



Community: News and Updates



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GLOBAL NEWS



2021 Webinars

The KBA Community group will be holding webinars during 2021. The dates and subject of the webinars will be communicated in due course. Keep an eye out for the invitations that will be distributed via the KBA Community Google Group and Facebook Group.

The first of these webinars was held on 25 March 2021. The KBA Secretariat, supported by the KBA Community Chair, and Dr. Amy McDougall, Global Biodiversity Policy Coordinator at BirdLife International, presented on the inclusion of the KBA concept into the language of the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) Post 2020 Framework and the inclusion of KBAs into the Targets and Indicators of the Framework. This webinar targeted CBD Focal Points that have previously mentioned or included KBAs in their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) together with the Chairs and Secretaries of the National Coordination Groups (NCGs). The objective of the webinar was to build support for the inclusion of KBAs into the Framework at the next CBD Congress of Parties (CoP).

The webinar was relatively well attended with 9 CBD country representatives, and 14 KBA NCG representatives, covering 9 countries. Additional participants from Uruguay, Chile, and Mozambique also participated. The participants, especially the CBD Focal Point representatives, were encouraged to submit comments to the CBD Secretariat supporting the inclusion of KBAs into the Post 2020 Global Framework. The presentations are also available in PDF format. For a copy, please contact Lindsey Smith at lindsey.smith@birdlife.org.za.

The webinar was recorded, and you can access the recording on YouTube [here](#).

Source: [KBA Secretariat]

Prioritising Conservation Action in Mountains

The IUCN WCPA Mountains Specialist Group has in March 2021 released a [paper](#) entitled "**Identification of Global Priorities for New Mountain Protected and Conserved Areas**".

The paper was prepared to “support the work of the IUCN-WCPA Mountain Specialist Group through the development of a Decision-Support tool for the identification of global priorities for new mountain protected and conserved areas” (IUCN WCPA, 2021).

Mountains have long been recognized as globally and regionally important centres of biodiversity contributing disproportionately to the terrestrial biodiversity of Earth. They also provide wide-ranging critical ecosystem services, specifically freshwater provision for over half of the world’s population. Of all terrestrial habitats globally, mountain ecological systems are the most influenced by climate change. Despite their significance, approximately only 19% of mountain areas globally are protected or conserved. Significant mountain areas lack adequate protection and nearly 40% of the world’s mountain ranges are completely unprotected.

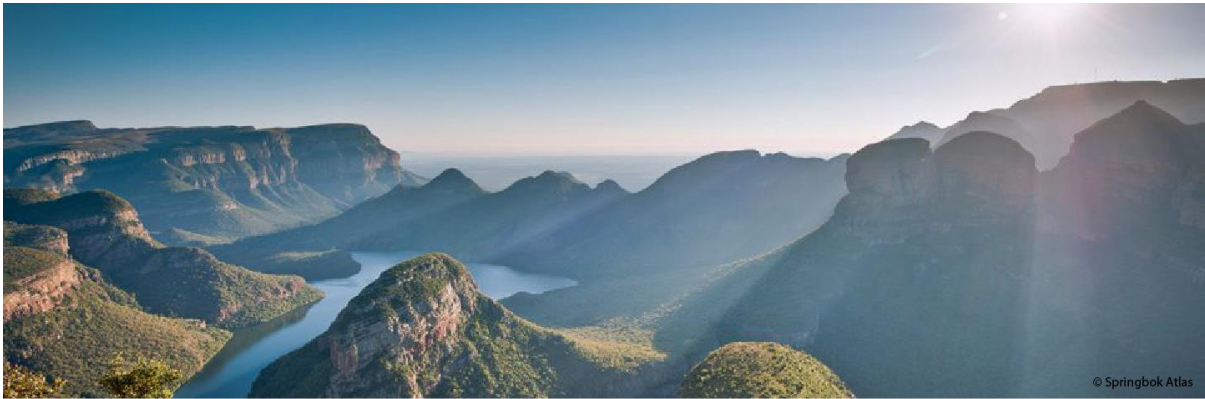
To identify and prioritise areas for conserving mountain ecosystems, species, and habitats, the IUCN WCPA has developed an iterative six-step Decision-Support Tool. This support tool recognises that KBAs play an extremely important role in identifying inadequately protected or conserved mountain areas. Globally, mountain KBAs are largely unprotected or only partially protected. As a result, the level of protection of KBAs in mountains is the principal factor used in the assessment tool. Mountain KBAs that have been initially identified are then further assessed and ranked against other values. The framework contains six steps that result in any of the over 6000 Mountain KBAs being allocated into nine categories with different actions.

The paper and Decision-Support Tool will be presented (virtually in poster format) at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in Marseille, as well as being distributed to all Mountain Specialist Group regional representatives to discuss how it may be implemented in the regions.

The acknowledgment of the value of the Global KBA Standard as a tool to better identify and protect mountains is an important one. It provides a further rationale as to why KBAs should now be captured in the text and language of the CBD Post-2020 Global Framework.

Source: [KBA Secretariat]

AFRICA



Ghana

Protecting the Atewa Range Forest Reserve against Bauxite mining threats

The KBA Secretariat welcomes the news that three global manufacturing leaders, BMW Group, Tetra Pak, and Schüco International, have expressed their concerns regarding the mining of bauxite in Atewa Range Forest Reserve, **Ghana**. Apart from being a KBA, Ghana's Atewa Forest is home to more than 1,000 species of plants, 230 species of birds, 570 butterfly species, and at least 50 species of mammals. Of these, four species are listed as Critically Endangered (CR) on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, many more as Vulnerable, and five potentially endemic species. Atewa Range Forest Reserve also meets the conditions for Alliance for Zero Extinction status. The KBA Secretariat has released a statement on this matter, which you can access here: <http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/kba-news/protecting-the-atewa-range-forest-reserve-against-bauxite-mining-threats>



Photo 1: Atewa Range Forest Reserve © A Rocha.

Source: [KBA Secretariat]

Nigeria

Freshwater KBA Identification And Validation Workshop In Nigeria

As was reported in the last KBA Community newsletter, the IUCN, KBA Secretariat, and BirdLife Africa in November 2020 provided capacity-building training for the Nigerian NCG in Abuja, **Nigeria**. This training also served as a precursor to a freshwater KBA identification and validation workshop, which subsequently took place in January 2021. The January workshop (25th – 26th) took place in Uyo in the Niger Delta. It convened many of the original KBA training participants, including representatives from KBA Partners BirdLife (Nigeria Conservation Forum) and WCS Nigeria, as well as representatives from government, academia, and several research institutes. The workshop revised the two CEPF freshwater KBAs in the Niger Delta before identifying further potential freshwater trigger species within Nigeria's IBAs and Ramsar wetlands. KBA training and delineation workshops have since been convened in Freetown, **Sierra Leone** (February 2nd – 3rd), Accra, **Ghana** (February 15th – 18th), and Abidjan, **Côte d'Ivoire** (23rd – 25th), significantly boosting capacity in the region and helping to pave the way towards the establishment of National Coordination Groups in these countries. The IUCN team has worked closely with BirdLife Africa and the KBA Secretariat to deliver the training. CEPF grantees from Missouri Botanical Garden have received KBA training through this initiative and have subsequently delivered KBA training in French in Côte d'Ivoire. We thank our colleagues in Global Wildlife Conservation for their work in developing the training materials and translating them into French. Two further training sessions and workshops were held in **Liberia** (March 9th – 10th) and **Cameroon** (March 16th – 19th). If anyone would like to review and comment on KBA proposals for freshwater species in western Africa, please contact thomas.starnes@iucn.org.



Photo 2: Participants at the Nigeria KBA workshop in Uyo revise the CEPF freshwater KBAs in the Niger Delta © Dayo Osinubi.

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

AMERICAS



Canada

Updates from the Canadian KBA Secretariat

In **Canada**, the initiative to identify KBAs has been progressing through various regional efforts, coordinated through the central Canadian KBA Secretariat hosted by Wildlife Conservation Society Canada (WCS Canada). In some areas, sets of proposals have been finalized and are undergoing expert and stakeholder review before being nominated to the global KBA Secretariat (via the Canadian National Coordination Group), while in others, we're only now hiring local coordinators to begin scoping the full extent of potential sites. To date, WCS Canada has identified ~200 new KBAs, most of which will be recognized at the global scale, with the rest identified as National KBAs. [A dashboard has been developed](#) on the Canadian KBA website that maps KBAs in progress across the country and is updated in real-time as they are proposed and reviewed by regional coordinators. This dashboard will eventually be replaced by a Canadian KBA registry, which is under development. Existing KBAs that were originally Important Birding Areas (IBAs) are not found on this dashboard and can be found for the moment on the legacy Canadian IBA database. There are a few large geographies lacking sites – some of these regions (e.g., Quebec) have KBAs that have been identified but have not yet been uploaded to the database.

Over the past couple of years, the Canadian KBA initiative has developed a range of tools to facilitate the data- and collaboration-heavy work of identifying and delineating KBAs. Tools that the Initiative developed and use regularly include a geospatial database of KBA trigger species with a 'KBA Service' for delineating and storing KBA spatial information; two online review tools with dynamic maps and embedded review questions to facilitate technical and stakeholder/rights holder review and storage of review comment; scripts that produce readable KBA proposal summaries from the KBA nomination forms; and a variety of other analytic tools and scripts.

A few other highlights from the KBA initiative in Canada:

- In addition to coordinating a ‘bottom-up’ regional effort to identify KBAs across Canada, WCS Canada is completing a ‘top-down’ analysis of existing conservation sites and existing IBAs to determine whether they meet KBA criteria for other taxonomic groups. Because most KBA trigger species in Canada do not have associated IUCN range maps available for a top-down analysis, we are using NatureServe Canada’s [hundreds of EBAR \(Ecosystem-Based Automated Range\) maps](#) that have been developed over the past year as part of the KBA effort. The top-down analysis will provide input into regional efforts.
- Birds Canada has developed a [visual StoryMap](#) packed with information about the KBA program in Canada, and showcasing two shoe-in candidate KBAs that have existed as Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) for decades: the Fraser River Estuary and Long Point in Ontario. Work is ongoing to add non-bird taxa to these sites and to assess whether they meet KBA criteria and thresholds. You can access the StoryMap through the above link or by clicking on the image below:



- WCS Canada hosts a monthly KBA webinar series to share the various facets of the KBA initiative with the Canadian KBA community and other interested audiences. Recent webinars topics have included the relationship between KBAs and IBAs in Canada (by Andrew Couturier of Birds Canada) and a conceptual framework for envisioning compatibilities between the KBA Standard and First Nations' environmental values (by Jeff Wall, University of Guelph/WCS Canada and Roger Lewis (Nova Scotia Museum). [All webinar recordings can be found here](#).
- The Canada KBA Coordinator (Ciara Raudsepp-Hearne, WCS Canada) was recently interviewed about KBAs on a popular radio program by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. In the interview, Ciara discussed how KBAs can guide Canada in its commitment to protect 30% of lands and oceans by 2030. [Listen to the interview here](#).

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

ASIA-PACIFIC



Australia

2019 State of Australia's KBAs

The Australian KBA National Coordination Group (NCG) reports that the 2019 State of Australia's KBAs report will soon be available for download at:

<https://www.birdlife.org.au/projects/KBA>.

The 2019 KBA Achievements are highlighted in the Summary of Findings below:

2019 KBA Achievements

KBA
KEY BIODIVERSITY AREA

PLACES YOU LOVE
96
of Australia's 333 KBAs have a KBA Guardian

VOLUNTEERS
37 302
hours of volunteering in KBAs in 2019

WILDLIFE YOU LOVE
199
threatened, endemic or gregarious species covered in 2019

THREATS
26
KBAs are in Danger through invasive animals or climate change

COMMUNITY
124 NGOs
are conserving habitat and advocating in KBAs

COVERAGE
17 100
bird surveys in 214 of 333 KBAs

SUCCESS
Sites for 49 of Australia's most threatened cycads, crayfish, frogs reptiles and mammals incorporated in the KBA network

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BirdLife Australia is dedicated to achieving outstanding conservation results for our native birds and their habitats. With our specialised knowledge and the commitment of an Australia-wide network of volunteers and supporters, we are creating a bright future for Australia's birds.

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AUSTRALIA

Summary of Findings: 2019 State of Australian KBA Report. Image credit: Key Biodiversity Areas Australia/BirdLife Australia

The contents of this article were extracted from the KBA Australia Blog with permission. You can access the blog, which is regularly updated, here:

<https://www.keybiodiversityareas.org.au/news>

Source: [Key Biodiversity Areas Australia Blog]

CONTACT US

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 – Adrián B. Azpiroz (pampasbirds@gmail.com)

Europe & Central Asia – Vacant

Asia-Pacific – Professor Yongut Trisurat (fforyyt@ku.ac.th)

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); (**eastern and central Africa**) - Tim Davenport (tdavenport@wcs.org)

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

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

Latin America and Caribbean- please correspond with both RFPs David Diaz (ddiaz@keybiodiversityareas.org) and Miguel Fernandez (Miguel_Fernandez@natureserve.org)

Mediterranean countries and eastern Europe - Catherine Numa (Catherine.numa@iucn.org)

KBA COMMUNICATIONS:

Communications working group co-chairs Lindsay Renick Mayer (lrenickmayer@globalwildlife.org) and Richard Lee (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).

