Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Submission of views and information relating to the strategic review and analysis of the current Programme of work on protected areas (PowPA) in the context of the KMGBF

In response to CBD Notification 2025-135, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) submits the following information on the current Programme of work on protected areas (PowPA) in the context of the KMGBF.

The PoWPA includes 16 targets and 126 specific actions, organized under four key interlinked elements: (1) site establishment planning and management; (2) governance, participation, equity, and benefit-sharing; (3) enabling policy, institutional, and capacity frameworks; and (4) standards, assessment, and monitoring of protected area systems. As such, it remains an important tool and is relevant for the implementation of the KMGBF. Further information is available at the following webpage: https://www.cbd.int/protected/pow.	
General comments	
	[use this column to insert any weblinks, contextual information or other relevant notes]
Suggestion to specifically include building coordination mechanisms, including policy dialogues and policy alignment, under 1.3.4 Promote collaboration between protected areas across national boundaries.	
Suggest adding a short "KMGBF alignment" preamble that maps PoWPA outputs to the KMGBF goals and targets.	
Given that the KMGBF encompasses other area-based conservation measures as well as Indigenous and traditional territories and Territories and Areas Conserved by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, consider revising the terminology in the PoW to move beyond 'protected areas' and instead use broader terms like 'conservation areas', pending discussion and approval of Parties at the upcoming SBSSTA27 and COP17.	
• What aspects should be incorporated or reinforced in the current review of the Programme of Work to improve alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework? Please consult the rapid gap analysis in document CBD/SBSTTA/25/INF/1 for reference.	
Current PoW does not provide any clear links to the human-wildlife interactions element of T4, nor to the sustainable, safe and legal harvesting and trade of wildlife species for the benefit of people (T5 and T9). More broadly, several other targets of the KMGBF are directly related to a One Health approach – in particular T6, T7, T8, T11 and T12. These targets should be better reflected in the Programme of Work, given the role protected and conserved areas play in sustainable wildlife management and as pillars of a One Health approach, notably for the prevention and management of health and biosecurity risks at human–wildlife–livestock interfaces, including those associated to consumptive and non-consumptive biodiversity uses that may be authorized in and around protected areas as part of customary practices and community livelihood programmes implemented in buffer zones or tourism activities provided for in protected area management plans.	
Suggested additions for alignment with the T4: • Element 1:	FAO and IUCN SSC HWCCSG Case Studies

- Integrate a systematic human-wildlife risk assessment into the establishment (baseline), expansion and zoning of protected and conserved areas, including through Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and/or Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) and associated Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMP). - Integrate human-wildlife conflict assessment and translate evidence-based and context-appropriate prevention and mitigation measures, as well as coexistence strategies, into protected area planning and buffer zones management plans. - Element 2: integrate human–wildlife conflict prevention, mitigation, and response into protected-area governance systems, clearly defining roles, responsibilities, decision-making making and grievance mechanisms, and ensuring the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and respect for their rights. - Element 3: Strengthen the capacity of protected area staff and partners for conflict-sensitive planning, participatory risk assessment, rapid response and community engagement, including the co-design, implementation and monitoring of human-wildlife conflict mitigation and coexistence measures. - Element 4: Integrate metrics on impacts and spatial extent of human–wildlife conflict, as well as relevant community-level social metrics, into protected area monitoring frameworks to measure the effectiveness of management measures and inform adaptive management.	IUCN SSC Guidelines on Human-Wildlife Conflict and Coexistence
Suggested additions for alignment with T5 and T9: - In general, the PoWPA should encourage Parties – through concrete and differentiated guidance - to use the diversity of management objectives and governance types across the full spectrum of protected and conserved areas categories to support the sustainable use of biodiversity where appropriate, while safeguarding biodiversity and the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. - Element 1: - Promote sustainable, legal, and safe use practices where appropriate, in line with the specific management objectives and zoning of each category of protected and conserved area, ensuring that such uses are consistent with species' ecological needs and conservation objectives of the area. - Where the use of wildlife is permitted in and around protected areas, management plans should apply a One Health risk-assessment framework that combines sustainability (population status, off-take levels), safety (food safety and zoonotic risks along value chains) and legality (compliance with national law and customary rules).	SWM Programme Legal Hub Customary law: Customary norms and practices to strengthen the sustainable use of wildlife resources in Binga District by Tonga communities Customary law: Customary norms and practices used to strengthen the sustainable use and management of wildlife resources in the Rupununi by Wapichan communities

• Element 2: Strengthen governance models across different categories and governance types (government-managed, co-managed, private, and IPLC-governed areas) to prevent and reduce illegal harvesting and trade, through inclusive decision-making, transparent enforcement processes, co-designed management measures and equitable benefit-sharing. • Element 3: Promote, train and incentivize sustainable livelihood opportunities, particularly in and around protected and conserved areas where sustainable biodiversity use can be an explicit objective and build capacities for community-based monitoring, locally-led management and value-chain upgrading that improves safety and legality. • Element 4: Integrate both ecological and social dimensions of sustainable use into monitoring and management frameworks, where appropriate and according to the category and management objectives of the area, including off-take trends, population status of species subject to use, basic wildlife and ecosystem health surveillance, human-wildlife conflicts (e.g. crop damage, livestock loss, human safety, road kills, road accidents linked to wildlife, human relocations etc.) and community perceptions and attitudes, to support adaptive management across different types of protected and conserved areas. Suggested additions for alignment with T9 and T5 on integrating customary sustainable use and knowledge systems: • Incorporate legal recognition and support for customary sustainable use by Indigenous Peoples and local communities into protected area planning and management strategies. • Promote the development of a legal framework which ensures that indigenous and local systems for the control, use, and management of natural resources are respected, protected, and encouraged • Ensure that legal texts on Conservation areas acknowledge the spiritual, cultural, economic, and subsistence functions of customary use of biological resources.	
Suggested additions for alignment with T6, T7, T11 and T12: • In general, o The PoWPA should encourage Parties to integrate biodiversity and One Health considerations in relation to sustainable, safe and legal use of wild species (T5), invasive alien species (T6), pollution and harmful chemicals (T7), and nature's contributions to health and well-being (T11 and T12). This would contribute to providing concrete guidance on the operationalization of the Global Action Plan on Biodiversity and Health (decision /COP/DEC/16/19) by promoting integrated One Health approaches to preventing and managing risks at human–wildlife–livestock–environment	

interfaces, while maximizing the co-benefits of protected and conserved areas for biodiversity conservation, ecosystem integrity and human health. ○ In addition, the PoWPA should promote an all-hazards approach to biosecurity in protected and conserved areas by encouraging integrated biosecurity risk assessments to be systematically incorporated into the planning and management of protected and conserved areas. Such assessments should consider biological, chemical and environmental hazards across wildlife, livestock, crops, food systems and ecosystems, and inform risk-based One Health–oriented management plans that reduce pathogen spillover, invasive alien species, contamination and other biosecurity risks at the interface between the protected and conserved areas and their surroundings while safeguarding biodiversity and local livelihoods. ○ The PoWPA should also recognize and promote the role of protected and conserved areas as sentinel sites for the emergence and re-emergence of zoonotic diseases, given the reservoir role played by certain wildlife species and the growing influence of climate and land-use change on disease ecology and epidemiology. By taking advantage of the regular presence of protected-area staff and rangers in remote frontier zones between wildlife, livestock and humans, Parties should be encouraged to integrate basic wildlife-health observation and community-based reporting in and around protected and conserved areas into national One Health surveillance systems, thereby strengthening early warning and rapid response capacities while safeguarding biodiversity and local livelihoods. • Target 6: ○ Element 1. Promote the systematic identification of invasive alien species (IAS) risk pathways when establishing, expanding and zoning protected and conserved areas, and require that management plans include proportionate prevention and biosecurity measures (e.g. controls linked to tourism, infrastructure, transport corridors and trade in equipment, feed and live animals) in and around protected and conserved areas. ○ Element 2. Strengthen cross-sectoral governance arrangements – involving environment, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, transport and health authorities, as well as Indigenous Peoples and local communities – to prevent, reduce and, where feasible, eliminate IAS introduction and spread in and around protected and	

conserved areas, through coordinated planning, clear mandates and transparent enforcement. ○ Element 3: Build the capacity of protected-area staff and local partners for IAS prevention, early detection and rapid response, including community-based surveillance and reporting mechanisms linked to national IAS databases and regional alert systems. ○ Element 4: Integrate harmonized indicators on the presence, absence and spread of priority IAS in and around protected and conserved areas, and on the effectiveness of prevention and control measures, into monitoring frameworks and reporting for KMGBF T6. • Target 7: ○ Element 1. Recognize protected and conserved areas as sentinel sites for monitoring the impact of surrounding/upstream pollution pressures (including nutrient run-off, pesticide loads, heavy metals, plastics, and noise and light pollution), especially as part of integrated landscape approaches to sustainable development, with the explicit purpose of safeguarding biodiversity and ecosystem services relevant to health. ○ Element 2. Encourage protected-area authorities to work with agriculture, water, industry and health sectors, and with IPLCs and local communities, to reduce key pollution sources around protected and conserved areas, including through integrated pest management and reduced-risk pest-control practices that contribute to Target 7(b) while maintaining food security. ○ Element 3. Strengthen the capacities of protected-area institutions and partners to monitor pollution, interpret results and engage with upstream regulators and local stakeholders to design and implement pollution-reduction measures. ○ Element 4. Integrate harmonized indicators on pollution impacts in and around protected and conserved areas (e.g. nutrient concentrations, pesticide risk indices, plastic-debris density and associated biodiversity/health impacts) into monitoring and management frameworks, to inform adaptive management and feed into biodiversity- and health-related reporting. • Targets 11 & 12 ○ Element 1. Encourage Parties to identify and maintain key nature's contributions to people (NCPs), including those specifically related to wildlife, and those relevant to physical and mental health (e.g.	

clean water, climate regulation, disaster-risk reduction, access to green and blue spaces, culturally important species and sites), in the objectives, zoning and management of protected and conserved areas. ○ Element 2. Promote governance arrangements that recognize and support the roles and knowledge of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in maintaining NCPs, including health-related contributions, while respecting rights, customary laws and cultural practices. ○ Element 3. Strengthen the capacity of protected-area managers, health and social sectors, and IPLCs to co-design and implement initiatives that leverage protected and conserved areas for health and well-being (e.g. nature-based solutions for disaster-risk reduction, water security, climate adaptation and nature-based recreation), consistent with the CBD decision on biodiversity and health. Element 4. Integrate indicators on key NCPs and health-related co-benefits (e.g. water quality for drinking, flood-risk reduction, access to nature for local communities, cultural and spiritual values) into protected-area monitoring and evaluation systems, to support adaptive management and reporting under T11 and T12.	
Suggested additions for alignment with T22 on inclusive governance and rights-based approaches: Support the development of legal texts that: • Integrate mechanisms for the active involvement and engagement of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in all decision-making processes related to protected areas. • Guarantee access to justice and information, and recognize the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities over their cultures, lands, territories, resources, and traditional knowledge. • Ensure the full protection of environmental human rights defenders. • Reinforce the rights of women and girls, children and youth, and persons with disabilities	
• How could the approach to implementing the Programme of Work be revised to better contribute to achieving Target 3 of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework? In your response, consider potential actors and timeframes.	
Highlight the importance of OECMs to complement the protected areas approach to reach T3, build capacities and provide operational guidelines for their recognition and reporting. The linkages between PAs and OECMs should be clearly recognized as essential to the maintenance of ecological and landscape connectivity, particularly in the context of transboundary conservation areas (see Goal 1.3). Transboundary coordination and governance mechanisms should be	Recognising and reporting other effective area-based conservation measures

adapted to recognize the variety of stakeholders and conservation approaches within a given landscape.	
Provide clear guidance on what counts towards 30% to ensure synchronized and consistent reporting between Parties, including minimal standards and criteria. This can be used for assessing the quality of their 7th national reports and improving the following reporting in 2029.	
Strengthen legislative support for Transfrontier Conservation Areas coordination platforms and for the designation and protection of wildlife corridors to enhance landscape connectivity in line with Target 3. By embedding clear provisions for ecological corridors in national and subnational policies, legal reinforcement can support species movement, genetic exchange, and ecosystem resilience to climate change and other pressures. Prioritizing wildlife corridors in laws and planning systems demonstrates a proactive commitment to biodiversity conservation and supports effective, equitable implementation of the KMGBF's global targets. Given the frequent overlap of wildlife corridors with multiple land uses and jurisdictions, the PoWPA should strongly emphasize responsible land tenure governance and provide practical guidance to address this complexity.	Voluntary Guidelines on Tenure | Governance of Tenure | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
In addition to the actors listed in the current PoWPA, we suggest adding CIFOR-ICRAF, CIRAD and the ICCA Consortium.	
The PoW should recognize and respect the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities in each area (particularly in Goals 2.1 and 2.2). This includes ensuring that traditional knowledge associated with biodiversity, innovations, worldviews, values, and practices of indigenous peoples and local communities are respected, documented, and preserved with their free, prior, and informed consent, including through their full and effective participation in decision-making, in accordance with relevant national legislation and international instruments. Timeframe: Immediate integration into ongoing and future PoWPA and KMGBF processes.	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
The PoW should recognize indigenous and traditional territories in each area. These are areas occupied or managed by indigenous peoples and local communities that contain significant and unique biodiversity. Timeframe: Immediate integration into ongoing and future PoWPA and KMGBF processes.	Target 3 Indigenous and traditional territories
The PoW should promote equitable governance and legal frameworks supportive of indigenous peoples and transitional institutions, norms and values in each area, particularly in Goals 2.2 and 3.1. It implies that relevant stakeholders should be involved in and able to participate fully in the establishment, management and governance of protected areas and OECMs. It should also ensure that the costs and benefits of establishing and managing such areas are shared fairly. Effective participation in decision-making processes should also be recognized and legally established, as should transparent procedures and access to justice in conflicting situations. The rights and diversity of the people who will be affected by the establishment and	Target 3 Equitable governance

management of protected areas and OECMs should also be recognized.	
In order to enhance access to legal information, the PoW should refer to the SWM Legal Hub to achieve Goal 3.1. This comprehensive online platform provides access to relevant legal information and analysis on sustainable wildlife management and related agri-food systems. The Legal Hub includes detailed information on legislation and policy regulating protected areas and OECMs in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa and the Asia-Pacific region. By offering up-to-date legal texts, best practices and comparative analyses, the Legal Hub supports governments, parties and stakeholders in developing and implementing participatory, rights-based approaches to the governance, establishment and management of protected areas and OECMs. The platform also facilitates knowledge sharing and capacity building among stakeholders and can support legal reforms, ensuring alignment with international commitments (e.g. the CBD, CITES) and promoting transparency and inclusivity in decision-making processes relating to protected areas and OECMs. Timeframe: The Legal Hub can be consulted and utilized immediately and throughout the implementation period, with regular updates and engagement as new legal developments arise.	Legal hub - SWM Programme
• Which goals, targets, or activities of the Programme of Work should be prioritized to support national implementation of the Framework by 2030?	
Target 3 cannot be only about the spatial extent of PAs/OECMs/ICCAs and Parties have to be discouraged from designating/recognizing new areas only for the sake of reaching 30x30. To ensure that the national implementation of this target is not focused on new areas, we suggest the following prioritization: 1. **Prioritize rights-based, inclusive governance and IPLC recognition (Programme elements 2 and 3 – Targets 3, 4, 5, 9, 22 and 23).** Long-term success of PAs depends on enabling legal frameworks that support co-management of protected areas, particularly with IPLCs. As competition over land and resources rise, the PoWPA should prioritize goals and activities that strengthen rights-based, inclusive governance, and equitable benefit-sharing and that explicitly recognize the risks of a narrow quantitative focus on 30x30 for IPLCs, especially where tenure is weak and power is imbalanced. In this context, priorities should include: • Strengthening tenure security and the formal recognition of IPLC lands and territories, including as ICCAs and OECMs where appropriate; • Ensuring clear zoning with well-defined use rights for each zone, based on commonly agreed and negotiated rights approved through an FPIC process. • Ensuring that legislation and policy frameworks recognize the full diversity of protected and conserved area categories, management objectives and governance types (government, co-	

managed, private and IPLC-governed) and provide clear pathways for their legal recognition;
- Establishing or expanding protected and conserved areas only with the free, prior and informed consent of affected IPLCs and with robust social and environmental safeguards; and
- Embedding co-management arrangements, recognition of IPLC governance systems (including ICCAs), effective participation and FPIC, and equitable cost- and benefit-sharing as core conditions for counting areas towards Target 3 (also in line with T22 and T23).

2. **Strengthen management effectiveness, connectivity and threat mitigation in existing PAs (Programme element 1 – Targets 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9).**

Many protected areas exist on paper but lack effective management or connectivity. Goals and activities under Programme element 1 (notably Goals 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5) should be prioritized to:

- Conduct PA management effectiveness assessments (PAME), strengthen existing PAs (including by considering revising PA categories) and prevent further degradation by mitigating existing threats, including invasive alien species, pollution and climate-related pressures (Targets 6 and 7), and expanding coverage where missing helps secure biodiversity long-term.
- Integrate systematic human–wildlife conflict assessment, prevention and mitigation (including coexistence strategies) into PA establishment, expansion, zoning and management planning (Target 4); and
- Promote sustainable, legal and safe use of wild species where appropriate (Targets 5 and 9), in line with the management objectives and zoning of each category of protected and conserved area.

3. Secure financial stability, capacity and an enabling policy and legal environment (Programme element 3 – multiple targets including 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12).

Without resources, capacity and supportive policy, all PA efforts are fragile. Goals focusing on the enabling environment (e.g. 3.1, 3.2 and 3.4) should be prioritized to:

- Secure sustainable and diversified funding for protected and conserved areas and associated community-based initiatives;
- Ensure equitable benefits sharing mechanisms from tourism and other sources of funding, to guarantee fair benefits for IPLCs
- Build institutional and technical capacity at national and subnational levels for PA system design, management, monitoring and enforcement, including for human wildlife conflict management, sustainable use and One Health; and
- Ensure coherent policy and legal frameworks that integrate PA objectives with wider land- and seascape planning, climate, health, agriculture, fisheries and tourism policies, to deliver

effective conservation and contribute meaningfully to Targets 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11 and 12.

4. Strengthen recognition of biodiversity values and nature's contributions to people, and the role of PAs (Programme elements 1, 3 and 4 – Targets 3, 11 and 12).

The PoWPA should prioritize goals and activities that enhance recognition of the multiple values of biodiversity and nature's contributions to people (NCP) – ecological, economic, cultural, spiritual and relational – in national and subnational policies, planning and finance frameworks. Protected and conserved areas should be highlighted, under Programme elements 1, 3 and 4, as key instruments for maintaining these values and delivering NCP, including health and well-being (Targets 11 and 12). Clarifying and embedding these values is a precondition for sustaining political support, funding and societal backing for PAs and OECMs.

5. Designate new PAs only where enabling conditions are in place (Goal 1.1 – Target 3)

Designation of new PAs should follow when the above conditions have been met. While recognition of OECMs and ICCAs can be a parallel effort, provided clear guidance from the CBD, designation of new PAs requires that enabling conditions for their success are there.

6. Integrate One Health and all-hazards biosecurity into PA systems (Programme elements 1, 3 and 4 – Targets 4, 5, 6, 7, 11 and 12).

Given the reservoir role of wildlife and the growing influence of climate and land-use change on disease ecology, the PoWPA should prioritize activities under Programme elements 1, 3 and 4 that:

- Integrate One Health and all-hazards biosecurity risk assessment into PA establishment, ESIA/SEA processes, and management planning, including for sustainable use of wildlife (Targets 4, 5 and 9) and IAS/pollution control (Targets 6 and 7);
- Recognize protected and conserved areas as sentinel sites for the emergence and re-emergence of zoonotic diseases and other health threats, leveraging the regular presence of staff in remote frontier areas between wildlife and human use zones;
- Link wildlife-health observations and community reporting in and around PAs to national One Health surveillance, early-warning and response systems, in line with the CBD decision on biodiversity and health and Targets 11 and 12.

7. Promote sustainable, safe and legal use of wild species in and around PAs (Programme elements 1, 2 and 4 – Targets 4, 5 and 9).

Building on existing PoWPA activities, the Programme of Work should prioritise actions that: • Provide guidance on when and how sustainable use can be compatible with PA objectives across different categories and governance types (Programme elements 1 and 2); • Strengthen governance models and co-management arrangements that jointly address illegal, unsafe and unsustainable use with IPLCs and other rightsholders; and • Integrate ecological and social indicators of sustainable use (off-take trends, population status of harvested species, basic wildlife and food-safety surveillance, community perceptions and attitudes) into monitoring frameworks (Programme element 4), to support adaptive management consistent with Targets 4, 5 and 9.	
Goal 3.1 to provide an enabling policy, institutional and socio-economic environment for protected areas	
3.1.2 Conduct national-level assessments of the contributions of protected areas, considering as appropriate environmental services, to the country's economy and culture, and to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals at the national level; and integrate the use of economic valuation and natural resource accounting tools into national planning processes in order to identify the hidden and non-hidden economic benefits provided by protected areas and who appropriates these benefits. • Valuation supports mainstreaming biodiversity into development agendas and mobilizing political and financial support, both of which are emphasized in the KMGBF Note: the Millennium Development Goals should be replaced by Sustainable Development Goals	.
Goal 1.4: Effective and equitable management of protected areas • This goal supports participatory approaches and benefit-sharing, which are critical for long-term success of protected areas	
3.2.5 Improve the capacity of protected areas institutions to develop sustainable financing through fiscal incentives, environmental services, and other instruments. • Strengthening institutional capacity to access and manage diverse funding sources is repeatedly highlighted as a best practice for achieving the 2030 targets	
4.1.2 Develop and implement an efficient, long-term monitoring system of the outcomes being achieved through protected area systems in relation to the goals and targets of this work programme. • The KMGBF places strong emphasis on measurable outcomes and transparent reporting	
Goal 4.3: To assess and monitor protected area status and trends	

• Directly linked to KMGBF's results-based approach and global reporting requirements	