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## Top conservation players unite to map, monitor and conserve vital places

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11 of the world's leading conservation organisations announced an ambitious new partnership to identify, map, monitor and conserve Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) – places that include vital habitats for threatened species – with more than US\$15 million committed over the next five years.



The announcement was made at the IUCN World Conservation Congress currently taking place in Hawai'i, USA.

Through the KBA Partnership, resources and expertise will be mobilised to further identify and map Key Biodiversity Areas worldwide. Monitoring of these sites will enable detection of potential threats and identification of appropriate conservation actions. The Partnership will also advise national governments in expanding their protected areas network, and will work with private companies to ensure they minimize and mitigate their impact on nature.

"This is a vitally important initiative for our planet's biodiversity," says Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity. "This partnership will enhance **global** conservation efforts by highlighting internationally important sites in need of urgent conservation action. It will also help us reach the targets in the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and allow national governments and conservation organisations to ensure that scarce resources are directed to the most important places for nature."

### Planet at the crossroads

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) has engaged with hundreds of experts and decision-makers to develop a **Global Standard for the Identification of Key Biodiversity Areas**. The Standard will also be launched during the World Conservation Congress, on Monday 5 September.

“Our planet is at the crossroads and we need to take urgent action if we want to secure its ability to support us,” says Inger Andersen, Director General of IUCN. “Information about where and why a site is considered key for the survival of threatened species underpins all sustainable development and will be critical for achieving Sustainable Development Goals.”

In particular, knowledge about Key Biodiversity Areas will contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 14 – on the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans – and Goal 15 – to manage forests, combat desertification, and halt land degradation.

The KBA Partnership builds on the partners’ established track record in site identification, monitoring and conservation. Over the past four decades, BirdLife International has identified more than 13,000 Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) on land and at sea in every region of the world through its 120 national partners and others, while the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund has supported the identification of 6,000 Key Biodiversity Areas within **global** biodiversity hotspots.

To date, more than 18,000 **global** and regional Key Biodiversity Areas have been identified and mapped. These include Ujung Kulon National Park in Indonesia – where the last known population of the Critically Endangered Javan rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros sondaicus*) lives – and the Molokai Island marine area in Hawai‘i – home to the Critically Endangered coral *Porites pukoensis*, known only to occur in the shallow waters of this site.

The new Partnership will unite these efforts under a single KBA umbrella. It will expand the KBA network to cover other species and ecosystems using the **global** KBA standard. These data will guide decision-makers on areas that require safeguarding and will help a range of end users to define their conservation priorities, achieve their international commitments, and comply with their environmental policies.

KBA Partners are the Amphibian Survival Alliance, BirdLife International, Conservation International, Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, **Global Environment Facility**, **Global Wildlife Conservation**, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), NatureServe, RSPB, Wildlife Conservation Society and the World Wildlife Fund.

“Advancing and implementing successful conservation solutions depends on clearly identified **global** strategies,” says Naoko Ishii, **Global Environment Facility** CEO. “In this regard, we are proud to be one of the founding members of this exciting new partnership to help map and protect some of the planet’s most valuable biodiversity.”

Source: [Global Environment Facility](#)