of the world in protected and conserved areas by 2030, one of the most ambitious conservation promises in history. This briefing outlines some of the implications.

Full wording of the target is given overleaf. Some headlines include:

- *At least 30 per cent*: the ambitious area target first proposed in 2020 was adopted, despite fears that some governments would overrule.
- *Terrestrial, inland water, and of coastal and marine areas*: inland waters have been included explicitly in the target after a long campaign.
- *Effectively conserved and managed*: there will be an increased emphasis on effectiveness rather than simply the area designated.
- *Equitably governed*: and on human rights, social impacts and the need to ensure the support of resident and local communities for any conservation actions.
- *Protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs)*: there will also be a higher emphasis on OECMs, which is both exciting and challenging given confusion amongst governments about their selection and management.
- *Recognizing indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable*: in effect a third type of area-based conservation has been introduced, beyond protected areas and OECMs; deciding which territories are eligible will be challenging in some cases.
- *Any sustainable use... is fully consistent with conservation outcomes*: fears that a vaguely defined category of “sustainable use areas” would be added proved unfounded.
- *Recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities*: rights-based approaches need to be central to the Global Biodiversity Framework.



## INTRODUCTION

The CBD's Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) was passed in the early hours of the morning of 19<sup>th</sup> December 2022 in Montréal, Canada. While the whole of the GBF is important, and needs careful analysis, Target 3 is particularly critical for those concerned with protected and conserved areas. The decision follows years of intense negotiations, over a period when 112 countries already signed onto the High Ambition Coalition, which proposed that 30% of the land and ocean should be placed in protected and conserved areas by 2030 (30x30).

The outcome was unclear until the final moments of the conference, with dissent continuing even after the chair had announced the decision, leading to negotiation and a second announcement, with the same target, the following morning.



Final wording of the target is as follows: *“Ensure and enable that by 2030 at least 30 per cent of terrestrial, inland water, and of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable, and integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean, while ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes, recognizing and respecting the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities including over their traditional territories”*

The sentence is convoluted and the conservation lobby did not perhaps get everything it was hoping for, but it is workable and does not undermine the basic aims of the 30x30 target, already supported by the High Ambition Coalition.

There are however some ambiguities and some clauses that can be interpreted in more than one way. The following note analyses the target clause by clause, with accompanying interpretation and where necessary initial actions needed.



## IDENTIFYING IMPACTS ON BIODIVERSITY

**INCLUSION OF  
"INLAND  
WATERS" WAS AN  
IMPORTANT STEP  
IN RECOGNISING  
THE  
DISPROPORTIONATE  
THREATS FACED  
BY THESE  
ECOSYSTEMS.**

Text	Background	Action needed
<i>Ensure and enable</i>	The opening phrase reflects concerns, particularly from developing countries, that insufficient resources are available to meet the target. This almost derailed the whole process, with a strong line held by DRC. But it also speaks to the need for updated policy and legislation in many countries.	Updated funding guidance is needed. Planned guidance on legal issues and 30x30 is now more urgent.
<i>by 2030</i>	The deadline matches those of the Sustainable Development Goals (Targets 14 and 15 are now likely to be revised and Target 6 also refers to inland waters) and the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.	Advocacy to ensure SDG updates match CBD goals. <sup>1</sup>
<i>at least 30 per cent</i>	Retention of the proposed 30% target is very welcome because it faced some resistance and "at least" hints at future moves towards half earth or similar.	
<i>of terrestrial, inland water, and coastal and marine areas,</i>	Inclusion of "inland water" is important and the result of effective lobbying. BUT countries are likely to interpret the link with 30% in different ways. The conservation lobby would like 30% to be applied individually to all the components, some countries are likely to interpret it as an overall figure.  Note <i>inland water</i> is used instead of <i>freshwater</i> due to presence of inland saline and brackish waters and to match Ramsar Convention terminology, which defines inland waters as "aquatic-influenced environments located within land boundaries". <sup>2</sup>	Complete guidance on inland waters. <sup>3</sup>  Advocacy to ensure the 30% goal is applied equally to inland waters and oceans.
<i>especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity ...</i>	Emphasis on biodiversity is important, particularly in implementation of OECMs, with a risk that governments will in particular declare OECMs in an arbitrary fashion and with little link to biodiversity. Note that despite hard lobbying some more precise recommendation, e.g., a focus on key biodiversity areas, did not get uptake (although they feature as indicators); wording is same as Aichi 11.	More comprehensive guidance on OECM selection criteria. <sup>4</sup>
<i>... and ecosystem functions and services</i>	It is not clear whether <i>ecosystem services</i> can trump biodiversity importance; in practice this is sometimes likely to be the case, particularly for OECMs. Inclusion of " <i>functions</i> " (not in Aichi 11) is important because it implies that ecosystems have intrinsic values beyond their value to humans.	Use of analyses <sup>5</sup> to help ecosystem services play a key role in supporting PCAs.



**“EQUITABLE GOVERNANCE” IS LIKELY TO RECEIVE FAR MORE ATTENTION THAN IT HAS IN THE PAST, WITH CALLS FOR GREATER ATTENTION TO HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL OUTCOMES.**

Text	Background	Action needed
<i>effectively conserved and managed</i>	This will receive much more attention than in Aichi 11. Addition of “ <i>conserved</i> ” is important because it implies increased attention on outcomes. But the associated indicators are incomplete: “component indicator” is just “ <i>protected area management effectiveness</i> ” while complementary indicators include the IUCN Green List, Protected Areas and OECM management effectiveness indicator, Ramsar METT and percentage of biosphere reserves with “ <i>positive conservation outcome</i> ”. UK DEFRA and JNCC staff are working on an indicator.	Guidance from WCPA needed on both indicators for reporting (small number, maximum 8) and for adaptive management (much more comprehensive).
<i>ecologically representative</i>	Same wording as Aichi 11. This is another component aimed at avoiding just protecting “rocks and ice” and has been promoted by conservation planners; it can be supported by gap analysis; systematic conservation planning and many software planning tools.	
<i>well-connected</i>	Same wording as Aichi 11. Emphasis on connectivity is increasing and this component is likely to receive extra attention, with a global analysis from the Joint Research Council in Europe showing weakness in this regard. A connectivity indicator is in development, backed up by the Protected Area Isolation Index.	Promotion of WCPA’s work on planning connectivity corridors, <sup>6</sup> etc.
<i>equitably governed</i>	Aichi 11 said “equitably managed” and this received little real attention. All the signs are that this will be much more in people’s minds this time around. It means that management effectiveness assessments will be expected to have far more on both social impacts and governance. Recent work between CI, IIED and Equilibrium Research has done first amalgamation of SAGE <sup>7</sup> (itself a complementary indicator of GBF) and METT. <sup>8</sup>	Fast-track work on assessment, ranger-community relations and safeguarding. Capacity building needed in these issues.
<i>systems</i>	Same wording as Aichi 11. Assumes some level of network rather than a series of individual sites. Slightly redundant wording in light of the reference to connectivity. Note there is a complementary indicator: Protected Areas Network metric (ProNet)	
<i>protected areas</i>	Note that the CBD and IUCN have different definitions of a protected area, with a tacit agreement that they are equivalent. This is important: the CBD one clearly carries more weight but the IUCN definition is more comprehensive.	



Text	Background	Action needed
	<p><b>CBD:</b> "a geographically defined area which is designated or regulated and managed to achieve specific conservation objectives."<sup>9</sup></p> <p><b>IUCN:</b> "A clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values".<sup>10</sup></p>	
<p><i>other effective area-based conservation measures</i></p>	<p>Same wording as Aichi 11, but now with a definition and technical advice.<sup>11</sup> These are critically important and both exciting and worrying: many governments are going their own way and ignoring IUCN guidelines on selection, with risks of greenwashing. FAO just released its own guidance on marine OECMs,<sup>12</sup> which is different from IUCN's. There is a lot of work, both technical and advocacy, to make sure this element doesn't go wrong.</p> <p>Although supposedly based on performance, there is currently no way of determining when an OECM is ineffective enough to be "delisted", even if governments are likely to do so, nor are there accepted protocols for monitoring.</p> <p>OECM definition from the CBD:<sup>13</sup> "a geographically defined area other than a Protected Area, which is governed and managed in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the in-situ conservation of biodiversity, with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio-economic and other locally relevant values."</p>	<p>Promotion of guidelines on site selection; guidance on monitoring and recognition. Support UNEP-WCMC to implement data standards.</p>
<p><i>recognizing indigenous and traditional territories, where applicable</i></p>	<p>There was a strong lobby from the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB) to include Indigenous peoples' territories as a third "category" in 30x30. The EU argued against, most developing countries argued for, most NGOs kept silent. The fears were: (i) any Indigenous territory might be recognised, even if it had no conservation value (IIFB statements suggest this was never the intention) and (ii) deciding which territories "count" could take years (e.g., 8 years to agree an OECM definition). The phrase "where applicable" implies Indigenous territories will need to show effective conservation, equitable governance, etc. to meet 30x30.</p>	<p>Liaison with the IIFB, ICCA Consortium etc in agreeing ways forward on identification of and support for IP territories beyond PAs and OECMs.</p>

**RECOGNITION OF INDIGENOUS TERRITORIES AS A THIRD "CATEGORY" UNDER THE TARGET IS PROBABLY THE MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE TO THE DRAFT TEXT THAT HAPPENED IN MONTREAL.**



**SUGGESTIONS THAT A THIRD CATEGORY OF "SUSTAINABLE USE" BE INCLUDED WERE REJECTED, WITH LANGUAGE STRESSING THE NEED FOR ANY USE TO BE COMPATIBLE WITH CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES**

Text	Background	Action needed
	But we may see governments listing Indigenous territories without any further support – i.e., this could backfire. This addition has made the target more complicated but on the plus side has brought IP groups into the debate more on their own terms. IIFB approved the final draft.	
<i>integrated into wider landscapes, seascapes and the ocean</i>	Same wording as Aichi 11 with “and oceans” added. Implies landscape and seascape approaches, often talked about but seldom put into place, although there is more experience available than there was a decade ago. <sup>14</sup> However, if correctly interpreted this links Target 3 with both the remaining 70% of the planet and with other associated actions such as restoration in Target 2.	
<i>ensuring that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes</i>	This was perhaps the most controversial element in Target 3, because at one time “sustainable use areas” were proposed as a third category alongside PAs and OECMs, which would have rendered the target meaningless. This did not happen, and the wording if interpreted correctly does not undermine the target. Vigilance will be needed to ensure that countries do not use this to allow monoculture plantations, intensive fishery activities etc within protected areas.	WCPA guidance on sustainable use in protected areas <sup>15</sup> probably needs to be revised following agreement of the GBF.
<i>recognizing and respecting</i>	The following three clauses are new from Aichi 11. Some Parties argued they were unnecessary, because they are mentioned higher up in the GBF, but others felt that inclusion in individual targets, particularly Target 3, helped to increase the likelihood that they would be applied.	Many governments still do not apply these principles in practice. NGOs (both
<i>rights of indigenous peoples and local communities</i>	Note that the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is a legal requirement for Indigenous peoples but not for local communities, although good practice would presume that it is applied throughout.	conservation and human rights focused) and donors will have an increasingly
<i>including over their traditional territories</i>	This further stresses that Indigenous peoples and local communities should not be dispossessed of their rights to use and/or occupation of traditional lands and waters. Note that the 2008 IUCN definition of a protected areas one of the associated principles is that “The definition and categories of protected areas should not be used as an excuse for dispossessing people of their land”. <sup>16</sup>	important role in encouraging and monitoring compliance.



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