

Community: News and Updates

Issue 2: September 2019
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GLOBAL

The second KBA Committee meeting will be taking place in Cape Town, South Africa, from 18-20 September. Key questions, concerns or recommendations about KBAs can be sent to the KBA Community Chair, Daniel Marnewick chair.kba.community@keybiodiversityareas.org, to raise in the meeting.

A webinar was presented by Dr Charlotte Boyd, on 11 July 2019, entitled "[Guidelines for using A Global Standard for the Identification of Key Biodiversity Areas](#)". The full recording can be listened to [here](#).

AFRICA

BirdLife **South Africa** and the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), with funding from SANBI and the WWF Nedbank Green Trust, contracted spatial planners to assist with reviewing the entire South African KBA network. The third stakeholder engagement workshop will take place on 17 September, and will also be attended by members of the KBA Committee and KBA Technical Working Group. Thus far the initial review has been undertaking to identify all potential KBAs in the country. The next phase is developing a delineation methodology to apply to the areas that qualify.

Kenya and **Mozambique** respectively are in the process of reviewing their KBAs. The IUCN Fresh Water Unit assessed fresh water KBAs in Lake **Malawi** and the **Lake Victoria** Basin.

Other African countries that are in the process of establishing or have established National Coordination Groups (NCGs) include **Mozambique, South Africa, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Uganda, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone**. These countries are being supported by the KBA Community Representative and Regional Focal Point, Daniel Marnewick, the Regional Focal Point, Tim Davenport, and the KBA Secretariat Head, Andy Plumptre. The Biodiversity Assessment for Spatial Prioritisation in Africa (BASPA) project is also supporting African countries to establish NCGs and review KBAs.

The BIOPAMA Action Component has launched the call for proposals for medium grants. The call recognises the need for KBAs, and thus encourage applications for conservation action in KBAs. The deadline is 20 September. <https://action.biopama.org/>



AMERICAS

The Canadian KBA Coalition (the NCG) is working to establish a comprehensive network of KBAs in **Canada**, build awareness of KBAs across the country, and develop a sustainable process and infrastructure to support KBA work into the future. To this end, the initiative has established a KBA Secretariat and Management Committee and is mobilizing experts and partners from across the country to contribute to the work. Leading the work are Wildlife Conservation Society Canada (WCS Canada), NatureServe Canada, Bird Studies Canada, WWF Canada, Nature Conservancy of Canada, and IUCN, with many other organizations and governments involved. The Canadian initiative has been bolstered by Canada's commitment to Aichi Target 11 of the Convention on Biological Diversity -- the "Pathway to Canada Target 1" process -- launched by the federal government in 2017, which recognized that the quantitative (17%) protected areas target is insufficient on its own, and that the qualitative elements of achieving this ambition, including "areas important for biodiversity and ecosystem services" are vital to this exercise.

Progress in the last months has included securing additional funding for the initiative, securing the input and involvement of experts and partners through meetings, surveys, and workshops, compiling data and developing associated data storage infrastructure and sharing agreements, conducting initial scoping analyses at the national scale, and developing regional and thematic work plans for identifying and delineating KBAs. Due to the size of Canada, it has been key to engage regional partners (governments, NGOs and academic institutions) to lead the work and identify priorities, data sources and appropriate expertise for KBA implementation within their jurisdictions. The Canadian KBA Coalition will develop 10-15 'proof of concept' KBAs in the coming months in order to continue to build understanding of what the KBA tool can capture, and to test workflows. At the same time, regional and thematic work is developing: first regional workshops will be held in British Columbia and Yukon before the end of this year, and a freshwater KBA workshop will likely be held early in the new year in partnership with IUCN.

Indigenous engagement is a priority for the Canadian initiative and a consultant was contracted to give an Indigenous perspective on the KBA Standard and other Canadian KBA documents. The resulting report recommendations are now being implemented, for example through a post-doctoral fellowship focused on assessing the KBA using traditional knowledge and developing parallel biocultural indicators.

A side event is being planned at the Congress on Protected Areas in Latin America and Caribbean, to be held in October in Lima. Funding to support the event has been received from The Rainforest Trust.

The KBA Community representative for the Americas, Alberto Yanosky, supported a training workshop in north-eastern **Argentina** for the Atlantic Forest, led by Aves Argentinas and with the participation of BirdLife partners from **Paraguay, Brazil** and **Uruguay**.

Alberto Yanosky made presentations on KBAs in the South American Forum of IUCN members in preparation for the 2020 World Conservation Congress. This was done with UICN (Stephanie Orellana) and in the context of tools for conservation. From this event we have gained the interest of **Chile** to advance the KBA Initiative. We invited the Vice Minister of the Environment of **Paraguay** (Biodiversity) to talk about the governmental strategy for KBAs and how they are important for the country.

ASIA-PACIFIC

During 2019, the Regional Focal Point mostly focussed on the BirdLife Asia Partnership's work on KBAs and IBAs (Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas). BirdLife Asia currently has 15 national partner organisations in the Asia region, all of which are actively involved in the IBA and KBA Programme. BirdLife's Asian Partners have regularly been informed about new developments in the KBA Programme by circulating key documents such as the Guidelines for using the Global KBA Standards and the KBA Partnership Strategic Plan and they are informed about the webinars such as the one on the KBA Guidelines that was held in July.

Several BirdLife partners are updating information on IBAs and KBAs in their countries. Bird Conservation **Nepal** and the Nepal Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation are currently finalising a national directory of IBAs/KBAs. Malaysian Nature Society held a workshop in March to plan the preparation of a new national directory. Burung **Indonesia** has a project to compile the first inventory of IBAs/KBAs in West Papua and Papua provinces (the eastern half of the island of New Guinea), one of the few remaining gaps in the global map of IBAs. Wild Bird Society of **Japan** are updating the information and maps of Marine IBAs in Japan.

Mike Crosby, provided training to Burung **Indonesia** in using the KBA criteria with Paul Insua-Cao (RSPB).

New KBA analyses are being planned in several Asian countries. In **India**, a one-day meeting on KBAs was held in Delhi in late July, where government agencies and NGOs discussed the potential to develop a national KBA programme. Penny Langhammer ran a training workshop in **Bhutan** in March, and the Bhutan Nature Conservation Division. Other national organisations plan to run further training events and initiate the identification of KBAs. A workshop on KBAs and AZE sites was held in August in the **Philippines**, attended by the Haribon Foundation (BirdLife in the Philippines). Discussions are underway about initiating a KBA project in **Mongolia**, involving TNC, UNDP, WCS, WWF and the Wildlife Science and Conservation Centre (WSCC).

In coordination with the Forest Department, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MoNREC), the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) organized the **Myanmar** Biodiversity Conservation Investment Vision (MBCIV) process in 2012 with the support of the MacArthur Foundation. During this process, a series of key informant interviews, secondary information and literature reviews, and a multi-stakeholder consultation workshops were conducted to review and revise existing KBAs across Myanmar. As a key result of that process, 132 KBAs, eight terrestrial conservation corridors, four freshwater conservation corridors and two marine conservation corridors were identified. Despite this initial effort, there were still many information gaps on biodiversity, threats and management systems for many of the proposed KBAs and most of the conservation corridors.

It has been realized that, among all terrestrial conservation corridors, three - (1) Chin Hills Complex, (2) Rakhine Yoma Range and (3) Western Shan Yoma Range – were selected as little-known corridors in terms of biological, threat and management information gaps. Therefore the "Conducting a KBA Gap Analysis to Promote Protected Area Expansion in Three Little Known Corridors in Myanmar" project was developed with the support of the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) in 2015 to address the following objectives:

- Build a strong foundation for the expansion of the protected area network based on the best information available;
- Build a mechanism to involve civil society in the earliest stages of protected area development; and

- Build long-term local support for conservation experiences that can be used to understand other conservation corridors across Myanmar

In collaboration between the Forest Department and WCS, field surveys were implemented from April 2015 to May 2016 across the three corridors. Surveys were conducted taking all possible guidelines for identifying KBA including the consultations with local communities and indigenous people. Findings from those field surveys were presented to all stakeholders in local and national workshops in late 2016. Recommendations and comments from all workshops were integrated in the proposed conservation strategy for the three little known corridors. A total of 13 KBAs in Chin Hill Complex, 16 KBAs in Rakhine Yoma Range, and seven KBAs in Western Shan Yoma have been identified after the survey.

One more attempt for supporting KBA expansion has been conducted through the Myanmar National Ecosystem Assessment contributing to strengthen sustainability of protected area management in Myanmar, a project funded by Global Environment Facility (GEF) in 2017. This assessment has been led by WCS with the technical support from the University of New South Wales (UNSW) based in Sydney, Australia. This work will last approximately two years and will also assess the country's protected area network against any new KBAs. A digital platform will be developed for the government to share data on both PAs and KBAs for decision-making. Formation of a National Coordination Group (NCG) and national KBA review is highly recommended to strengthen the work on KBAs in Myanmar.

KBAs ASEAN

The 29th International Congress for Conservation Biology took place in Malaysia from 21-25 July 2019 and the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB) participated in a Symposium entitled "Identification and application of Key Biodiversity Areas in Asia". They also presented on the topic "Promoting the conservation of areas critical to the persistence of biodiversity in Southeast Asia". Additional presentations were made by Ding Li Yong and Mike Crosby (BirdLife Asia): 'Building from important Bird and Biodiversity Areas towards the identification and safeguard of KBAs in Asia'; Molly Hennekam: Threats to Key Biodiversity Areas from oil palm expansion; New May Lay Thant: Using Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) as a tool for identifying gaps and planning expansion of the Protected Area System in Myanmar and by Thomas Brooks on "Where next in applications of KBA Information in Asia and beyond?"

Discussions at the symposium indicated significant progress on the use of KBAs as a tool for identifying areas critical to the persistence of biodiversity. In particular, the use of the tool made headways in Myanmar's protected areas planning. KBAs have also been used as a tool to identify critical areas that are proposed to be avoided in places where development is planned, specifically for the expansion of oil palm plantations in countries that have viable climate and landscapes. It was surmised that the standards for identifying KBAs can be used in different ways and it was recommended that in order to be a comprehensive tool, KBAs have to be identified in the Indonesian side of Papua and other areas that have not undergone the KBA process in the ASEAN region. This can be expedited by the identification of National Consultative Groups who will mobilize the process.

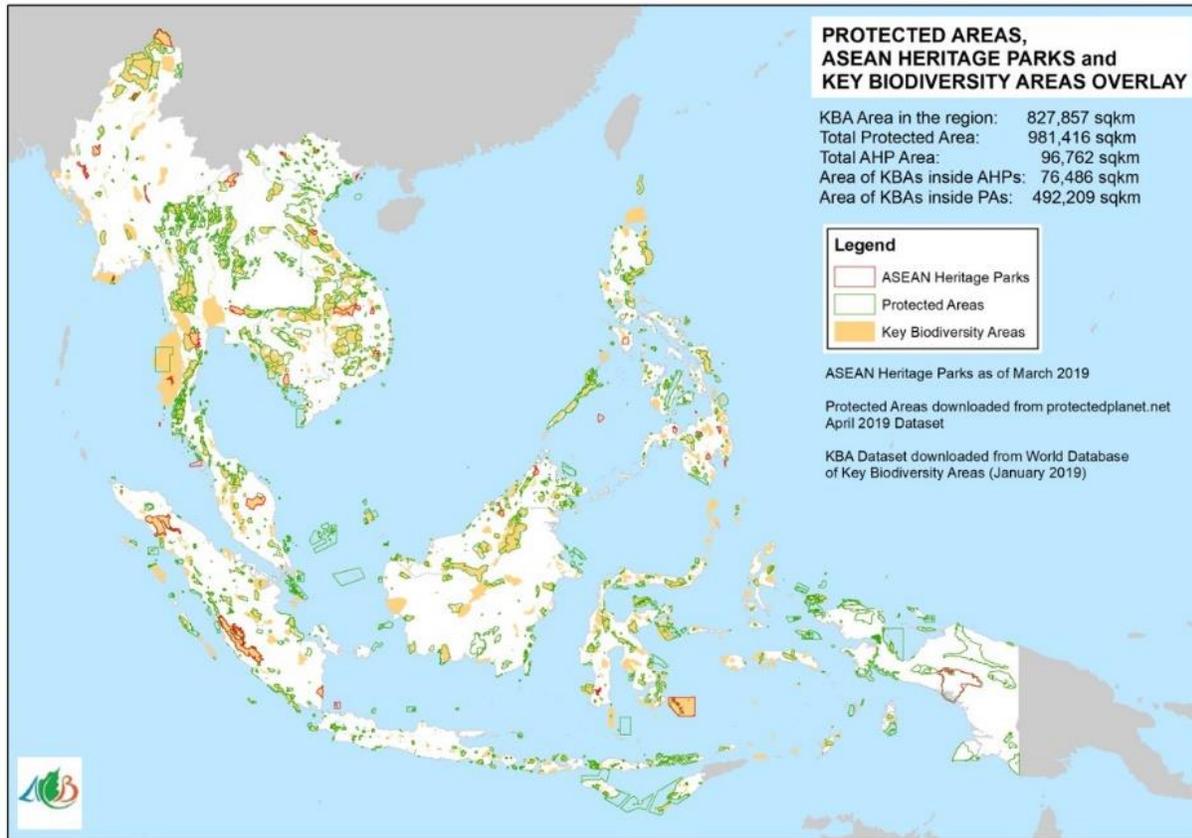


Figure 1. Protected Areas in the ASEAN Region, ASEAN Heritage Parks (AHPs), and KBAs identified based on KBA processes implemented.

After discussions with Birdlife, the managers of the World Database on Key Biodiversity Areas, ACB was provided access to data resources that enabled the preparation of the updated KBA map (fig. 1) for the ASEAN to deliver on its commitment to the Biodiversity Conservation and Management of Protected Areas in ASEAN (BCAMP) project. Figure 1 shows that AHPs coincided with most of the KBAs except in Indonesian Papua where the KBA process has not yet been implemented.

The ASEAN region will most likely not meet the necessary conservation coverage through PAs as guided by the Aichi targets specially for marine areas. Based on the current information made available by the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) and the World Database on Key Biodiversity Areas (WDKBA), only 3.5% of MPAs are protected in the region and if all identified marine KBAs are protected this figure could increase to 4.7%. This gap can be filled by the identification of more KBAs, especially those that are beyond the coastal areas, covering the remaining Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and areas belonging to ABNJs. There is thus a need to conduct the identification of KBAs for the rest of the ASEAN Region through national consultation processes that can be co-led with nationally designated focal points. Results of this process could fill the gaps in complying to the marine component of Aichi Target 11 (marine), mobilize measures at the regional level on transboundary marine conservation and contribute to the achievement of SDG 14. The KBA identification processes conducted in Myanmar and the Philippines could serve as reference for these processes.

CONTACT DETAILS

KBA COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES:

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

Africa (and Chair) – Daniel Marnewick, (chair.kba.community@keybiodiversityareas.org)

Americas – Alberto Yanosky, yanosky@guyra.org.py

Europe & Central Asia – Irina Kostadinova, irina.kostadinova@bspb.org

Asia-Pacific – Sheila Vergara, 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 - Daniel Marnewick (daniel.marnewick@birdlife.org.za) - Southern and western Africa;

Tim Davenport (tdavenport@wcs.org) - Eastern and Central Africa

Asia - Mike Crosby (Mike.Crosby@birdlife.org)

Australasia and Pacific Islands - Mark O'Brien (Mark.Obrien@birdlife.org)

Latin America and Caribbean- please correspond with both RFPs

Miguel Fernandez (Miguel_Fernandez@natureserve.org)

David Diaz (ddiaz@keybiodiversityareas.org)

Mediterranean countries and eastern Europe - Marcos Valderrabano

(Marcos.VALDERRABANO@iucn.org)

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