



## Community: News and Updates



Issue 7: November 2020

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## GLOBAL NEWS



### Improving KBA communication between the community of practice

The KBA Community has set up a Facebook group on which to post all KBA related news and updates. It will also act as a site to allow all members in the KBA Community to post their news about their work with KBAs. All members of the Google Group have received an invitation to join this group. The group will be moderated to ensure only KBA relevant information is posted, and under specific categories.



*KBA Community Facebook Group*



*KBA Community Google Group*

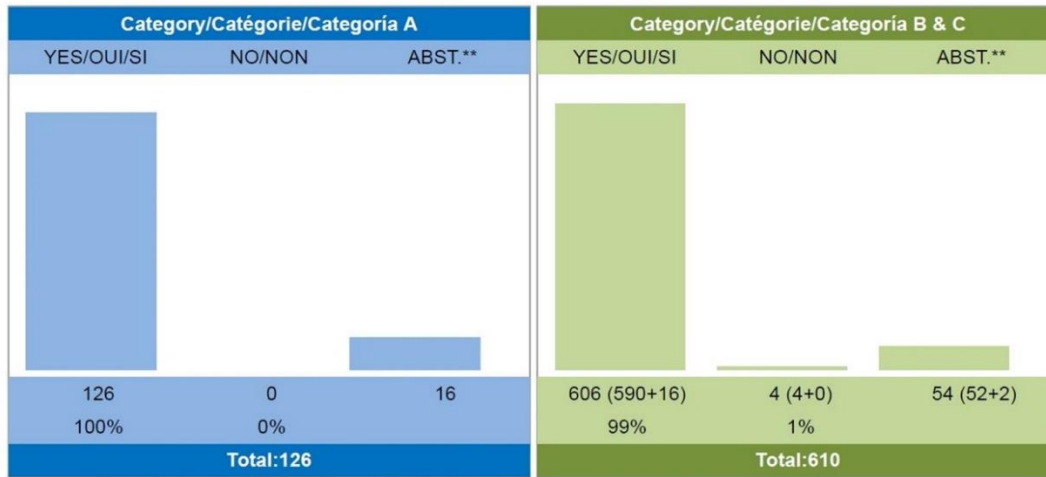
### KBA Motion passed at World Conservation Congress

#### **Government strongly endorse national spatial planning that incorporates Key Biodiversity Areas**

Governments and civil society organisations around the world have adopted a Resolution that each country make spatially explicit conservation plans for biodiversity that incorporate a national assessment of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs), together with the connectivity required between them, and use these to guide the expansion of protected and conserved areas. KBAs are sites important for the global persistence of biodiversity and their identification and safeguard nationally will ensure that globally important populations of species and extent of habitats are maintained for the long term.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) represents the global conservation community. Every 4 years it hosts the World Conservation Congress at which motions for action are proposed; if adopted as Resolutions, they become part of the general body of policy of the Union. This year IUCN Members from the KBA Partnership, advised by the IUCN Connectivity Conservation Specialist Group, developed a motion that calls on governments to develop spatial plans, incorporate them in their National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans, and ensure they are mainstreamed in government planning processes. It also calls upon governments, NGOs and donors to support the establishment and functioning of KBA National Coordination Groups in each country to ensure that KBAs are identified nationally. Developing these spatially explicit plans will help guide development of infrastructure, expansion of cities and agriculture, and siting of business developments so that their impacts on biodiversity are minimised.

The motion can be found at: <https://www.iucncongress2020.org/motion/096>



\*\* Abstentions are not counted as votes cast (Art. 32) /  
 Les abstentions ne sont pas comptées comme suffrages exprimés (Art.32) /  
 Las abstenciones no se contabilizarán como votos emitidos (Art.32)

Figure 1: Results of voting: A-Governments; B-NGOs and Indigenous peoples' organisations

Source: [Andrew Plumtre, KBA Secretariat]

### New Co-Chairs of the KBA Partnership Committee appointed

The KBA Partnership has appointed two new Co-Chairs of the KBA Committee: Dr Naomi Kingston and Dr Alberto Yanosky. Naomi works with the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) in Cambridge, UK, as Head of Operations. Naomi brings a wealth of experience in conservation of sites from her time working for the government of Ireland, subsequently working with UN and other governmental agencies in various roles in WCMC and experience with the management of the Protected Planet database. Alberto is an advisor on international affairs of Guyra Paraguay, Chair of the Paraguayan IUCN Committee, Manager of Sustainable Development of CYTED, and an International consultant mainly working as a specialist on Environmental and Social Standards (ESS) for the World Bank Group. He has more than 30 years of experience working in the Americas supporting conservation across south and central America, representing the KBA community for this region and serving as a BirdLife International Council Member, applying his experiences globally. Both bring a wealth of expertise to help guide the KBA programme.

We also thank Dr Simon Stuart who steps down as chair of the KBA Committee. He led the establishment of the KBA Programme and KBA Secretariat following the formation of the KBA Partnership in 2016 and has been instrumental in guiding the KBA programme over the past 4 years. His ability to bring together the diverse set of interests and skills found within the partnership and harness that energy to drive the programme has meant that KBAs are becoming recognised as the standard by which to judge sites of global importance for biodiversity.



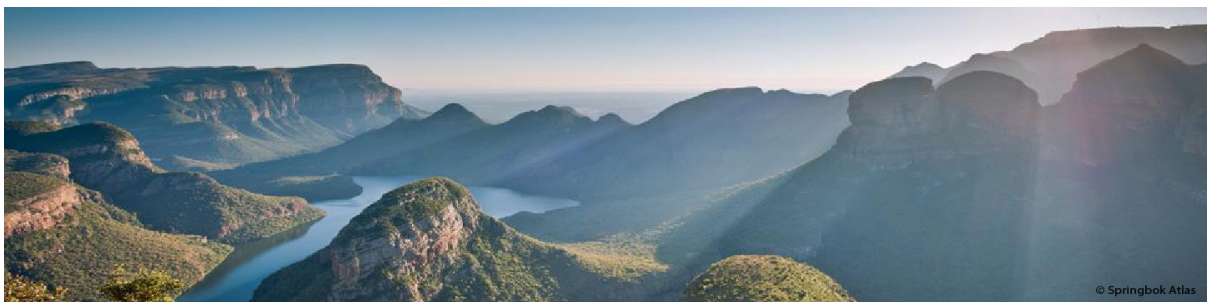
Figure 2: New KBA Co-Chairs, Dr Naomi Kingston and Dr Alberto Yanosky



Figure 3: Former KBA Chair Dr Simon Stuart

Source: [Andrew Plumtre, KBA Secretariat]

## AFRICA



At the recent KBA Committee meeting, the Committee appointed Dr Simeon Bezeng as the KBA Regional Focal Point for West and Southern Africa, and re-elected Daniel Marnewick as KBA Community Chair and African Regional Representative.

## Mozambique

A package of 27 proposals for new KBAs in Mozambique have been confirmed as KBAs by the KBA Secretariat. Mozambique is one of the first countries to have completed a national KBA assessment, assessing multiple taxonomic groups. Overseen by the KBA National Coordination Group, this assessment evaluated sites for mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, plants, and some insects and marine species. In the meantime, four complementary projects have started. One of them is focused on developing a historical ecosystem map for Mozambique, which will then be used to run a Red List of Ecosystems Assessment. These products will be made available online and should be finalized by the end of February 2021. This project also includes the development of the Terms of Reference for a national biodiversity Governmental website, aligned with the Clearing House Mechanism, which will also include a specific site for the KBA and Red Listing National Coordination Group, with all the associated information (KBAs, Red Lists of species and ecosystems). The other three projects are focused on coastal and marine environments. Besides contributing to the compilation of information that will allow the identification of new coastal and marine KBAs, these projects are promoting the use of KBAs in a systematic biodiversity planning exercise to develop scenarios for Marine Protected Area Network expansion and to inform the Marine Spatial Plan currently underway in Mozambique. The former product should be ready by mid-2021.

Source: [Hugo Costa, Project Director, Mozambique, Wildlife Conservation Society]

## KBA training in Nigeria

From 17 - 19 November, training in KBA identification and delineation was provided to the Nigerian National Coordination Group by the IUCN Global Species Programme (Freshwater Biodiversity Unit) as part of the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) project, 'Identification and Validation of West African Freshwater Key Biodiversity Areas'. This training was supported by the BirdLife International Africa Secretariat and the KBA Secretariat. A follow-up workshop in January will focus on identifying and proposing KBAs for freshwater species in Nigeria. This has paved the way for similar workshops which have been planned for Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Cameroon. Since the global pandemic has restricted international travel, the training facilitators joined the training remotely, although the training participants were able to meet physically in Abuja. An interactive map interface has been designed to facilitate remote stakeholder engagement on KBA identification and proposals, with contextual layers including threatened species richness, major river basins, and protected areas as well as links to draft KBA Proposal Forms. This tool is intended to aid in preparation for the KBA delineation workshop in January, where the existing CEPF Freshwater KBAs will be validated and additional KBAs identified for freshwater species. Many lessons will be learned from this approach which will be shared in future newsletters.





Figure 4a and b. KBA identification and delineation Photo: Joseph Onoja, Nigerian National Coordination Group

Source: [Thomas Starnes, KBA Programme Officer, IUCN Freshwater Biodiversity Unit, Global Species Programme]

## AMERICAS



Adrián B. Azpiroz has been appointed as the KBA Community Representative for the America's. Adrián has been involved with priority-setting conservation tools for 25 years. In 1996-97 he prepared the first portfolio of Important Bird Areas for Uruguay and served as IBA Coordinator through to 2000. In 2008 he started to work on the development of national IUCN Red List products and has co-authored the first [Red List \(Birds\)](#) for Uruguay in 2012 and the first [Red Data Book \(Birds\)](#) in 2017. These two projects were sponsored and supported by IUCN (South American Regional Office) and the National Environmental Bureau and National Aquatic Resources Bureau (Uruguay). In 2018 he conducted a Mid-term Review (UN Environment) for a GEF-supported conservation project that focused on conserving the most irreplaceable sites for endangered biodiversity at the global level. The project involved several outcomes including the mainstreaming of site priority-setting

tools (including KBAs) into global financial institution policies. He has worked as an independent consultant in wildlife management and conservation (mainly for the private sector) since 1996. Some of the companies he worked with are currently considering the adoption of the KBA system within their conservation agendas. Adrián brings with him a wealth of experience in research and conservation and we look forward to having him on board in this new role.

## Argentina

Aves Argentinas has started the process of identifying KBAs. Their approach has been similar to that of their IBA work almost two decades ago, working by provincial states. Thus, within the framework of its Atlantic Forest Project, it began with the Province of Misiones, whose boundaries coincide with the Atlantic Forest ecoregion. The work has been done in collaboration with various academic and natural resource management institutions. In this particular case, the publication of a management booklet with information on all the KBAs, including maps and photographs and a poster for public dissemination, has already been completed. In addition, and in alliance with IBS and CECOAL - Conicet, with the support of The Nature Conservancy, Aves Argentinas is also advancing with the identification of the KBAs in the province of Corrientes, and the final results will be released in 2021. Both projects are characterized by the active participation of researchers and naturalists who are contributing with data and points of view. Learn more about the Atlantic Forest by watching the [video](#).

Source: [Alberto Yanosky, BirdLife International, Americas Regional Office]

## Canada

The Canadian KBA initiative has many tentacles, with regional efforts occurring across Canada, as well as some exercises that are national in scope. Some of the regional efforts are wrapping up, for example in Yukon (northwest Canada) and Nova Scotia (eastern coast), although the intensive review of proposals by external experts, stakeholders, and rights holders continues and will still take some time. A few highlights from recent months include:

- NatureServe Canada has been developing a series of Ecosystem-based Automated Range (EBAR) maps for KBA trigger species that are being used to identify and delineate KBAs. These new range maps are generated in a consistent manner using available spatial data and then reviewed by experts. The generation of new range maps is necessary because the majority of Canada's threatened species have not yet been Red Listed and therefore there aren't many range maps available from that source. The first of these expert-reviewed species' range maps are [now publicly available as PDFs](#) or as a geospatial data package with associated metadata. The list of available EBAR maps will continue to be updated as more are completed.
- Birds Canada has been working on assessing existing Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) against KBA criteria and are nearing completion of this work. Most IBAs were designated around 20 years ago with a focus on bird aggregations and Species at Risk. Stewardship efforts are ongoing at many IBA sites and they form a strong base from which to grow the complete set of Canadian KBAs. So far, results show that 482 of almost 600 IBAs in Canada will qualify as National or Global KBAs. The Canadian National Coordination Group is now working to integrate other taxa and ecosystems into existing IBA/KBAs designated for birds and adapting the existing IBA database for users to display and share data about all Canadian KBAs.

- The Canada KBA initiative recently received support from RBC’s Tech for Nature environmental grants program. This funding will help them develop open-access data products and platforms – notably, a publicly-accessible KBA database and new data tools (including range maps and species distribution maps) to inform both the development of KBAs as well as other conservation efforts. With this grant, they have also engaged the [Lincoln Institute of Land Policy’s Center for Geospatial Solutions](#) to help the Canadian National Coordination Group develop a strategy for data management across multiple organizations that are involved in KBA work.
- The Canadian National Coordination Group has started a monthly webinar series on KBAs for the Canadian conservation community. Recordings of their first webinars can be found here, including: [How Key Biodiversity Areas can guide conservation in Canada](#). Future webinars will range from more technical talks on how to identify and delineate KBAs and how to approach a regional assessment of multiple KBAs, to discussions about biocultural values and stakeholder involvement in KBA work.



Figure 5: Victoria's Owl Clover (*Castilleja victoriae*), which has triggered a new KBA in British Columbia, Canada, under Criteria A1 and B1. Photo: Brian Starzomski.

Source: [Ciara Raudsepp-Hearne, Wildlife Conservation Society Canada]

## ASIA-PACIFIC



Australia



The Australian KBA National Coordination Group (NCG) is tasked with identifying a comprehensive network of KBAs for all wildlife in Australia over the next ten years. Thus, it is great news that the global partnership members WCS, WWF, BirdLife and IUCN have been joined in this effort by large NGOs most recently by AWC and the Commonwealth.

Eight KBAs are currently under revision with the global KBA Programme after receiving approval from Australia's NCG. Greater Blue Mountains is one of the KBAs up for a boundary revision accommodating additional knowledge about the distribution of Regent Honeyeater.

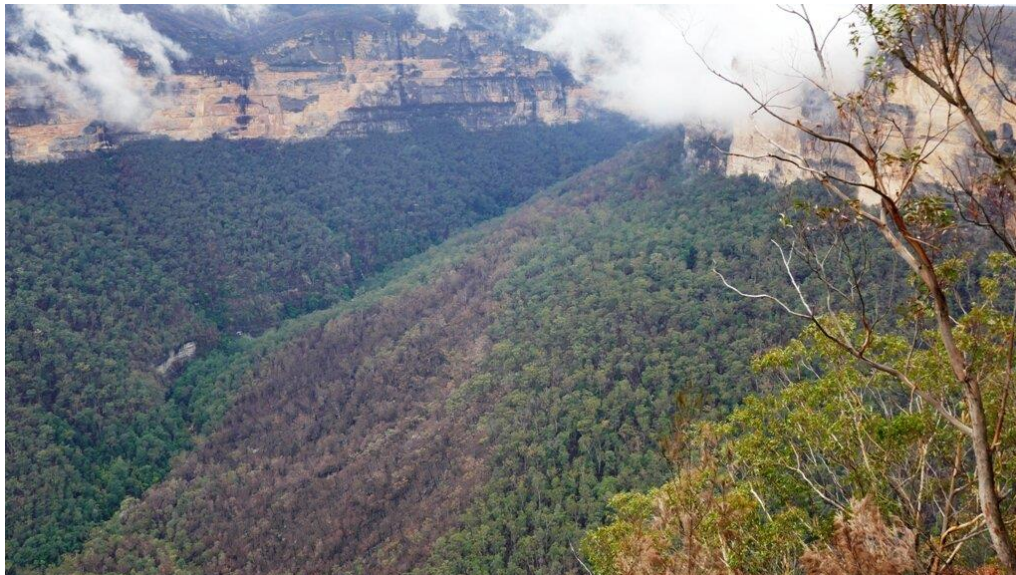


Figure 6: Greater Blue Mountains KBA. Photo: Paul Vale

A new BirdLife Australia report has found dramatic impacts of the 2019/20 Bushfires on KBAs and their birds and other Trigger Species. In 18 KBAs more than 15% and up to 100% of the total area was burnt.

Despite these shocking statistics the fires have further increased the importance of KBAs. The devastation wreaked outside KBAs means that for many species more of the total suitable habitat is found in KBAs, for instance 85% of unburnt Rufous Scrub-bird habitat is inside the KBA Network. Rather than thinking of these areas as lost to wildlife they are our best chance to recovery, and we need to double down on conservation efforts. BirdLife needs more standardised bird data surveys within these KBAs to determine the population decline of birds, record fire damage on the ground and direct conservation actions. The [Report](#) provides guidance for these surveys.



Figure 7: Australian Alps KBA. Photo: Denise Alderdice

Les Main, KBA Guardian for the Australian Alps can pass on some good news as the year draws to an end. In four birddata surveys at the top of the range he found good undergrowth and birdsong returning in many places. At each site the sound of Rufous Whistlers echoed through the mountains and Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos, Rosellas, Shrike-thrushes and even smaller Thornbills were present. There was also a proliferation of wildflowers even in some of the heavily burnt areas, helped by good rains over the last couple of months. The trip was capped off by a Lyrebird crossing the road, something quite unexpected given our KBA Bushfire Report shows that almost half their habitat in this KBA was burnt.



Figure 8: Wildflowers at Yans Crossing. Photo: Les Main

Hobsons Bay Wetland Centre has been undeterred by the Victorian lockdown and has taken on the KBA Guardian role for the Cheetham and Altona KBA. As a KBA Guardian Group they bring a diversity of skills and interests and an abundance of enthusiasm to the role much of it on display on their [website](#).

Source: [[Key Biodiversity Areas Australia Blog](#)]

## CONTACT US

### **KBA COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES:**

The current Chair and Regional Representatives of the KBA Community are:

**KBA Community Chair & Africa** – Daniel Marnewick

([chair.kba.community@keybiodiversityareas.org](mailto:chair.kba.community@keybiodiversityareas.org))

**Americas** – Adrián B. Azpiroz ([pampasbirds@gmail.com](mailto:pampasbirds@gmail.com))

**Europe & Central Asia** – Irina Kostadinova ([irina.kostadinova@bspb.org](mailto:irina.kostadinova@bspb.org))

**Asia-Pacific** – Sheila Vergara ([sgvergara@aseanbiodiversity.org](mailto:sgvergara@aseanbiodiversity.org))

### **KBA REGIONAL FOCAL POINTS:**

Interim Regional Focal Points have been nominated for the following regions and should be contacted if you have queries about assessing Key Biodiversity Areas or want to nominate a KBA:

**Africa** (southern and western Africa) - Simeon Bezeng ([simmy.bezeng@birdlife.org.za](mailto:simmy.bezeng@birdlife.org.za))

; (eastern and central Africa) - Tim Davenport ([tdavenport@wcs.org](mailto:tdavenport@wcs.org))

**Asia** - Mike Crosby ([Mike.Crosby@birdlife.org](mailto:Mike.Crosby@birdlife.org))

**Australasia and Pacific Islands** - Mark O'Brien ([Mark.Obrien@birdlife.org](mailto:Mark.Obrien@birdlife.org))

**Latin America and Caribbean**- please correspond with both RFPs David Diaz

([ddiaz@keybiodiversityareas.org](mailto:ddiaz@keybiodiversityareas.org)) and Miguel Fernandez

([Miguel\\_Fernandez@naturereserve.org](mailto:Miguel_Fernandez@naturereserve.org))

**Mediterranean countries and eastern Europe** - Catherine Numa ([Catherine.numa@iucn.org](mailto:Catherine.numa@iucn.org))

### **KBA COMMUNICATIONS:**

Communications working group co-chairs Lindsay Renick Mayer

([lrenickmayer@globalwildlife.org](mailto:lrenickmayer@globalwildlife.org)) and Richard Lee ([rlee@wwfint.org](mailto:rlee@wwfint.org))

### **KBA SECRETARIAT:**

For other regions (North America and Europe) please contact the head of the KBA Secretariat, Andy Plumptre ([aplumptre@keybiodiversityareas.org](mailto:aplumptre@keybiodiversityareas.org)).

