Managing MIDAs

Harmonising the management of Multi-Internationally Designated Areas: Ramsar Sites, World Heritage sites, Biosphere Reserves and UNESCO Global Geoparks

Thomas Schaaf and Diana Clamote Rodrigues

Jeju

환경부
Ministry of Environment

IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature)
IUCN is a membership Union composed of both government and civil society organisations. It harnesses the experience, resources and reach of its more than 1,300 Member organisations and the input of more than 16,000 experts. IUCN is the global authority on the status of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it.
www.iucn.org

Ramsar Convention
The Convention on Wetlands, called the Ramsar Convention, is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. Its mission is "the conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world". Under the "three pillars" of the Convention, the Contracting Parties commit to: work towards the wise use of all their wetlands; designate suitable wetlands for the list of Wetlands of International Importance (the "Ramsar List") and ensure their effective management; and cooperate internationally on transboundary wetlands, shared wetland systems and shared species.
www.ramsar.org

World Heritage Convention
The 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage recognises that certain places on Earth are of "outstanding universal value" and should form part of the common heritage of humankind. Today, 191 countries adhere to the World Heritage Convention and have become part of an international community united in a common mission to identify and safeguard our world's most significant natural and cultural heritage. The Convention is unique in that it links together the concept of nature conservation and the preservation of cultural sites.
whc.unesco.org

The World Network of Biosphere Reserves under the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme
By focusing on sites internationally recognised within the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, the MAB Programme, launched in 1971, develops the basis within the natural and social sciences for the sustainable use and conservation of the resources of the biosphere and for the improvement of the overall relationship between people and their environment. It predicts the consequences of today's actions on tomorrow's world and thereby increases people's ability to efficiently manage natural resources for the well-being of both human populations and the environment.
www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/man-and-biosphere-programme/about-mab/

UNESCO Global Geoparks under the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme
UNESCO Global Geoparks are single, unified geographical areas where sites and landscapes of international geological significance are managed with a holistic concept of protection, education and sustainable development. Their bottom-up approach of combining conservation with sustainable development while involving local communities is becoming increasingly popular.
www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/earth-sciences/global-geoparks/

Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea
The mission of the Ministry of Environment is to protect the national territory from threats of environmental pollution and improve the quality of life for the public so that people can enjoy ambient natural environment, clean water and clear skies. Furthermore, we aim to contribute to the global efforts to protect our one and only Earth. The tasks of the Ministry of Environment include enactment and amendment of environmental laws and regulations; introduction of environmental institutions; building up a framework structure for environmental administration; drafting and implementation of mid- and long-term comprehensive measures for environmental conservation; setting up standards for regulations; providing administrative and financial support for environmental management to local governments; inter-Korean environmental cooperation; and environmental cooperation with other countries.
eng.me.go.kr/eng/web/main.do

Jeju Special Self-Governing Province
Jeju Special Self-Governing Province is the largest island off the coast of the Korean Peninsula. It has an area of 1,845.55 km^2 and a population of 630,000 residents. The island was granted autonomy as a so-called self-governing province in 2006 from the central government, the Republic of Korea. It is a universal recreational island with beautiful natural landscape received as a gift from nature which draws more than 12 million tourists annually from all over the world. Jeju Island is the only place in the world where four international designations overlap in the same place: it comprises a natural World Heritage site, a Biosphere Reserve, a UNESCO Global Geopark and a total of five Ramsar Sites. The province is very interested in improving the management and operations of multi-internationally designated areas as the island is a pioneer in this field. It is trying to create its own development model using a future vision for the island which many residents helped design, based on the concepts of cleanliness and coexistence. The province's plans for the future are focused on solving pending issues and formulating policies based on these core values.
english.jeju.go.kr

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Thomas Schaaf and Diana Clamote Rodrigues

In partnership with

Ramsar Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization · World Heritage Convention

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization · Man and the Biosphere Programme

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization · UNESCO Global Geoparks

Jeju

환경부 Ministry of Environment

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Lower left: Jeju Island (Republic of Korea): Biosphere Reserve, World Heritage site, Ramsar Site, UNESCO Global Geopark © Jeju Special Self-Governing Province
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Joint foreword by the Director-General of IUCN and the Chair of WCPA

IUCN was among the first to recognise the importance of protecting our planet's most valuable natural areas through international protection mechanisms. At IUCN's Ninth General Assembly in 1966, the term "World Heritage" was used internationally for the first time during the discussion of the idea of a legal mechanism to designate areas considered to be of value for all humanity. IUCN and UNESCO's ideas led to the 1972 World Heritage Convention that would mobilise the international community for the protection of outstanding natural landscapes and historic monuments. In a similar way, IUCN was integral in supporting the development and implementation of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands that entered into force in 1971. IUCN has also hosted the Ramsar Secretariat in its headquarters in Gland, Switzerland since 1987.

IUCN Members have continuously called for the global conservation community to support the implementation of both conventions. They have also urged support for the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, during the development of the Action Plan on Biosphere Reserves in 1984 and the early implementation of the Seville Strategy for Biosphere Reserves in 1996. More recently, in 2008 and 2012, IUCN Members have called for the protection and management of the world's geodiversity and geoheritage. A bureau member of the Global Geoparks Network since its establishment in 2004, IUCN continues to have a consultation role with the newly established UNESCO International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme.

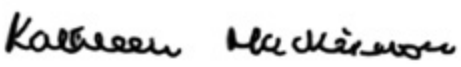
Each of the international site designation mechanisms has its own specific profile and focus, but they all share the overall goal of ensuring the appropriate management and conservation of these cherished natural areas. IUCN recognises the exceptional and pioneering work carried out by Ramsar and UNESCO through the designation of Ramsar Sites, World Heritage sites, Biosphere Reserves and UNESCO Global Geoparks, and we will continue to work to support and strengthen the efficient implementation of all of these initiatives.

IUCN's concern with Internationally Designated Areas (IDAs) led to the acknowledgement of the challenges for areas with multiple international designations. Consequently, a project aiming to prepare written guidance on the opportunities for harmonising the integrated management of these Multi-Internationally Designated Areas (MIDAs) was established, in coordination with the secretariats of the Ramsar Convention and UNESCO. The project stems from an IUCN Resolution (WCC-2012-Res-052) adopted at the 2012 IUCN World Conservation Congress in Jeju, which hosts the only area in the world where all four designations directly overlap.

The diverse ways in which the actual areas can overlap, together with the range of benefits and/or challenges that multiple designations can bring to natural areas, show the nature of this challenge. Yet, despite the complexity, all IDAs, and all MIDAs in particular, should demonstrate the highest standards and quality of practice, as model conservation areas and an inspiration to our work in protected areas. IUCN is uniquely placed to support MIDAs. The launch of this Guidance is a much needed contribution to connect these sites, improve their integrated management, and contribute to improved coordination of the procedures of the different international designating bodies.

IUCN encourages site managers, national stakeholders, and the secretariats of the Ramsar Convention, the World Heritage Convention, the Man and the Biosphere Programme and the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme to apply, test and provide feedback on the recommendations in this Guidance.

Inger Andersen
Director-General
International Union for Conservation of Nature



Kathy MacKinnon
Chair
IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas

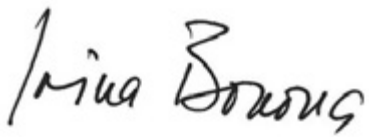
Foreword by the Director-General of UNESCO

Within the United Nations, UNESCO has a unique mandate to designate natural areas of significance for all humanity. It does so through three intergovernmental instruments – the World Heritage Convention, the Man and the Biosphere Programme, with its World Network of Biosphere Reserves, and the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme. These sites are all different, but they share the goal of conserving the environment for present and future generations. Natural World Heritage sites represent the most emblematic natural areas on Earth. Biosphere Reserves promote the harmonious co-existence of people with their environment. UNESCO Global Geoparks safeguard our geological heritage in line with sustainable development.

Many of the sites overlap, and this underlines their outstanding significance for the planet and, indeed, all humanity. This is why we must join forces to ensure their conservation and management. Sites with multiple international designations must be models, demonstrating that sustainable development is fully in line with environmental protection. When several international designations are given to the same areas, responsibility for caring for these sites increases. This raises both benefits and challenges, and calls for aligning conservation modalities and institutional mechanisms at all levels.

I believe that the initiative taken by our partner, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, to propose guidelines to harmonise the integrated management of overlapping World Heritage sites, Biosphere Reserves and Global Geoparks, as well as wetlands of international importance listed under the Ramsar Convention, is very timely. This is not meant as a prescriptive document, as recommendations will need to be considered by the governing bodies of the four international designating instruments. But recommendations can help to spark debate on how to improve the functioning of natural areas with multiple designations. The guidance's overview of the Ramsar and World Heritage conventions, the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, and the UNESCO Global Geoparks will also help readers to assess similarities and differences between the four international designating instruments. Readers will find here insights on ways to protect and strengthen the brand recognition of Biosphere Reserves, natural World Heritage properties, UNESCO Global Geoparks and Ramsar Sites.

Each international site designation must keep its identity – but I believe that there are vast opportunities for synergies between the different programmes through integrated management systems and efficient conservation measures. This guidance is a welcome step in this direction, for which I am deeply grateful.



Irina Bokova
Director-General
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Foreword by the Acting Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention

Some of the most spectacular scenery, the most beautiful, historic and textured landscapes, the most valuable and productive ecosystems in the world are protected by these four designations. However, the pressures on these important areas are equally dramatic. Rapidly rising numbers of tourists in these areas only reinforce the degradation of air, water and soil quality, the noise pollution, the pressures of expanding infrastructure and housing stock, which they experience. And that is before we consider the expansion of agricultural land, exploratory drilling and extraction of oil and gas, or other minerals, and the competition for water resources, all of which threaten to bring about even bigger changes. Sea-level rise and climate-change impacts are also introducing uncertainties.

Hence the conservation, management and wise use of these iconic areas are activities which are increasingly important, and increasingly challenging. The Ramsar Convention is very grateful for the support and collaboration of these other conventions on a number of Ramsar Sites, designated as Wetlands of International Importance. Working with the UNESCO World Heritage Convention, with the Man and the Biosphere Programme, and with Global Geoparks, each brings its own perspective, tools and knowledge. We also gratefully acknowledge the support from IUCN, and the Government of the Republic of Korea and of Jeju Island. Jeju itself, of course, has gathered invaluable experience, as being the first site to earn all four of these international designations.

The two most valuable contributions of the MIDAs project are, firstly, the support which these guidelines provide to site managers and to local decision makers, who are managing and juggling the various designations and their demands; and, secondly, the additional recognition which is brought to bear on these most sensitive and valuable sites worldwide. They have attracted multiple designations because of their multiple values: their unique geology, their biodiversity, their hydrology, and their historical and cultural significance.

The Ramsar Convention would like to see many more wetland sites receiving the protection that they need in order to support the sustainability of our societies and our economies. The internationally agreed targets are for 17% of terrestrial land and 10% of marine areas to be protected. However, while working towards that goal, these MIDAs – sites with multiple designations – will serve as beacons of hope, and reminders of just how much can be achieved when organisations work together, and when societies and communities truly recognise and value the natural landscapes within which they are embedded.

We applaud the efforts of the team that has worked hard to produce this publication, and we look forward to even more collaboration with our international partners, to support the site managers and the local communities who are the stewards of the most beautiful and valuable places on our planet.

Ania Grobicki
Acting Secretary General
Ramsar Convention

Foreword by the Governor of Jeju Special Self-Governing Province (Republic of Korea)

The world's environmental specialists designated nearly 50% of the mountain, field, river, cave and coast areas on this island which was formed by volcanic activity millions of years ago as protected sites. More than 12 million tourists visit it every year and this is one of the world's most visited islands. The 2008 Nobel Laureate in Literature, Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clézio, described this area with its unique culture and nature as the island of fantasy and thrill. This is the world's treasure island and the southern tip of the Korean Peninsula.

It's Jeju Island.

International organisations including IUCN, UNESCO and the Ramsar Convention recognise the island's pristine and unique natural environment. Jeju was designated a Biosphere Reserve in 2002, a natural World Heritage site in 2007 and a Global Geopark in 2010, and wetlands on the island were designated as Ramsar Wetlands of International Importance in 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2015. The island is the world's only place with protected areas with four overlapping international designations. The island's experience and stories that have coexisted with nature and have been well preserved are now being shared across the world as interesting and precious ones.

Especially, the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2012 held in Jeju served as a momentum to think about the island's specific roles and assume them for global environment and biodiversity. It was a precious outcome that participants at the Congress issued a resolution concerning the establishment of a new management model for individual management systems of internationally designated areas to be efficiently consolidated and harmonised. The Jeju province, IUCN, the Ministry of Environment of Korea, UNESCO and the Ramsar Convention Secretariat have pooled their wisdom to realise this objective by actively discussing relevant issues at international forums, workshops and meetings over the last three years since 2012.

This report includes the activities and efforts we have made so far. We hope that the environmental conservation, professionalism and vividness in this report will become guidelines and a future vision for better internationally designated areas.

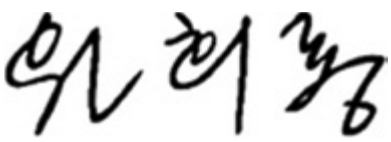
We are now facing the new trend of the times of cleanness and coexistence. At this moment, Jeju is seeking to establish a long-term master plan. We are pooling wisdom to harmonise and coexist with nature and culture, and maximise advantages for future generations. To this end, the island is carrying out diverse and specific policies to be a Number 1 eco-friendly community and carbon-free island and global environmental capital for sustainable development. We expect our efforts to be examples for global environmental issues.

The publication of this report is a new start, not the end of our journey. Above all, we can build capacity by forging a firm network among internationally designated areas for sharing experiences and knowledge when seeking solutions to environmental challenges.

We believe that establishing an education and training centre for internationally designated areas in cooperation with IUCN, UNESCO and the Ramsar Convention Secretariat is an important future task. Managers of internationally designated areas can build capacity through high quality and standardised education and training programmes. The island will join the efforts to establish the centre.

I greatly appreciate your contribution to this report. I hope this report will be a practical guideline for managers of internationally designated areas. And I hope it will be easily available on the internet to raise the world's concern and attract public attention to internationally designated areas.

Thank you.



Won Heeryong
Governor
Jeju Special Self-Governing Province

Site managers, decision makers of international organisations and Korean officials at the Workshop on Multi-Internationally Designated Areas in Jeju, 2015, including WON Heeryong (Jeju Governor), LEE Minho (Ministry of Environment, Republic of Korea), Ania Grobicki (Ramsar Secretariat), Tim Badman (IUCN), Han Qunli and Patrick McKeever (UNESCO)

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This Guidance would not have come into existence without the many valuable inputs, information provided by and discussions with a great variety of people and institutions.

First of all, IUCN wishes to thank the two authors: Thomas Schaaf, former Secretary of the UNESCO MAB Programme and current Director of Terra-Sana environmental consulting, and Diana Clamote Rodrigues, Project Coordinator – Internationally Designated Areas at IUCN, who have dedicated much time and effort in preparing this Guidance.

Thanks to funding provided by the Jeju Special Self-Governing Province and the Republic of Korea, and as a follow-up to Resolution WCC-2012-Res-052-EN adopted at the 2012 IUCN World Conservation Congress, IUCN's World Heritage Programme initiated the efforts towards the publication of this volume. In this task, the Programme was assisted by KIM Yangbo (former IUCN-Jeju Government Liaison Manager, current Director-General of the Environmental Conservation Bureau of Jeju Province) and KO Kilrim (current IUCN-Jeju Government Liaison Manager). The authors would like to warmly thank their colleagues in IUCN for their support and advice, particularly Haifaa Abdulhalim, Elena Osipova, Christelle Perruchoud, Pedro Rosabal and Célia Zwahlen, as well as Yichuan Shi (currently seconded to UNEP-WCMC). The authors also had very close and efficient working relationships with AHN Hyeyeong and KO Sunil of the Environmental Policy Division (Jeju Special Self-Governing Province) to whom they wish to extend their gratitude.

IUCN is particularly grateful to the site managers who shared with the authors their day-to-day management experience, their case studies and their photographs contained in this publication. They also provided excellent comments when reviewing the overall Guidance. Notably, IUCN thanks the following: Luis Sánchez Arguedas (Talamanca, Costa Rica), Manuel Paulino Costa (Azores, Portugal), Salem Hawash and Ahmed Saeed (Socotra, Yemen), LEE Soojae (Jeju, Republic of Korea), Dina Madiyeva (Korgalzhyn, Kazakhstan), Arndt Meyer-Vosgerau (Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony, Germany), Angel Omar Ortíz Moreno (Sian Ka'an, Mexico), Assane Ndoye (Saloum Delta, Senegal), Borni Rejeb (Ichkeul, Tunisia), Angelo de Vita (Cilento, Vallo di Diano and Alburni, Italy), and Salifou Zoumari (W Region, Niger).

IUCN and the authors were also greatly encouraged by the many comments and views expressed by delegates, representatives, national focal points and observers who attended meetings of the governing bodies of the four international site-designating instruments: the 35th European Geoparks Network meeting (UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France, 30 March–1 April 2015); COP-12 of the Ramsar Convention (Punta del Este, Uruguay, 1–9 June 2015); the 27th session of the MAB International Coordinating Council (UNESCO Headquarters, 8–12 June 2015); and the 39th session of the World Heritage Committee (Bonn, Germany, 28 June–8 July 2015). The delegates and observers were too many to be mentioned by name but, to the extent possible, the authors have tried to capture all their views and suggestions in this publication.

The secretariats of the Ramsar and UNESCO designated sites were always ready to provide guidance and technical advice related to the four international designating instruments. Regarding the Ramsar Secretariat, IUCN extends its heartfelt thanks to former Secretary General Christopher Briggs and Acting Secretary General Ania Grobicki and their colleagues Edmund Jennings, Chris Perceval, Tobias Salathé and Lew Young. The same thanks go to the former Secretary of the World Heritage Centre, Kishore Rao, and the current Secretary, Mechtild Rössler and their staff Eric Esquivel, Susanna Kari and Richard Veillon; the Secretary of the MAB Programme, Han Qunli and his team, especially Meriem Bouamrane, Maria Cardenas, Peter Dogsé, Miguel Clüsener-Godt and Alberto Hernandez-Salinas; as well as the Secretary of the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme at UNESCO, Patrick McKeever, and his colleagues Yann Gavillot, Margarete Patzak and Marie-Laure Faber.

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Tim Badman
Director
IUCN World Heritage Programme

Glossary and use of terms

Cultural landscapes. According to the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, cultural landscapes are cultural properties and represent the "combined works of nature and of man" designated in Article I of the World Heritage Convention. Essentially, the term embraces a diversity of the interaction between humankind and its natural environment.

Designating body. In the context of this publication, any of the four bodies which bestow an international title to a natural site or protected area. These four bodies are the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention), the UNESCO 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (often referred to as the World Heritage Convention), UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme, and the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme.

Governance. The interactions among structures, processes and traditions that determine how power and responsibilities are exercised, how decisions are taken and how citizens or other stakeholders have their say.

Internationally Designated Areas (IDAs). Areas which are internationally recognised through global or regional designations, including, for example, sites listed under the Ramsar Convention, the World Heritage Convention, UNESCO's MAB Programme, and the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme, regardless of whether any of these areas fully or partially overlap.

Multi-Internationally Designated Areas (MIDAs). Areas which have a combination of two, three or four international designations provided under the Ramsar Convention, the World Heritage Convention, UNESCO's MAB Programme and/or the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme, and which fully or partially overlap.

Mixed World Heritage property. A World Heritage site inscribed on the World Heritage List by virtue of a combination of cultural and natural criteria.

Protected area (IUCN definition 2008). A clearly defined geographical space, recognised, dedicated and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values.

UNESCO designated sites. This term refers to sites listed under the World Heritage Convention, MAB's World Network of Biosphere Reserves, and the Global Geoparks Network. Legally speaking, such sites are not designated by UNESCO (that is, by the UNESCO Secretariat), but by the governing bodies of the three UNESCO instruments – the World Heritage Committee, the MAB International Coordinating Council regarding Biosphere Reserves, and the UNESCO Executive Board regarding UNESCO Global Geoparks. Once the governing bodies have decided on the adoption of a new site, the UNESCO Director-General informs the country concerned of this decision. In this Guidance, the term "UNESCO designated site" is used for the purpose of simplifying terminology.

List of acronyms

ASEAN	Association for Southeast Asian Nations
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEPA	Communications, education, participation and awareness (Ramsar)
COP	Conference of the Parties
EGN	European Geoparks Network
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization (of the United Nations)
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIS	Geographical Information System
GIZ	*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (German Society for International Cooperation)
GGN	Global Geoparks Network
GIAHS	Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (FAO)
GLOCHAMORE	Global Change in Mountain Regions project (UNESCO)
GLOCHAMOST	Global and Climate Change in Mountain Sites - Coping Strategies for Mountain Biosphere Reserves project (UNESCO)
IACBR	International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves (MAB)
IBA	Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (BirdLife International)
ICCROM	International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Properties
ICOMOS	International Council on Monuments and Sites
IDA	Internationally Designated Area
IGGP	International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme
IOP	International Organization Partner (Ramsar)
ITPGRFA	International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IUGS	International Union of Geological Sciences
LIFE	Financial instrument supporting environmental, nature conservation and climate action projects throughout the EU
MAB	Man and the Biosphere Programme
MAB-ICC	MAB International Coordinating Council
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MIDA	Multi-Internationally Designated Area
NABU	*Naturschutzbund Deutschland* (Nature Conservation Union, Germany)
MRI	The Mountain Research Initiative
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
RIS	Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
STRP	Scientific and Technical Review Panel (Ramsar)
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP-WCMC	World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP)
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
WCPA	World Commission on Protected Areas (IUCN)
WDPA	World Database on Protected Areas
WHC	World Heritage Centre
WNICBR	World Network of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves

Executive summary

An Internationally Designated Area (IDA) is a natural area internationally recognised by a global or regional designation mechanism. As of 31 October 2015, there are 3,313 IDAs which have been listed as Ramsar Sites under the Ramsar Convention; natural and mixed World Heritage properties, as well as cultural landscapes, under the World Heritage Convention; Biosphere Reserves recognised within the World Network of Biosphere Reserves of the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme; and UNESCO Global Geoparks as part of the UNESCO International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme (IGGP). These include 2,218 Ramsar Sites; 197 natural World Heritage properties, 32 mixed World Heritage properties based on both cultural and natural criteria, as well as 95 World Heritage cultural landscapes; 651 Biosphere Reserves; and 120 UNESCO Global Geoparks throughout the world.

Among these, there are 263 areas where different IDAs fully or partially overlap thus carrying double, triple or even quadruple international designations. These areas are named Multi-Internationally Designated Areas (MIDAs) for the purpose of this publication. Among MIDAs, there are 215 Ramsar Sites wholly or partially embedded in 169 Biosphere Reserves; and 109 Biosphere Reserves which overlap with 100 World Heritage sites. Ninety-seven Ramsar Sites are also inscribed wholly or partially in 70 properties of the World Heritage List, while 22 Ramsar Sites are part of five UNESCO Global Geoparks. Sixteen Biosphere Reserves are embedded in 14 UNESCO Global Geoparks, and 15 UNESCO Global Geoparks overlap with 13 World Heritage sites. Apart from these double designations, triple and quadruple designations have also been given to specific areas. A comprehensive list of MIDAs (indicating year of inscription of the site, its surface area and geographical coordinates) is appended to this publication, listing all areas that have these overlapping international designations.

Following up on Resolution WCC-2012-Res-052 adopted at the IUCN World Conservation Congress (Jeju Island, Republic of Korea, September 2012), this Guidance addresses specific issues related to the management of MIDAs, and includes recommendations for harmonising the management, systematic conservation and sustainable use of these areas aimed at the local, national and international stakeholders of MIDAs.

While all four international designating instruments share the overall goal of conservation for present and future generations and are in line with sustainable development objectives, each instrument has its own purposes, profiles and management requirements, which justifiably sets it apart from the other three designations:

Ramsar Sites develop and maintain an international network of wetlands which are important for the conservation of global biological diversity and for sustaining human life through the maintenance of their ecosystem components, processes and benefits/services.

World Heritage properties serve for the identification, protection, conservation and transmission to future generations of natural and cultural sites of outstanding universal value.

Biosphere Reserves stand for harmonised management and conservation of biological and cultural diversity, and economic and social development based on local community efforts and sound science.

UNESCO Global Geoparks foster international cooperation between areas with geological heritage of international value, through a bottom-up approach to conservation, local community support, promotion of heritage and sustainable development of the area.

This Guidance provides an overview of the four international designating bodies to facilitate comparisons between them. It summarises different aspects of the four designations, such as their purposes, main objectives, history, legal frameworks, administrative arrangements, governance structures and bodies as well as scientific advisory bodies, and governmental obligations. The respective site admission criteria give an idea of the specificities of each designation. Differences among the four designations are also reflected in their reporting requirements and monitoring.

The management of MIDAs is at the core of the Guidance, illustrated by 11 case studies from a range of countries plus a special chapter on Jeju Island (Republic of Korea) which comprises all four international designations. In Jeju, the successful designation as a Biosphere Reserve paved the way for World Heritage listing, certification of five Ramsar Sites and recognition as a UNESCO Global Geopark in successive steps and for complementary reasons. Jeju's efforts in harmonising local management structures for the four international designations may give insights for MIDA stakeholders in other countries and regions.

With regard to site management, there are advantages in an area having two or more international designations. Multiple forms of international recognition have the potential to increase the resilience of natural areas to external pressures as they underline the diverse values of a site in the global arena. Linking conservation with sustainable development is a common aspiration of all four designations and can facilitate the engagement and participation of local communities in site conservation and management. International designations accentuate the significance of an area for research, education and public awareness, and are helpful in fostering transboundary collaboration, twinning of sites, global knowledge sharing and partnership programmes. At the national and international levels, MIDAs can provide a platform for strengthened inter-institutional cooperation. In many cases, multiple designations help fundraising efforts for site management at the national level and contribute to securing financial resources from international donors. Multiple international designations also contribute to raising national visibility and global site prestige, which in turn helps to reinforce the economic base of the area through tourism and the marketing of locally branded products.

Challenges for the management of these areas come to the fore when different national authorities are in charge of the same MIDA, and no harmonised legal or administrative framework exists, let alone a coordination mechanism fine-tuning the policies and intervention activities of the various responsible institutions. Lack of coordination may also result in competition for securing national and international funding for site management. Moreover, each designating instrument has its own primary objectives and approaches, and these might not necessarily be compatible with the geographical extents for which sites have been listed by other designating instruments. Differing reporting requirements in terms of depth of information and time cycles solicited by the four designating bodies pose a heavy workload on site managers and national authorities. Additionally, site managers are rarely trained in handling multiple international designations. Smooth information flows from site managers via national authorities to the four global secretariats and *vice versa* are not always ensured. Ever-increasing tourist numbers might jeopardise the environmental integrity of these sites. International designations may also evoke resistance from local communities and indigenous peoples, usually related to issues of land-use restrictions or sometimes even lack of respect for community and indigenous peoples' rights. A multiplicity of different forms of recognition risks confusing local communities and visitors regarding the significance of each designation, or else the perceived "higher value" of one international status may eclipse those designations that may be perceived of "lower value". Finally, the effectiveness of international designations may be diluted through an ever-growing number of IDAs and MIDAs.

An improved management system for MIDAs should be based on the complementarity and the synergies created by the different designations. In this light, the Guidance provides a number of recommendations addressed to three target groups: site managers of MIDAs at the local level; focal points of the four designating instruments and stakeholders at the national level (ministries and affiliated national authorities and others); and decision-making bodies of the four international designating instruments and their respective secretariats at the international level.

Recommendations for site managers at the local level

- **Improve staff capacity building**

Training and capacity-building activities for site managers on the specificities, similarities and potential for synergies of the four international designating instruments should be institutionalised as part of regular in-service training for protected area staff, as well as for other local stakeholders.

- **Create a joint coordination mechanism at site level for all international designations**

To the extent possible, a joint coordination mechanism, with sufficient management and decision-making capacity, should be institutionalised at site level for all overlapping international designations. This mechanism would be in charge of harmonising the different objectives and requirements of a site's international designations.

- **Revise and update management plans**

If an area has obtained multiple international designations, a new coherent and single management plan should be worked out (or updated if it already exists) to accommodate all the objectives and requirements of the respective international designations.

- **Engage with and respect the rights of local communities and indigenous peoples**

Local communities and indigenous peoples should be fully engaged and participate in the planning and management of MIDAs through various governance mechanisms, as well as receiving concrete benefits from site conservation. All MIDA processes should observe the principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) when considering the rights of indigenous peoples.

- **Promote communication, education and awareness raising**

Communication, education and awareness-raising programmes regarding the environment should be showcased in MIDAs, by site managers and responsible national authorities, combining their resources and expertise to promote the multi-faceted recognition of the area.

Manage tourism and visitor numbers

Visitor numbers should be adequately managed, and sustainable tourism strategies and plans should be developed and implemented in order to safeguard the conservation and environmental integrity of a MIDA. Tourism activities should be fully compatible with the conservation objectives of all the different designations that apply to the area.

Develop and display branding that transmits the site's values

The branding of a MIDA should successfully translate the site's values into appropriate and sustainable tourism and information products and activities, which can transmit these values and educate visitors. Additionally, the logos and significance of each international designation should be visibly displayed and explained on site.

Use visitor centres to raise awareness of international designations

Visitor centres and educational activities should be used to raise awareness amongst local communities, the general public and decision makers, in an easily understandable manner, of the site's various forms of international recognition and the primary objectives of each designation.

Recommendations for authorities and focal points at the national level

Choose the most appropriate international designation

Establishing a MIDA is not necessarily advantageous for a site so these should only be created with careful consideration. National authorities should first focus their attention on the specific comparative advantage that a site could receive according to the profile of each designation. Choosing the most appropriate designation for a site should aim to contribute to improving its management effectiveness and governance arrangements, as well as sharpening the appropriate branding and marketing profile of the area.

Assess the added value of international designations

Thanks to their specific profiles, international designations have the potential to add value to each other in some circumstances, and to act synergistically to enhance site protection and management. However, such added value needs to be carefully considered, and so, for new designation proposals, evidence should be provided of such added value. Any additional international designation(s) should be agreed upon by all relevant national stakeholders.

Monitor designation effectiveness

The responsible national authorities should critically assess if each international designation of a MIDA effectively helps the area in its efforts to enhance environmental conservation, sustainable development and resource use, and engagement and benefit sharing with local communities.

Improve coordination and information sharing among different authorities

When MIDAs are the responsibility of different national authorities, they should ensure an adequate and effective coordination structure for enhanced site management, information sharing and reporting. Assigning focal point functions for Ramsar and UNESCO designated sites to a single national institution could prevent duplication of efforts and expenses, and should be sought where possible.

Align conservation policies and institutional mechanisms across different regions and countries

In the case of transboundary MIDAs, or MIDAs spanning different administrative provinces or states within the same country, aligned environmental and site conservation policies and institutional mechanisms should be sought between the different responsible authorities.

Ensure an effective legal framework for MIDAs

States with, or planning to seek, IDAs and MIDAs should establish an effective and harmonised legal framework for such sites at the national level to ensure coherence in their conservation and management.

Establish coordinated fundraising efforts

National authorities and site managers in charge of MIDAs should actively use the complementarity of international recognition to secure external financial support needed for enhanced site management and conservation. These fundraising efforts should be coordinated and should take into account the conservation objectives of all international site designations.

Use expertise from different supporting communities

National authorities in charge of MIDAs should ensure that the great variety of expertise of the different communities supporting each designation is jointly shared, in an inter- and transdisciplinary manner, to the benefit of site conservation, management and educational activities.

Recommendations for the designating bodies at the international level

Improve coordination and information exchange among the designating bodies

The four designating bodies in charge of Ramsar and UNESCO designated sites should review existing cooperation agreements and, where appropriate, update these to ensure complementary support for the benefit of MIDAs.

Hold regular meetings among the secretariats

The four secretariats should hold regular, at least annual, joint meetings for information exchange, maintenance of a joint MIDAs database, provision of support for sites facing significant damage or danger, and discussion of other coordinated policies, projects and activities.

Participate in governing meetings of the designating bodies

Participation of representatives of each designating body (including their secretariats and relevant advisory bodies) in meetings of the governing bodies of all four international instruments is recommended, in order to increase information flow and coherence on policy decisions affecting MIDAs.

Maintain an up-to-date list of MIDAs

The joint creation and maintenance of an online list of MIDAs, ideally integrated within the IUCN/UNEP-WCMC World Database on Protected Areas, is recommended as a basic requirement for collaboration, and is consistent with the clearing-house function of the four secretariats.

Harmonise reporting and ensure joint monitoring

Harmonised reporting to the designating bodies should be established for MIDAs, since it will be more cost-efficient if reporting requirements for one designation can also feed into the requirements for the others. This will enhance the quality of reports and facilitate joint technical assessments and monitoring. The current practice of joint missions to some MIDAs when monitoring takes place should be extended and made consistent for all MIDAs.

Share information during nomination and reporting processes

The four secretariats, and their technical groups and advisory bodies, should routinely share existing information on proposed and existing MIDAs (nomination dossiers, periodic reports, ad hoc state of conservation reports), in order to ensure harmonised approaches between the applications of the different designating instruments.

Organise joint capacity-building activities on the operations of each designation

The four secretariats should organise joint capacity-building activities for site managers, national focal points, and other relevant stakeholders on the specific profiles of each designation. These should aim to foster possible synergies among the international instruments, and facilitate the exchange of best practices in the management of MIDAs.

Implement joint projects and networking at site level

By combining their expertise and outreach capabilities, the designating bodies should assist MIDAs in implementing joint projects of common interest at the site level, and in fostering twinning and networking arrangements among MIDAs.

Develop harmonised branding and communication strategies

The designating bodies should develop branding and communication strategies for their respective designations that do not compete with each other, but rather focus on communicating the added value of each designation and highlighting their potential for cooperation and synergistic activities.

Part I: Introduction

1. Setting the stage

International recognition of an area is a very powerful tool to raise awareness of its conservation significance from a local or national context into the global arena. In essence, all sites listed under the Ramsar Convention, the World Heritage Convention, the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, and the Global Geoparks Network have demonstrated their values for environmental conservation and sustainable development, and the importance of international concern for their protection and effective management. Their global recognition is raised to the highest level when several international designations have been given to the same areas of our planet. In this regard, the benefits from increased prestige and visibility as well as donor interest, potential added benefits to local communities and economies, and added attraction for visitors, conservationists and researchers are beyond doubt.

On the other hand, multiple international designations for the same area also bring about some challenges and questions on how to further improve and harmonise the management of such sites. Highlighting the benefits and challenges of sites with multiple international designations, and recommending proposals to enhance their management, is the subject of this Guidance.

The idea for the development of this Guidance goes back to the 2012 IUCN World Conservation Congress held in Jeju Island (Republic of Korea). At the Congress, Resolution WCC-2012-Res-052 was adopted which calls for the establishment of an integrated management system for so-called "UNESCO protected areas" [sic], that is Biosphere Reserves, natural World Heritage sites and Global Geoparks (see Resolution appended as Annex 1).[1] The resolution, among other things, expresses its concern that different management guidelines, time cycles and periods provided and monitored by different authorities impede the establishment of a comprehensive management regime for sites that carry multiple international designations. For example, periodic review cycles for Biosphere Reserves are set every ten years, while reporting for World Heritage sites is requested every six years, and regular evaluation for sites recognised under the Global Geoparks Network takes place every four years. Moreover, the resolution states its conviction that an integrated management system of UNESCO designated areas is the most assured method for their conservation, and that this approach to management complies with the fundamental concept of IUCN and contributes to the sustainable use of ecosystems.

In its operative paragraph, Resolution WCC-2012-Res-052 "requests the [IUCN] Director General, based on the learnings of the Jeju experience[2] and in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders, to develop an integrated conservation management manual that includes guidelines and other prescriptions for the systematic conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems, to develop and standardise a management system for protected areas including the integration of the different cycles for re-evaluation of designations, and to distribute it as a model for IUCN Members."

IUCN responded to the resolution with the development of this Guidance, which was made possible thanks to generous financial and technical support provided by the Jeju Special Self-Governing Province and the Republic of Korea. In 2014, IUCN started implementing the project with the working title "Improving the integrated management system of protected areas with overlapping designations". In addition to Biosphere Reserves, natural World Heritage sites and Global Geoparks, it was decided that the project also invite consideration of wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention. This Guidance is the fruit of both, Resolution WCC-2012-Res-052 and the IUCN project, implemented in coordination with the secretariats of UNESCO and the Ramsar Convention, which terminated in 2016.

The Guidance explicitly addresses issues of Multi-Internationally Designated Areas (MIDAs). For the purposes of this publication, MIDAs are defined as sites which have a combination of two, three, or even all four international designations provided under the Ramsar Convention, the World Heritage Convention, the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, and the Global Geoparks Network, and which fully or partially overlap. A common denominator of these four designations, compared to other forms of international nature conservation designation, is their global scope. Even though this Guidance focuses on MIDAs, many of the issues discussed here also affect Internationally Designated Areas (IDAs), that is, sites recognised through international designation mechanisms, including the Ramsar Convention, the World Heritage Convention, the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, and the Global Geoparks Network regardless of whether these designations fully or partially overlap with others.

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1 The IUCN Resolution refers to protected areas while, strictly speaking, not all the international designations referred to are necessarily protected areas. Most natural World Heritage sites are made up of formally recognised protected areas. Biosphere Reserves contain protected areas but they are actually a composite of "core areas" which are legally protected areas for the long-term conservation of biodiversity, "buffer zones" which may not necessarily have a protected area status, and "transition areas" that are not protected but which are economically used to demonstrate sustainable development. In general, UNESCO Global Geoparks are areas which may contain one or several smaller protected areas as geosites. Ramsar sites may or may not encompass protected areas. In this publication, nevertheless, protected areas are also referred to, since the management of areas with multiple international designations is often effected by the authorities in charge of protected areas at the national and local levels.

2 Jeju Island (Republic of Korea) is currently the only site in the world where all four international designations overlap: it is a Biosphere Reserve, a natural World Heritage site, a UNESCO Global Geopark and it contains five Ramsar Sites. Two of the Ramsar Sites are located within areas that have all three other designations.

Throughout the duration of the project, there were numerous consultations with different stakeholder groups. Site managers of MIDAs in a range of countries were interviewed and provided case studies on their respective sites which are reflected in this Guidance. An international workshop with site managers took place on Jeju Island from 27 to 29 April 2015, which served to capture the day-to-day management experience of areas carrying multiple international designations.

The project was also presented and discussed at meetings of the designating bodies of the Ramsar Convention, the World Heritage Convention, the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and the Global Geoparks Network. These meetings provided ideal platforms for information exchange on the project with national authorities and their focal points of internationally designated areas. In chronological order, the project was showcased at the 35th European Geoparks Network meeting at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris (France), 30 March–1 April 2015, which was also attended by representatives from other world regions. At this meeting, the project was discussed as a specific agenda item on 31 March 2015. It was presented at the 12th Conference of the Parties (COP-12) of the Ramsar Convention held in Punta del Este (Uruguay), 1–9 June 2015, thanks to an IUCN-organised side event on 3 June 2015. The 27th session of the MAB International Coordinating Council took place at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, 8–12 June 2015; at this occasion, the project was discussed with delegates and observers of the MAB Council under a specific agenda item of the MAB Council session. Finally, the project was also introduced at the 39th session of the World Heritage Committee, which met in Bonn (Germany), 28 June–8 July 2015. Here, the project was presented with two case studies during a side event jointly organised by IUCN and the German National Commission for UNESCO on 30 June 2015. In their oral reports to the respective designating bodies, the Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention and the Secretary of the World Heritage Convention also referred to areas with multiple international designations and the project at the above-mentioned meetings. Finally, at its 196th Session (UNESCO Headquarters, spring 2015), the UNESCO Executive Board formally took note of the existence of the project through document 196 EX/5 Part II prepared by the UNESCO Secretariat.

In their functions as national focal points for the four international designations, delegates and representatives of the designating bodies, as well as observers, provided invaluable input regarding the benefits and challenges of MIDAs as well as suggestions on how to improve the joint management of these sites. The authors are grateful for their suggestions and recommendations which are reflected in this Guidance to every extent possible.

At the occasion of the IUCN "Little Sydney: Protecting Nature in Europe" conference (held in Hainburg, Austria, 28–31 May 2015), a working session was dedicated to the theme of "Multiple International Protected Area Designations". The session identified a growing focus on measuring management effectiveness of protected areas and the need for coordination between the Ramsar and World Heritage conventions, the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme, the European Diploma for Protected Areas (see Section 1.4), and UNESCO Global Geoparks. Recommendations and action points emanating from this session are reflected in the Guidance.

Finally, the project also benefited from the active participation and input of the secretaries of the four designation instruments throughout its implementation. In fact, the secretaries were members of the project's Steering Group; they or their representatives attended project meetings, the above-mentioned workshop in Jeju and obviously the respective meetings where the project was further discussed with the designating bodies' networks.

1.1 Internationally Designated Areas (IDAs)

The 2014 United Nations List of Protected Areas contains 209,429 protected areas covering a total of 32,868,673 km^2 – an area larger than the African continent. In total, 3.41% of the world's marine area and 14% of the world's terrestrial area are currently protected. If Antarctica is excluded from the global statistics coverage, the percentage of the total terrestrial area protected is 15.4%.[3] The majority of these areas are protected under national designation.

Some protected areas have also been accorded international status through their recognition and designation by the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (commonly called the Ramsar Convention), and by the 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (usually referred to as the World Heritage Convention), UNESCO's MAB Programme with its World Network of Biosphere Reserves, and UNESCO Global Geoparks within the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme (IGGP). As of 31 October 2015,[4] there are 2,218 Ramsar Sites; 197 natural World Heritage sites, 32 mixed World Heritage sites which are inscribed on the World Heritage List on the basis of both cultural and natural criteria, as well as 95 World Heritage cultural landscapes; 651 Biosphere Reserves; and 120 UNESCO Global Geoparks throughout the world.

With a large number of sites benefiting from international recognition, it is not surprising that currently 263 areas carry multiple forms of international recognition, in any possible combination of these four designations. Annex 2 of this Guidance lists all these areas.

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3 Deguignet, M., Juffe-Bignoli, D., Harrison, J., MacSharry, B., Burgess, N. and Kingston, N. (2014). *2014 United Nations List of Protected Areas.* Cambridge, United Kingdom: UNEP-WCMC.

4 While modifications (addition of new sites, deletion of existing sites, extensions or boundary modifications) to site listings of UNESCO designated areas usually occur only once per year, new Ramsar Sites can be added to the Ramsar List at any time of the year. For practical reasons, 31 October 2015 was the cut-off date used in this Guidance for the counting of sites with a MIDA status.

Figures 1a–1c. Examples of MIDAs with different types of overlaps between designations

Figure 1a. China

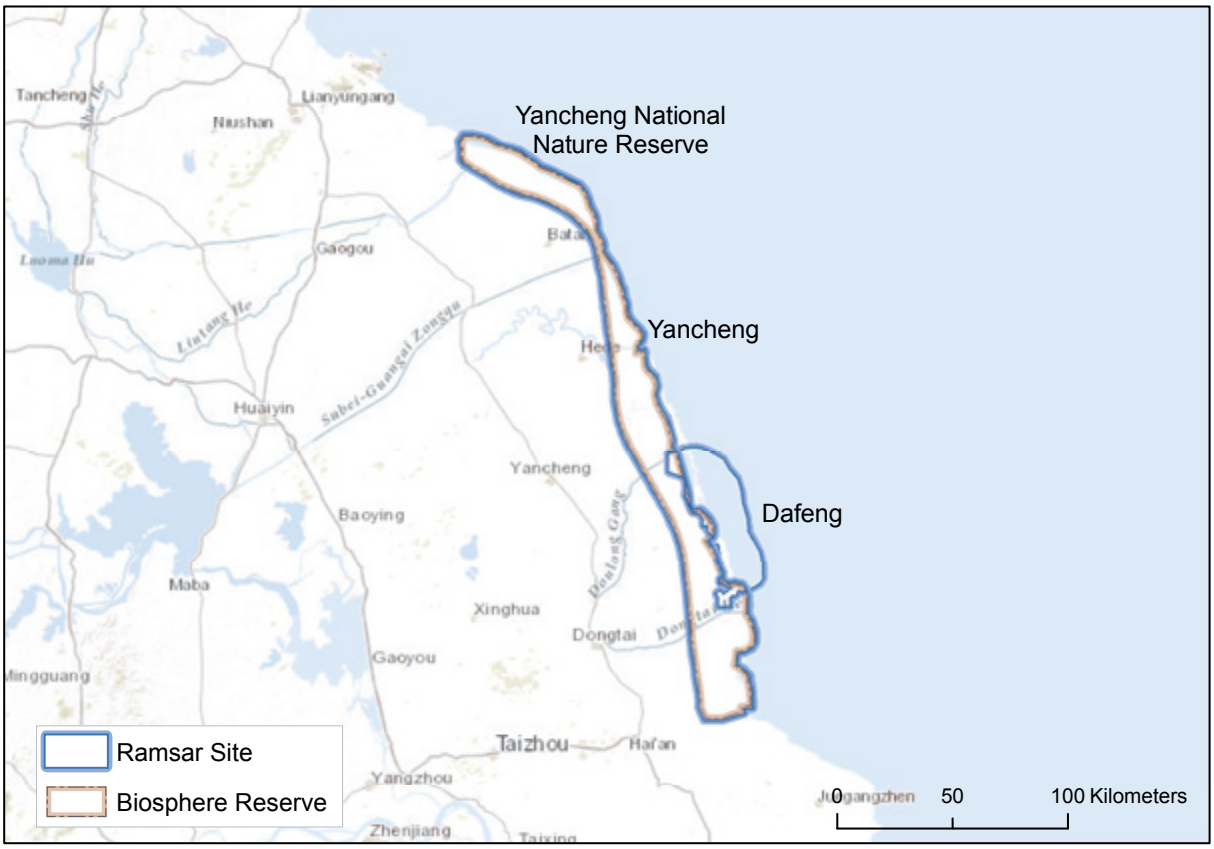


Figure 1b. Australia

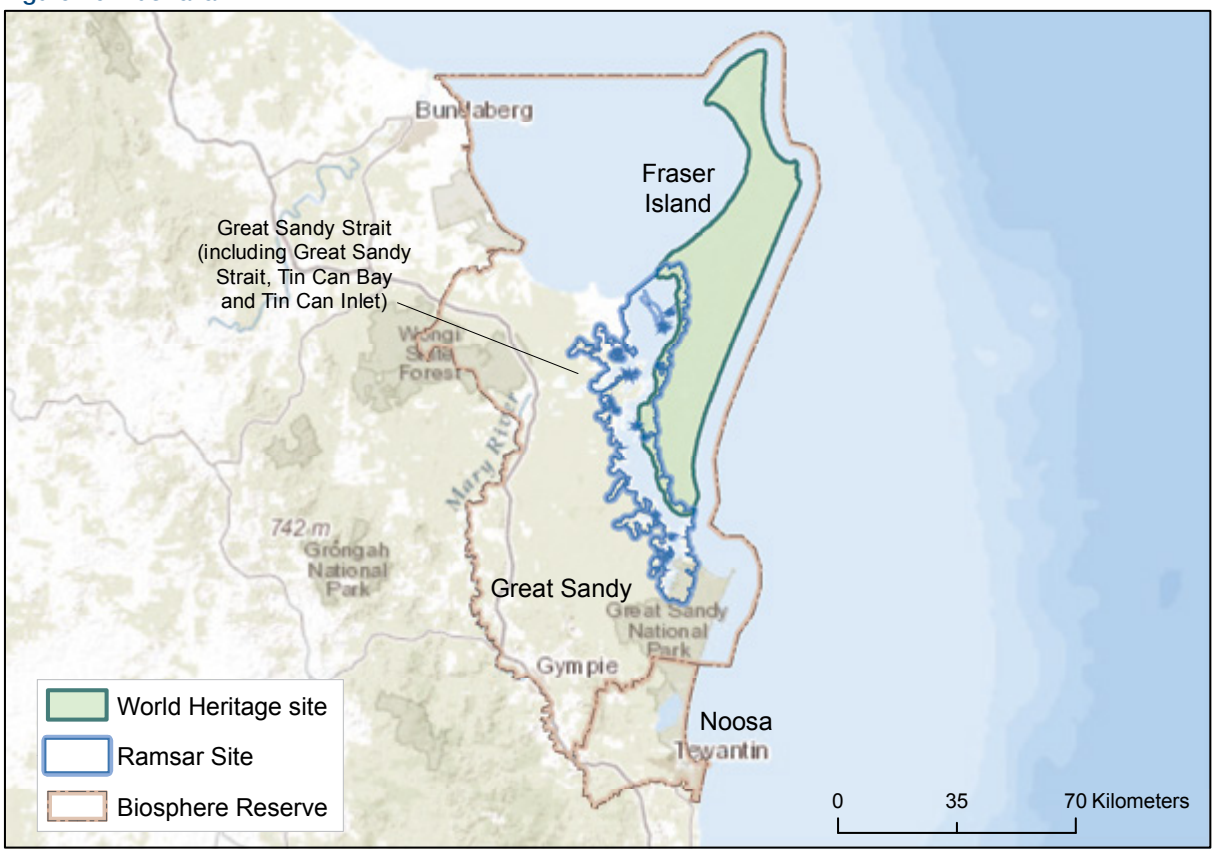


Figure 1c. Argentina

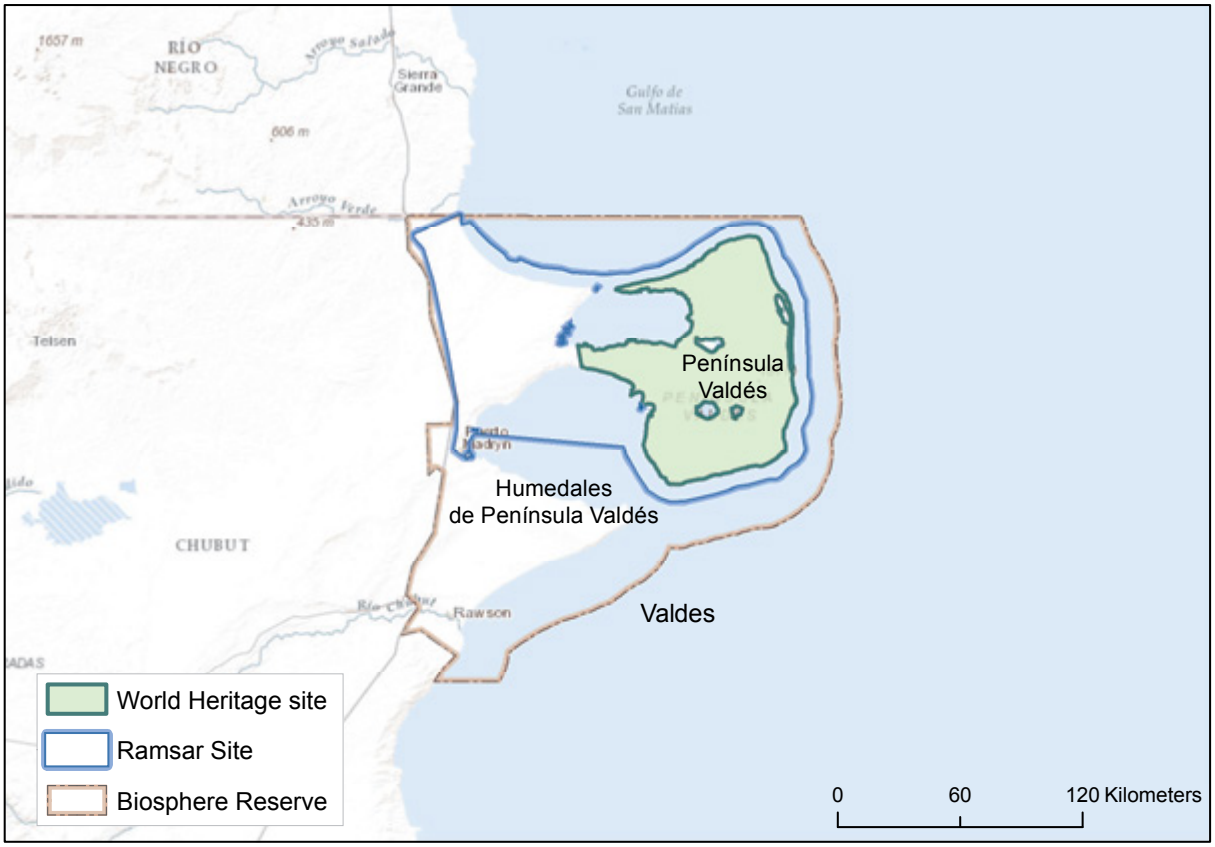


Figure 2. Frequency of double designated sites

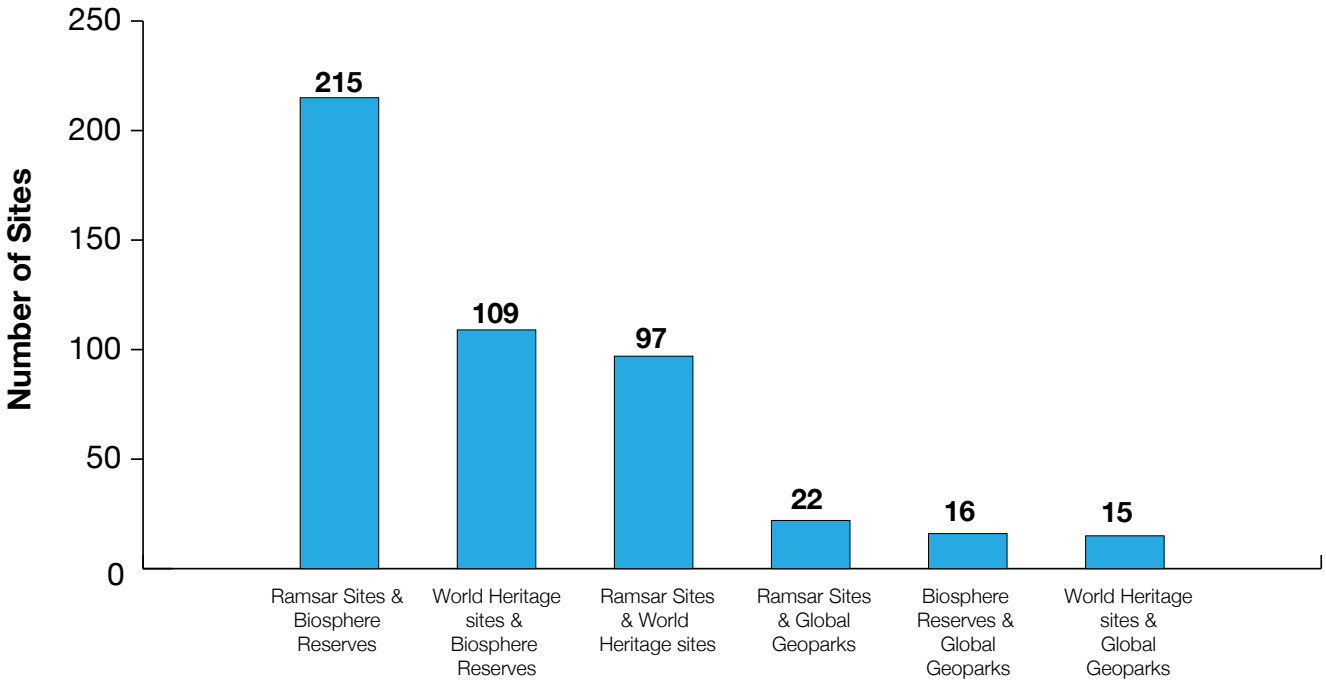
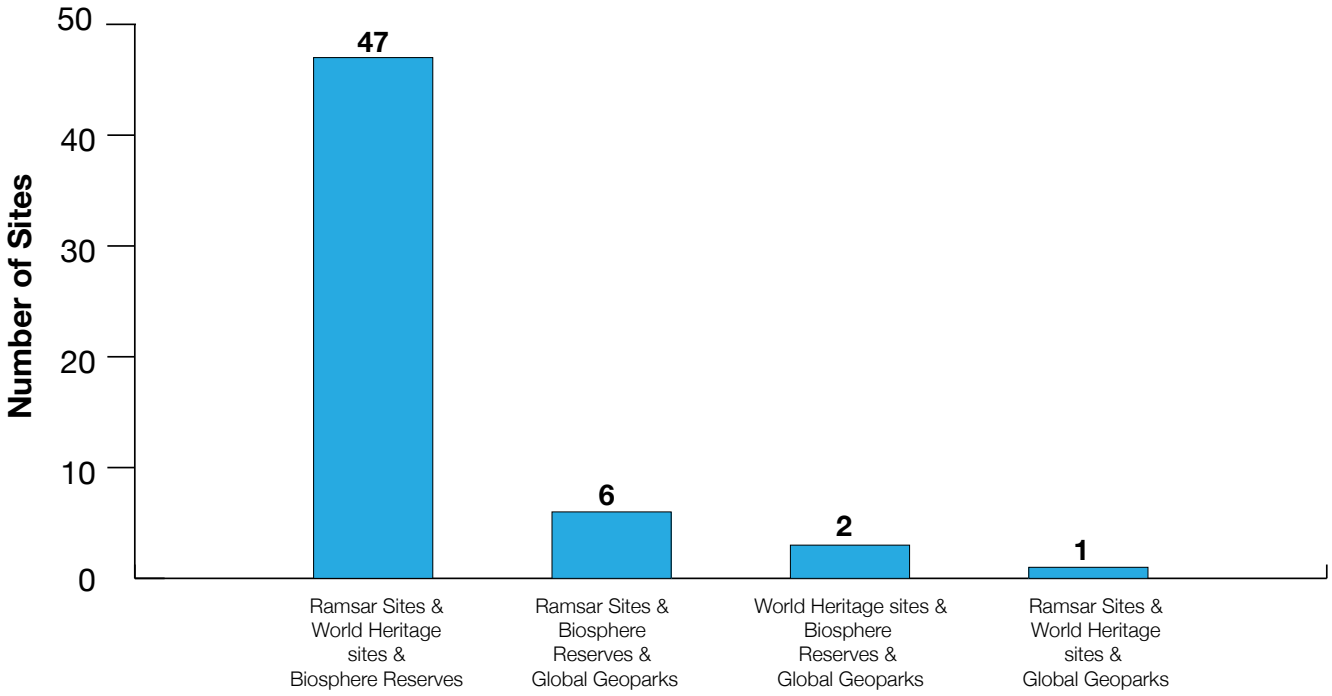


Figure 2 illustrates the frequency of double designated sites; for each figure in the chart, the highest number of sites under a specific international designation per coupled designation-type was used. As of 31 October 2015, there are 215 Ramsar Sites

which are wholly or partially embedded in 169 Biosphere Reserves; 109 Biosphere Reserves which overlap with 100 World Heritage sites; 97 Ramsar Sites which are also inscribed wholly or partially in 70 World Heritage sites; while 22 Ramsar Sites are part of five UNESCO Global Geoparks. Finally, 16 Biosphere Reserves are embedded in 14 UNESCO Global Geoparks, and 15 UNESCO Global Geoparks overlap with 13 World Heritage sites.

Even triple designations are possible, of which a total of 57 cases was counted. These are depicted in Figure 3. For World Heritage properties, it should be noted that the counts in Figures 2 and 3 include natural World Heritage sites, mixed World Heritage sites and World Heritage cultural landscapes. The choice to include cultural landscapes, even though they are considered cultural World Heritage sites, is due to the fact that there are significant connections between these areas and the IUCN protected areas categories system.[6] In fact, there are clear spatial overlaps between the two, with roughly two thirds of all World Heritage cultural landscapes coinciding with protected areas in one or more of the IUCN management categories. As a consequence, substantial management and governance relations between World Heritage cultural landscapes and protected areas exist,[7] which makes it relevant to include them in this analysis.

Figure 3. Frequency of triple designated sites



All four designations occur at the same location in Jeju Island (Republic of Korea). Two Ramsar Sites (1100 Altitude Wetland and Muljangori-Oreaum Wetland) on Jeju Island are precisely located within Jeju Volcanic Island and Lava Tubes World Heritage property, Jeju Island Biosphere Reserve and Jeju Island Global Geopark: at these two Ramsar Sites, all four international designations overlap in precisely the same space.

While the Azores Archipelago (Portugal) – if taken as a whole – also has all four international designations, each designation covers different terrestrial and marine territories so that only combinations of three designations overlap at any given point.

Table 1 indicates the total number of IDAs and the number of MIDAs respectively listed under the Ramsar Convention, the World Heritage Convention (natural properties, mixed natural and cultural properties and cultural landscapes), the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and the Global Geoparks Network.

6 Dudley, N. (Ed.) (2008). *Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN; and Dudley, N. (Ed.) (2013). *Guidelines for Applying Protected Area Management Categories. Including IUCN WCPA Best Practice Guidance on Recognising Protected Areas and Assigning Management Categories and Governance Types* by Sue Stolton, Peter Shadie and Nigel Dudley. 2nd Edition. Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series No. 21. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN.

7 Finke, G. (2013). *Linking Landscapes. Exploring the relationships between World Heritage cultural landscapes and IUCN protected areas.* Gland, Switzerland: IUCN.

Table 1. Number of IDAs and MIDAs according to each designation

	No. of IDAs	No. of MIDAs	Percentage of MIDAs to IDAs
Ramsar Sites	2,218	195	8.8%
World Heritage natural and mixed sites, and cultural landscapes	324	134	41.4%
Only natural World Heritage sites	197	109	55.3%
Biosphere Reserves	651	224	34.4%
UNESCO Global Geoparks	120	23	19.2%

1.2 Purpose of the Guidance

Common to all four IDA mechanisms is that they are designed to encourage national governments and local communities to identify areas so that these can be conserved and used sustainably for current and future generations. In many cases, these areas are also designated to showcase the positive interaction between people and nature over a long period of time.

However, as the overall number of MIDAs grows, the potential for confusion arises. Why would a site need different international designations when in essence the majority of IDAs support environmental conservation and contribute to sustainable development? Is one international recognition not enough to achieve these objectives?

Indeed, many are puzzled when on-site information boards and tourist brochures refer to UNESCO as the designating body for fairly different designations – that is, World Heritage properties, Biosphere Reserves and UNESCO Global Geoparks – occurring in essentially the same area. Probably only environmental conservation experts know the conceptual differences between the purposes and approaches of these different designations. Fewer experts may also know that UNESCO provides the international secretariat for the World Heritage Convention through its World Heritage Centre, while the UNESCO Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences is the Secretariat for the MAB Programme and its World Network of Biosphere Reserves, as well as for the IGGP and UNESCO Global Geoparks. Finally, perhaps only a fraction of conservation specialists and environmental lawyers are aware that UNESCO even serves as the Ramsar Convention's depository institution (although UNESCO has no other institutional role in the Ramsar Convention's governance or legal affiliations).

It is, therefore, essential to develop guidance to understand how each of these site-designation instruments functions.

- First of all, what are their main purposes?

  In **Part II** of the Guidance, a comparative overview of the four international designations is provided with a special emphasis on the respective selection criteria, as these best define the specific objectives for listing an area under any of the designating instruments.

- What are the similarities and differences between MIDAs?

- Is it a benefit or rather a challenge when the same area carries different international designations?

  These questions are addressed in **Part III**, Sections 3.1 and 3.2 of the Guidance, since the "pros and cons" for listing an area under multiple international designations should be carefully weighed.

As quite a number of MIDAs already exist, it becomes essential to consider institutional strategies to improve and harmonise the management systems of these areas at the local, national and global levels.

- Is there complementarity among two, three or four international designations?

- How can each provide added value for the overall sake of environmental conservation and sustainable development?

- Can the various designations synergistically reinforce one another and how?

  In **Part IV** of the Guidance, a number of recommendations aimed at different target groups have been formulated to help strengthen the conservation and management of MIDAs.

Of course, each of the four international designation instruments has its own objectives, purposes, profiles and management requirements, which distinguishes it from the other three. In this introduction, only a brief overview is given of the main objectives of each designation:

Ramsar Sites: Development and maintenance of an international network of wetlands which are important for conserving global biological diversity and for sustaining human life, through the maintenance of their ecosystem components, processes and benefits/services.

World Heritage properties: Identification, protection, conservation and transmission to future generations of natural and cultural sites of outstanding universal value.

Biosphere Reserves: Harmonised management and conservation of biological and cultural diversity, and economic and social development based on local community efforts and sound science.

UNESCO Global Geoparks: International cooperation between areas with geological heritage of international value, through a bottom-up approach to conservation, local community support, promotion of heritage and sustainable development of the area.

One of the main purposes of this Guidance is to share experiences on the joint management of areas with multiple international designations. A number of case studies focus on the different challenges that MIDAs may encounter, and propose solutions for enhanced site management and conservation.

Of the properties listed under the World Heritage Convention, this Guidance primarily considers natural World Heritage sites (that is, sites which have demonstrated outstanding universal value under natural criteria of the World Heritage Convention) and mixed sites, which are listed by virtue of natural and cultural criteria stipulated in the Convention's text. World Heritage cultural landscapes, which express human interaction with the environment and the presence of tangible and intangible cultural values in the landscape,[8] have also been considered. Strictly speaking, cultural landscapes are considered as cultural sites for the Convention. However, and by definition, they contain a natural component and are sizeable enough to include Ramsar Sites, Biosphere Reserves and/or UNESCO Global Geoparks, which is essential for our purpose to analyse areas with overlapping international designations. Common to all four designations is the focus on nature conservation (in addition to promoting sustainable development and education), and their relatively large geographical extent.

This Guidance also seeks to identify instances where harmonisation of management among the four international designating bodies is possible and desirable.

1.3 Target audiences of the Guidance

The Guidance was prepared for people and institutions concerned with environmental conservation at large. More specifically, it targets users at three different levels: site managers at the local level; state ministries or provincial authorities in charge of IDAs and other stakeholders at the national level; and the designating bodies and their secretariats at the international level. It is hoped that the Guidance will promote collaboration among stakeholders horizontally and vertically at all levels towards an improved management system of sites that carry multiple international designations.

Site managers at the local level

Managers of areas with multiple international designations are the primary focus of the Guidance. This publication is intended to provide site managers with information on the similarities and specificities of the four designating instruments, especially regarding the operational requirements of each designation that are needed on the ground for the site's sound management and to meet reporting requirements of the national and international bodies. A number of case studies aim to illustrate challenges but also opportunities that such sites deal with in their day-to-day management. Care was taken to choose case studies from a good range of countries to depict a variety of different issues in specific local, national and regional contexts.

In addition, the Guidance is also intended for managers of areas which – perhaps for the time being – carry only one international designation, but which may be in the process of applying for or obtaining additional international recognition. The purpose of the Guidance for this group is to foreshadow some issues that may arise for sites with overlapping international designations so that any potential drawbacks can be avoided. In fact, the intention is to sharpen the focus and the relative comparative advantage

8 Mitchell, N., Rössler, M. and Tricaud, J.-M. (2009). *World Heritage Cultural Landscapes: A Handbook for Conservation and Management.* World Heritage Papers No. 26. Paris, France: UNESCO.

of each specific designation so that informed decision making can happen with regard to choosing the most appropriate international designation for a specific area, or even deciding if the area really needs and would benefit from having more than one designation.

Authorities and focal points at the national level

The Guidance has also been prepared for natural resource ministries, environmental authorities and national agencies responsible for IDAs and protected area systems at large. These authorities at the national or state level are often the primary decision makers for the launching of a process that may give international status to an existing conservation area. The choice of which international status is most appropriate for a given site then becomes fundamental: is the area in question really of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV – required for World Heritage listing), or does it rather have a potential for the wise use of wetlands (for Ramsar Sites)? Does an area offer a development potential for local communities (for Biosphere Reserve designation), or does it have an asset for education and outreach to enlighten the public on earth's history, making it a candidate site for listing as a UNESCO Global Geopark? Does it even make sense for that site to pursue additional international designations?

National authorities have to decide if attaching an additional international recognition to an already existing one actually has added value or whether it would impose some constraints, in particular in terms of additional workload and the need for supplementary and qualified staff. National authorities in charge of a site are also requested to liaise between the individual designated areas on the one hand, and the secretariats of the designating bodies on the other. In this function, they have to ensure information flow from the secretariats to the site managers and *vice versa*. They are expected to inform site managers of decisions made by the designating bodies at the global level for subsequent implementation at the respective site levels. Moreover, they are in charge of collecting information from the designated sites, and transmitting such information to the international secretariats and their governing bodies.

Civil society bodies and public or private agencies that are providing support to internationally designated areas or national state authorities in charge of natural resources may also find the Guidance useful. In many cases, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are instrumental in preparing a nomination dossier for the listing of a site under an international designation. The authors hope that this Guidance will help to spell out the specificities and similarities of the various designations and how synergies in the overall management of MIDAs may be achieved.

Designating bodies at the international level

The Guidance is also meant for consideration by the governing bodies and the advisory bodies of the four international designating instruments and their respective secretariats: the Ramsar Convention Secretariat based in Gland (Switzerland), as well as the UNESCO World Heritage Centre, the MAB Secretariat, and the IGGP Secretariat based at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris (France). These secretariats are often requested to not only inform on their specific profiles and procedures, but also on those of the other three. In fact, it is their function to provide advice on the similarities and specificities of the four international designations so that their Member States or Contracting Parties may make informed decisions with regard to selecting the most appropriate international recognition for potential candidate sites.

The governing bodies of the four site-designating instruments have often expressed a wish for closer collaboration. This responds in particular to the need for joint research, conservation and educational programmes – for example on the impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss or land degradation – and information sharing beyond national boundaries on how to address these issues. A good example was the project Global Change in Mountain Regions (GLOCHAMORE) and its follow-up project Global and Climate Change in Mountain Sites – Coping Strategies for Mountain Biosphere Reserves (GLOCHAMOST), funded by the European Commission, sponsored by UNESCO-MAB, and implemented in collaboration with the Mountain Research Initiative and the University of Vienna (Austria). The projects set up a worldwide network of mountain Biosphere Reserves and natural World Heritage sites to detect signals of global change in mountains and to identify their consequences on mountain ecosystems and their economies (see box below).

1.4 Other international organisations, legal instruments and initiatives

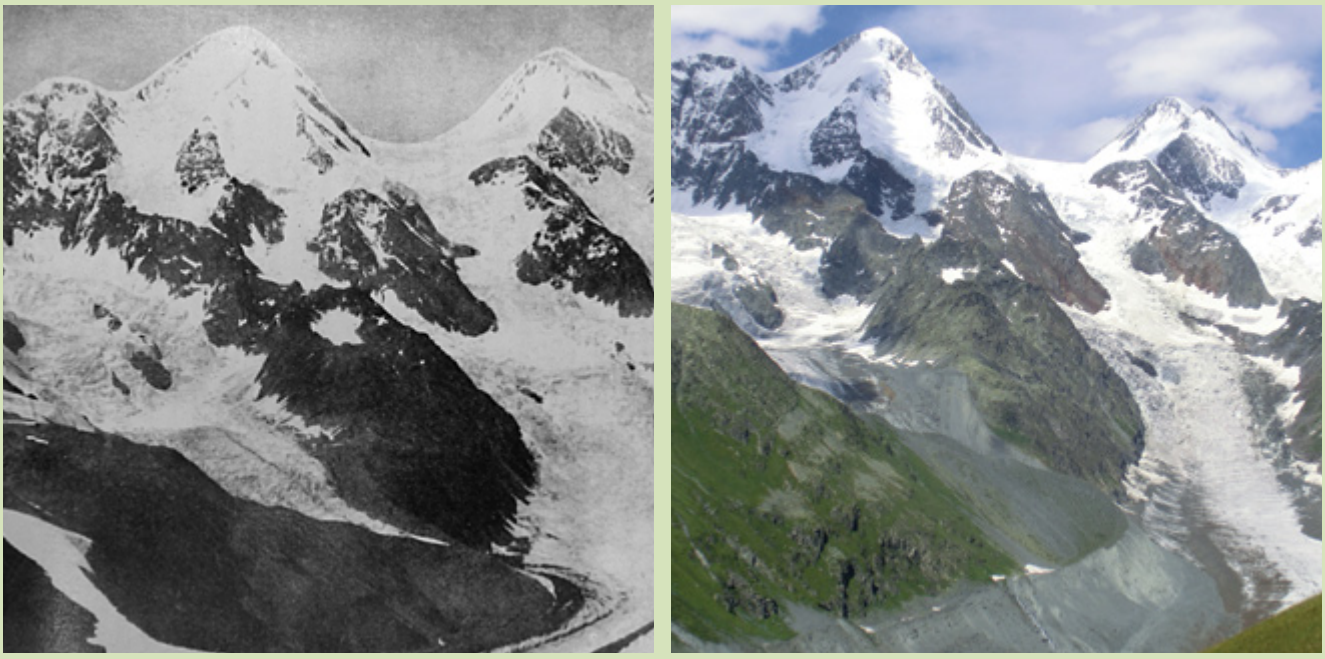
Ramsar and UNESCO designated sites are only four out of a larger range of possible international designations which similarly have overlapping characteristics or at least related mandates. These include, in particular, regional agreements and/or organisations. Many of the recommendations contained in the Guidance may also be relevant to these other agreements and organisations which may use this publication as a reference for their own work, since a large number of Ramsar Sites, World Heritage sites, Biosphere Reserves and UNESCO Global Geoparks have close relationships with these organisations.

Research project: Impacts of global change on mountain Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage sites

What are the impacts of global and climate change on mountains and people living in mountains? How can we detect signals of global change in the biophysical environment of mountains and the socio-economic conditions of mountain inhabitants?

The GLOCHAMORE project and its follow-up project GLOCHAMOST tried to find answers to these questions since mountains are fragile ecosystems that are sensitive to changing environmental and economic conditions. A worldwide network of study and monitoring sites in mountains consisting of both Biosphere Reserves and natural World Heritage sites was set up. Both projects pooled the expertise of over 20 site managers and over 300 scientists from all continents through applied on-site research, a series of international workshops and an Open Science Conference. As a result, the *GLOCHAMORE Research Strategy* (published by The Mountain Research Initiative, 2006) was prepared as a blueprint to guide managers of mountain protected areas and scientists in planning and implementing global change research. A special focus was given to five key research areas to provide a framework for knowledge sharing on the impacts of global and climate change on mountains:

- Climate change including the frequency of extreme events;
- Assessment of key fauna and flora and their occurrence and distribution;
- Quantity and change of water flows;
- Understanding the origins and impacts of land use;
- Employment and income.



Gebler glacier, Katunskiy Biosphere Reserve/Golden Mountains of Altai World Heritage site (Russian Federation) in 1897 (left) and in 2011 (right) © Tatjana Yashina

All study and monitoring areas were mountain Biosphere Reserves, of which several were also listed as World Heritage sites or were adjacent to World Heritage properties, including Waterton (Canada), Nanda Devi (India), Mount Kenya (Kenya), Uvs Nuur Basin (Mongolia), Huascarán (Peru), Katunskiy and Golden Mountains of Altai (Russian Federation), Sikhote Alin (Russian Federation), Sierra Nevada (Spain) and Glacier (USA).

The two projects demonstrated that Biosphere Reserves and natural World Heritage sites can serve as excellent long-term ecological monitoring stations, since site management teams maintain lists on the occurrence, distribution and population dynamics of key and other species, they regularly record climate data (temperature, precipitation, air pressure), and several also monitor water discharges at regular intervals. Impacts of land use on the environment and employment opportunities were also studied and recorded.

Organic honey production in Katunskiy Biosphere Reserve/Golden Mountains of Altai World Heritage site (Russian Federation) © Thomas Schaaf

Rangers from Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation in Katunskiy Biosphere Reserve/Golden Mountains of Altai World Heritage site (Russian Federation) © Thomas Schaaf

Although beyond the focus of the present Guidance, the relationships between these different levels of designation can be equally significant to the overlaps inherent in MIDAs. A very short description is given below of a selection of such organisations and initiatives (listed in alphabetical order):

ASEAN Heritage Parks (AHPs) are selected protected areas in the Association for Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region which are known for their unique biodiversity and ecosystems, wilderness and outstanding values. AHPs were given the highest recognition because of their importance as conservation areas. Through the ASEAN Declaration on Heritage Parks and Reserves, the ASEAN Member States agreed to effectively manage these AHPs so as to maintain ecological processes and life-support systems; preserve genetic diversity; ensure sustainable utilisation of species and ecosystems; and maintain wildernesses that have scenic, cultural, educational, research, recreational and tourism values.

The **Bern Convention** under the Council of Europe is a binding international legal instrument in the field of nature conservation, covering most of the natural heritage of the European continent and extending to some States of Africa. It is the only regional Convention of its kind worldwide, and aims to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats, as well as to promote European cooperation in this field. The treaty also takes account of the impact that other policies may have on natural heritage and recognises the intrinsic value of wild flora and fauna, which needs to be preserved and passed to future generations. Fifty countries and the European Union (EU) have already signed up to the Convention and committed to promoting national conservation policies, considering the impact of planning and development on the natural environment, promoting education and information on conservation, and coordinating research.

The Ramsar and UNESCO designated sites as well as the international organisations, legal instruments and initiatives mentioned in this section of the Guidance feed into the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 of the **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**. Its so-called Aichi Target 11 stipulates that, by 2020, at least 17% of terrestrial and inland water areas and 10% of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscape and seascape.

The **European Diploma for Protected Areas** is a prestigious international award given by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. It recognises natural and semi-natural areas and landscapes of exceptional European importance for the preservation of biological, geological and landscape diversity and which are managed in an exemplary way. Protected areas may receive the diploma for their outstanding scientific, cultural or aesthetic qualities, but they must also be the subject of a suitable conservation scheme. Since its creation in 1965, 74 protected areas have been granted the European Diploma. They are located in 29 European countries, both member and non-member States of the Council of Europe.

In order to safeguard and support the world's agricultural heritage systems, in 2002, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) developed an initiative for the dynamic conservation of **Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS)**. The GIAHS initiative promotes public understanding, awareness, national and international recognition of agricultural heritage systems. Looking to safeguard the social, cultural, economic and environmental goods and services these provide to family farmers, smallholders, indigenous peoples and local communities, the initiative fosters an integrated approach combining sustainable agriculture and rural development.

The **IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas (GLPCA)** is a global programme designed to assist national governments, site administrations and their community partners in conservation to improve the quality and performance of their protected areas, to help meet the quality elements embodied in the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020, including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and in particular Target 11. One of the core components of the GLPCA is a global standard for identifying protected areas that deliver successful biodiversity conservation outcomes (the GLPCA Standard).

The EU's **Natura 2000** is a network of core breeding and resting sites for rare and threatened species, and some rare natural habitat types which are protected in their own right. It stretches across all 28 EU countries, both on land and at sea. The aim of the network is to ensure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats, listed under both the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive. Natura 2000 is not a system of strict nature reserves from which all human activities would be excluded. While it includes strictly protected nature reserves, most of the land remains privately owned. The approach to conservation and sustainable use of the Natura 2000 areas is much wider, largely centred on people working with nature rather than against it. However, member States must ensure that the sites are managed in a sustainable manner, both ecologically and economically.

IUCN's **Protected Area Management Categories**,[9] which classify protected areas according to their management objectives, are today accepted as the benchmark for defining, recording and classifying protected areas. They are recognised by international bodies such as the United Nations as well as many national governments. As a result, they are increasingly being incorporated into government legislation.

9 Dudley, 2008; Dudley, 2013.

Part II: The four designating instruments

2. Overview of the four designating instruments

This part of the Guidance provides an overview of the four international designating instruments: the Ramsar Convention on Wetland Sites of International Importance, the World Heritage Convention for natural and cultural properties inscribed in the World Heritage List, the World Network of Biosphere Reserves under the Man and the Biosphere Programme regarding Biosphere Reserves, and the UNESCO Global Geoparks within the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme. The following sections will not go into every detail of the international instruments as this would go beyond the scope of this Guidance. Rather, it will present the four site-designating instruments and their specific designating procedures in a concise manner using the same structure, so that a comparison among the four instruments is possible. For all figures (such as number of sites, number of countries participating, etc.) contained in this part of the Guidance, 31 October 2015 was used as reference date.

A particular emphasis, however, is given to the respective site admission criteria, since they stipulate the specific character and objectives of sites listed under each designation. This will highlight the specific profiles and comparative advantages of each designation so that site managers at the local level and authorities at the national level have a better idea which international designation may be most appropriate for a targeted area.

It is interesting to note that three of the four designating instruments – the Ramsar Convention, the World Heritage Convention and the MAB Programme – originated at about the same time in the early 1970s. The *zeitgeist* in the late 1960s and early 1970s was opportune for international environmental cooperation, and in particular the global listing of special places that needed to be conserved in the context of apparent environmental degradation. The same spirit of the time culminated in the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm (Sweden) in 1972 and the expressed need for the rational use of natural resources.

The idea for the creation of Global Geoparks emerged later, in the second half of the 1990s. Based on a combination of the chronological genesis of the four designating instruments and the number of sites listed under the respective instruments (with the largest number of sites under the Ramsar Convention and the lowest number, for the time being, under the UNESCO Global Geoparks), the following sections will introduce the Ramsar Convention first, followed by the World Heritage Convention, then the Biosphere Reserves under the MAB Programme, and will conclude with UNESCO Global Geoparks.

2.1 The Ramsar Convention

- **Purpose:** The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat, called in short the Ramsar Convention, is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources.[10]

- **Main objective:** The conservation and wise use of all wetlands through local and national actions and international cooperation, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development throughout the world.

- **History:** Ramsar is the oldest of the modern global intergovernmental environmental agreements. The treaty was negotiated through the 1960s by countries and NGOs concerned about the increasing loss and degradation of wetland habitats for migratory waterbirds. It was adopted in the Iranian city of Ramsar in February 1971 and entered into force after UNESCO (the Convention's depository) received from Greece an instrument of accession to become the Convention's seventh Contracting Party.

- **Legal framework:** The Ramsar Convention is a legally binding instrument embodying the commitments of its Member Countries to conserve and maintain the ecological character of their Wetlands of International Importance and to plan for the "wise use", or sustainable use, of all wetlands in their territories. As of 31 October 2015, the convention has 169 Contracting Parties.

- **Administrative arrangements:** Ramsar is not administered within the United Nations system. It is managed by a stand-alone secretariat located in Gland (Switzerland) and is hosted under contract by IUCN. UNESCO acts as the depository for the convention.

10 See http://www.ramsar.org/.

- **Governance structure and bodies:** The Ramsar Convention is governed by the Contracting Parties (the policy-making organ of the Convention, which meets every three years for the Conference of the Parties) and an 18-member Standing Committee, the inter-sessional executive body, which meets on an annual basis. The Standing Committee represents the Contracting Parties in the implementation of work of the Convention and in monitoring the activities of the Secretariat.

- **Scientific and technical advice:** A Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) was established in 1993 as a subsidiary body of the Convention to provide scientific and technical guidance to the Conference of the Parties, the Standing Committee, and the Ramsar Secretariat. For the 2016–2018 triennium, the Panel is composed of a Chair and 18 members appointed for expertise in their own right on aspects of wetland conservation and wise use, of communications, education, participation & awareness (CEPA), of socio-economics as well as natural science. In addition, a representative of each of the six International Organization Partners (IOPs) is appointed as a Panel member. The six IOPs are: BirdLife International, IUCN, the International Water Management Institute, Wetlands International, Wildlife and Wetlands Trust, and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

- **Governmental obligations:** Contracting Parties commit to working actively to support the "three pillars" of the Convention: (1) ensuring the wise use of wetlands in their territory; (2) designating and managing Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites) to maintain their ecological character; and (3) promoting international cooperation, especially in regard to transboundary wetlands, shared water systems, and shared species.

- **Site admission criteria:** Wetlands are selected for the List of Wetlands of International Importance on account of their international significance in terms of ecology, botany, zoology, limnology or hydrology according to nine criteria, agreed by the Contracting Parties, based on their uniqueness/representativeness or their biodiversity values for waterbirds, fish and other taxa.

The Nine Ramsar Site Criteria

Group A of the Criteria: Sites containing representative, rare or unique wetland types

Criterion 1: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it contains a representative, rare or unique example of a natural or near natural wetland type found within the appropriate biogeographic region.

Group B of the Criteria: Sites of international importance for conserving biological diversity

Criteria based on species and ecological communities

Criterion 2: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports vulnerable, endangered, or critically endangered species or threatened ecological communities.

Criterion 3: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports populations of plant and/or animal species important for maintaining the biological diversity of a particular biogeographic region.

Criterion 4: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports plant and/or animal species at a critical stage in their life cycles, or provides refuge during adverse conditions.

Specific criteria based on waterbirds

Criterion 5: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 20,000 or more waterbirds.

Criterion 6: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of waterbirds.

Specific criteria based on fish

Criterion 7: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it supports a significant proportion of indigenous fish subspecies, species or families, life-history stages, species interactions and/or populations that are representative of wetland benefits and/or values and thereby contributes to global biological diversity.

Criterion 8: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it is an important source of food for fishes, spawning ground, nursery and/or migration path on which fish stocks, either within the wetland or elsewhere, depend.

Specific criteria based on other taxa

Criterion 9: A wetland should be considered internationally important if it regularly supports 1% of the individuals in a population of one species or subspecies of wetland-dependent non-avian animal species.

- **Monitoring and reporting:** Contracting Parties provide detailed national reports, using the Ramsar Site Information Sheet format, every three years for the Conference of the Parties. In addition, they are requested to report any significant change or likely change to the ecological character of any listed wetland in their territory as a result of technological developments, pollution and human interference. Contracting Parties are also invited to submit national reports on the implementation of the Convention every six years.

- **Number of countries participating (Contracting Parties):** 169

- **Number of countries with sites:** 169 – at least one Ramsar Site is obligatory for every Contracting Party.

- **Application/nomination process:** National governments have the sole responsibility of designating their wetlands to the Ramsar List based upon agreed criteria for eligibility. When a country accedes to the Convention, it must designate at least one wetland site as a Wetland of International Importance. Information on this first Ramsar Site is sent with the documents of accession to UNESCO, the Convention's depository. Following accession to the Convention, any wetland which meets at least one of the criteria for identifying wetlands of international importance and has been designated by the appropriate national authority can be added to the Ramsar List. The national Administrative Authority sends these subsequent designations, with a completed Ramsar Site Information Sheet, directly to the Secretariat. The Secretariat ensures that the data and map meet the standards set by the Conference of the Parties, and then adds the information on the site to the Ramsar Sites Information Service.[11]

- **Deletions from the list:** A Contracting Party may, because of its urgent national interest, delete or restrict the boundaries of wetlands already included in the List (Article 2.5 of the Convention). Article 4.2 states, however, that such deletions or restrictions should be compensated for by the creation of additional nature reserves or by the protection, either in the same area or elsewhere, of a suitable portion of the original habitat. Few Ramsar Sites have ever been "deleted" in this way, and Parties have only extremely rarely restricted the boundaries of a site on this basis. There is no mechanism for removing a Ramsar Site against the wishes of the Party concerned.

- **Funding available as a result of membership:** The Ramsar Secretariat has a Small Grants Fund for eligible Parties in all regions, drawn largely from voluntary contributions from Parties and others, as well as modest assistance programmes for Neotropical and African Parties funded by the United States and Switzerland respectively. All are intended to provide funding or co-funding for small-scale preparatory, conservation management, capacity-building, awareness-raising and emergency response projects.

- **Mechanism to encourage greater national and international cooperation on the conservation of a particular site:** The Montreux Record is a register of sites on the List of Wetlands of International Importance where changes in the ecological character have occurred, are occurring, or are likely to occur as a result of technological developments, pollution or other human interference. The Ramsar Advisory Mission is a technical assistance mechanism, which provides help to developed and developing countries alike in solving the problems of threats that make inclusion in the Montreux Record necessary.

2.2 The World Heritage Convention

- **Purpose:** The Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, commonly called the World Heritage Convention, links together in a single document the concepts of natural conservation and the preservation of cultural properties.[12] The Convention recognises the way in which people interact with nature, and the fundamental way to preserve the balance between the two.

- **Main objective:** Identification and conservation of natural and cultural sites of outstanding universal value.

- **History:** The idea of creating an international movement for protected heritage emerged after World War I. The Convention developed from the merging of two separate movements: the first focusing on the preservation of cultural sites, and the other dealing with the conservation of nature. Eventually, a single text was agreed upon by all parties concerned. The Convention concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage was adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO on 16 November 1972. It formally took effect in 1975 upon its ratification by the first 20 States Parties.

- **Legal framework:** The World Heritage Convention is a legally binding instrument providing for international cooperation for the identification and conservation of the world's most outstanding natural and cultural properties. The Convention sets out the duties of the States Parties in identifying potential properties and their role in protecting and preserving them. To date, 191 States Parties have ratified the Convention.

11 See https://rsis.ramsar.org/.

12 See http://whc.unesco.org/en/convention/.

- **Administrative arrangements:** The Convention is serviced by a Secretariat under the auspices of UNESCO. The Secretariat, called the World Heritage Centre, is located at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris (France).

- **Governance structure and bodies:** Countries having ratified the World Heritage Convention (States Parties) have a biennial General Assembly to review and decide on broader policy issues. The General Assembly elects the World Heritage Committee, comprised of 21 States Parties, which meets annually to consider new nominations, to review the state of conservation of existing sites, and to decide on administrative and policy matters related to the implementation of the Convention.

- **Scientific and technical advice:** The Convention recognises three technical Advisory Bodies: IUCN regarding natural sites, and the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) and the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) for cultural properties. The Advisory Bodies provide the World Heritage Committee with evaluations of cultural and natural properties nominated, expert advice on conservation as well as on training activities.

- **Governmental obligations:** By signing the Convention, each country pledges to conserve not only the World Heritage properties situated on its territory, but also to protect its national heritage for future generations. According to Article 6 of the Convention, States Parties recognise that such heritage constitutes a world heritage for whose protection it is the duty of the international community as a whole to cooperate.

- **Site admission criteria:** To be included on the World Heritage List, properties must be of Outstanding Universal Value (OUV). To be deemed this, a property must meet at least one out of ten selection criteria, meet the conditions of integrity and/or authenticity and must have an adequate protection and management system to ensure its safeguarding. World Heritage properties are selected on the basis of six cultural and four natural criteria. Among the latter are: areas of exceptional natural beauty, outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history and on-going ecological and biological processes, and areas containing the most important and significant habitats for in-situ biodiversity conservation. The criteria for OUV are explained in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention[13] as follows (note in particular criteria (vii)–(x) for natural World Heritage properties).

Criteria for the assessment of Outstanding Universal Value for World Heritage properties

The [World Heritage] Committee considers a property as having Outstanding Universal Value if the property meets one or more of the following criteria. Nominated properties shall therefore:

(i) represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;

(ii) exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;

(iii) bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;

(iv) be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;

(v) be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;

(vi) be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance. (The Committee considers that this criterion should preferably be used in conjunction with other criteria);

(vii) contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;

(viii) be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;

(ix) be outstanding examples representing significant on-going ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals;

(x) contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of Outstanding Universal Value from the point of view of science or conservation.

13 See http://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/.

To be deemed of *Outstanding Universal Value*, a property must also meet the conditions of integrity and/or authenticity[14] and must have an adequate protection and management system to ensure its safeguarding.

Authenticity

Properties nominated under criteria (i) to (vi) must meet the conditions of authenticity. The so-called Nara Document on Authenticity provides a practical basis for examining the authenticity of such properties and is summarized below.

Judgments about value attributed to cultural heritage, as well as the credibility of related information sources, may differ from culture to culture, and even within the same culture. The respect due to all cultures requires that cultural heritage must be considered and judged primarily within the cultural contexts to which it belongs.

Depending on the type of cultural heritage, and its cultural context, properties may be understood to meet the conditions of authenticity if their cultural values (as recognized in the nomination criteria proposed) are truthfully and credibly expressed through a variety of attributes including:

- form and design;
- materials and substance;
- use and function;
- traditions, techniques and management systems;
- location and setting;
- language, and other forms of intangible heritage;
- spirit and feeling; and
- other internal and external factors.

Attributes such as spirit and feeling do not lend themselves easily to practical applications of the conditions of authenticity, but nevertheless are important indicators of character and sense of place, for example, in communities maintaining tradition and cultural continuity.

The use of all these sources permits elaboration of the specific artistic, historic, social, and scientific dimensions of the cultural heritage being examined. “Information sources” are defined as all physical, written, oral, and figurative sources, which make it possible to know the nature, specificities, meaning, and history of the cultural heritage.

When the conditions of authenticity are considered in preparing a nomination for a property, the State Party should first identify all of the applicable significant attributes of authenticity. The statement of authenticity should assess the degree to which authenticity is present in, or expressed by, each of these significant attributes.

In relation to authenticity, the reconstruction of archaeological remains or historic buildings or districts is justifiable only in exceptional circumstances. Reconstruction is acceptable only on the basis of complete and detailed documentation and to no extent on conjecture.

Integrity

All properties nominated for inscription on the World Heritage List shall satisfy the conditions of integrity.

Integrity is a measure of the wholeness and intactness of the natural and/or cultural heritage and its attributes. Examining the conditions of integrity, therefore requires assessing the extent to which the property:

a) includes all elements necessary to express its Outstanding Universal Value;

b) is of adequate size to ensure the complete representation of the features and processes which convey the property’s significance;

c) suffers from adverse effects of development and/or neglect.

This should be presented in a statement of integrity.

For properties nominated under criteria (i) to (vi), the physical fabric of the property and/or its significant features should be in good condition, and the impact of deterioration processes controlled. A significant proportion of the elements necessary to convey the totality of the value conveyed by the property should be included. Relationships and dynamic functions present in cultural landscapes, historic towns or other living properties essential to their distinctive character should also be maintained.

14 Authenticity is only relevant for cultural properties.

For all properties nominated under criteria (vii) to (x), bio-physical processes and landform features should be relatively intact. However, it is recognized that no area is totally pristine and that all natural areas are in a dynamic state, and to some extent involve contact with people. Human activities, including those of traditional societies and local communities, often occur in natural areas. These activities may be consistent with the Outstanding Universal Value of the area where they are ecologically sustainable.

In addition, for properties nominated under criteria (vii) to (x), a corresponding condition of integrity has been defined for each criterion.

Properties proposed under criterion (vii) should be of Outstanding Universal Value and include areas that are essential for maintaining the beauty of the property. For example, a property whose scenic value depends on a waterfall, would meet the conditions of integrity if it includes adjacent catchment and downstream areas that are integrally linked to the maintenance of the aesthetic qualities of the property.

Properties proposed under criterion (viii) should contain all or most of the key interrelated and interdependent elements in their natural relationships. For example, an "ice age" area would meet the conditions of integrity if it includes the snow field, the glacier itself and samples of cutting patterns, deposition and colonization (e.g. striations, moraines, pioneer stages of plant succession, etc.); in the case of volcanoes, the magmatic series should be complete and all or most of the varieties of effusive rocks and types of eruptions be represented.

Properties proposed under criterion (ix) should have sufficient size and contain the necessary elements to demonstrate the key aspects of processes that are essential for the long-term conservation of the ecosystems and the biological diversity they contain. For example, an area of tropical rain forest would meet the conditions of integrity if it includes a certain amount of variation in elevation above sea level, changes in topography and soil types, patch systems and naturally regenerating patches; similarly a coral reef should include, for example, seagrass, mangrove or other adjacent ecosystems that regulate nutrient and sediment inputs into the reef.

Protection and management requirement

Protection and management of World Heritage properties should ensure that their Outstanding Universal Value, including the conditions of integrity and/or authenticity at the time of inscription, are sustained or enhanced over time. A regular review of the general state of conservation of properties, and thus also their Outstanding Universal Value, shall be done within a framework of monitoring processes for World Heritage properties (both Reactive Monitoring and Periodic Reporting), as specified within the *Operational Guidelines*.

All properties inscribed on the World Heritage List must have adequate long-term legislative, regulatory, institutional and/or traditional protection and management to ensure their safeguarding. This protection should include adequately delineated boundaries.

Similarly, in their nomination dossiers, States Parties should demonstrate adequate protection at the national, regional, municipal, and/or traditional level for the nominated property. They should append appropriate texts to the nomination with a clear explanation of the way this protection operates to protect the property.

Furthermore, each nominated property should have an appropriate management plan or other documented management system which must specify how the Outstanding Universal Value of a property should be preserved, preferably through participatory means.

Lastly, World Heritage properties may support a variety of ongoing and proposed uses that are ecologically and culturally sustainable and which may contribute to the quality of life of communities concerned. The State Party and its partners must ensure that such sustainable use or any other change does not impact adversely on the Outstanding Universal Value of the property. For some properties, human use would not be appropriate. Legislations, policies and strategies affecting World Heritage properties should ensure the protection of the Outstanding Universal Value, support the wider conservation of natural and cultural heritage, and promote and encourage the active participation of the communities and stakeholders concerned with the property as necessary conditions to its sustainable protection, conservation, management and presentation.

More detailed information is available in the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, paragraphs 96–119.

- **Monitoring and reporting:** The World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies maintain on-going reactive monitoring systems throughout the year.[15] The World Heritage Committee may ask for "state of conservation" reports based on evidence of serious conservation concerns. The same Committee may also request States Parties to invite a reactive monitoring mission, usually

15 See http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc.

comprised of UNESCO and one of the Advisory Bodies' representatives, to carry out *in-situ* investigation of the state of conservation of a site so that they may report back to the Committee. States Parties are requested to participate in periodic reporting exercises every six years on a regional basis and to respond to specific requests by the World Heritage Committee.

- **Number of countries participating (States Parties):** 191

- **Number of countries with sites:** 163

- **Application/nomination procedure:** The State Party prepares a tentative list from which it nominates properties for inscription onto the World Heritage List. The State Party prepares a detailed nomination file and submits it to the World Heritage Centre prior to an annual nomination deadline. The World Heritage Centre reviews it for a completeness check. If complete, it is forwarded to the appropriate Advisory Bodies for both an on-site and desktop evaluation. Once a site has been evaluated, the Advisory Bodies provide a recommendation to the intergovernmental World Heritage Committee, which makes the final decision in relation to its inscription.

- **Deletion from the list:** The World Heritage Committee may decide to remove a property from the World Heritage List during its regular meetings, if the property has lost its OUV.

- **Funding available as a result of membership:** The World Heritage Centre manages the World Heritage Fund[16] through which it can grant International Assistance[17] to States Parties. Priority is given to the most threatened properties and to low or middle-income countries. International Assistance is available for nomination or Tentative List preparation, conservation and management, promotion and education, and emergency support purposes.

- **Mechanism to encourage greater national and international cooperation on the conservation of a particular site:** The World Heritage Committee may decide to inscribe a property onto the List of World Heritage in Danger when it is considered to be seriously threatened and needs protection requiring major operations and assistance. The purpose is to incite rapid and focused conservation action and to raise the conservation profile of the property both within national governmental agencies and the international community. When the identified threats have been resolved, the Committee may remove the property from the Danger List.

2.3 The Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme and its World Network of Biosphere Reserves

- **Purpose:** UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme is an intergovernmental scientific programme that aims to establish a scientific basis for the improvement of relationships between people and their environments.[18] MAB combines the natural and social sciences, economics and education to improve human livelihoods and the equitable sharing of benefits, and to safeguard natural and managed ecosystems, thus promoting innovative approaches to economic development that are socially and culturally appropriate, and environmentally sustainable.

- **Main objective:** Biosphere Reserves, listed in the MAB Programme's World Network of Biosphere Reserves, promote solutions reconciling the conservation of biodiversity with its sustainable use. Considered as "science for sustainability support sites", they function as interdisciplinary testing sites to understand and manage changes and interactions between social and ecological systems.

- **History:** Launched by UNESCO in November 1971 and endorsed by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in 1972, the MAB Programme itself was created as an inter-governmental programme of research on the interactions between human beings and their environment and has been set as a source of scientific knowledge needed by decision makers for managing natural resources in a sustainable manner. Biosphere Reserves originated within the frame of Major MAB Project Area No. 8 (among 14 other Major MAB Project Areas) entitled "Conservation of natural areas and the genetic material they contain". In the course of time, Biosphere Reserves moved into the centre of the MAB Programme following the designation of the first sites in 1976.

- **Legal framework:** Biosphere reserves are nominated by national governments and remain under the sovereign jurisdiction of the States where they are located. Their status is internationally recognised. They are designated under the intergovernmental MAB Programme by the Director-General of UNESCO following the decisions of the MAB International Coordinating Council (MAB-ICC).

16 See http://whc.unesco.org/en/world-heritage-fund/.
17 See http://whc.unesco.org/en/intassistance.
18 See http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/man-and-biosphere-programme/.

UNESCO's General Conference approved the Seville Strategy for Biosphere Reserves and the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves in 1995; the latter functions as the "soft legal framework" for the development and formal recognition of Biosphere Reserves. Sites can be proposed by all 195 Member States and nine Associate Members of UNESCO.

- **Administrative arrangements:** The MAB Programme and its World Network of Biosphere Reserves are managed under the auspices of UNESCO with an international MAB Secretariat at the Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences located at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris (France).

- **Governance structure and bodies:** The MAB-ICC consists of 34 Member States elected by UNESCO's General Conference. The MAB-ICC normally meets once every year to guide and supervise the MAB Programme in all its aspects pertaining to its implementation, scientific content and international collaboration. It decides upon new biosphere reserves and considers periodic review reports on existing ones. It is assisted by a Bureau composed of six members (one per electoral region of UNESCO, including a Chairperson and a Rapporteur). The MAB Bureau may meet more frequently than the MAB-ICC, as the need arises.

- **Scientific and technical advice:** An International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves advises the Director-General of UNESCO and the MAB-ICC on scientific and technical matters concerning the nomination of new sites, periodic reviews of sites already included in the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, and the MAB Programme at large. The International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves is composed of 12 members (two per UNESCO electoral regions) who are selected by the Director-General of UNESCO in their personal capacities. The members of the Advisory Committee serve a term of four years.

- **Governmental obligations:** By participating in the MAB Programme, Member States pledge to manage their Biosphere Reserves respective to the Seville Strategy and the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and the global action plans of MAB approved by decisions of UNESCO General Conferences for specific durations, for instance the Madrid Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves (2008–2013), and the Lima Action Plan for UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme and its World Network of Biosphere Reserves (2016–2025).

- **Site admission criteria:** Biosphere Reserves are considered as representative sites of major biogeographic regions. There are seven criteria that a site must fulfil to be approved as a Biosphere Reserve. The criteria are related to a site's mosaic of ecological systems representative of major biogeographic regions; significance for biological diversity conservation; sustainable development issues; spatial zonation supporting three specific functions (conservation, development, and logistic support); governance arrangements including participation of local communities in decision making; proper management mechanisms; and implementation of specific research programmes contributing to the achievement of MAB Programme objectives. The seven criteria are detailed in Article 4 of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (UNESCO, 1996).

Criteria for Biosphere Reserves

Article 4 – Criteria

General criteria for an area to be qualified for designation as a biosphere reserve:

1. It should encompass a mosaic of ecological systems representative of major biogeographic regions, including a gradation of human interventions.
2. It should be of significance for biological diversity conservation.
3. It should provide an opportunity to explore and demonstrate approaches to sustainable development on a regional scale.
4. It should have an appropriate size to serve the three functions of biosphere reserves, as set out in Article 3 [see below].
5. It should include these functions, through appropriate zonation, recognizing:
   (a) legally constituted core area or areas devoted to long-term protection, according to the conservation objectives of the biosphere reserve, and of sufficient size to meet these objectives.
   (b) buffer zone or zones clearly identified and surrounding or contiguous to the core area or areas, where only activities compatible with the conservation objectives can take place;
   (c) an outer transition area where sustainable resource management practices are promoted and developed.
6. Organizational arrangements should be provided for the involvement and participation of a suitable range of *inter alia* public authorities, local communities and private interests in the design and carrying out the functions of a biosphere reserve.

7. In addition, provisions should be made for:
   (a) mechanisms to manage human use and activities in the buffer zone or zones;
   (b) a management policy or plan for the area as a biosphere reserve;
   (c) a designated authority or mechanism to implement this policy or plan;
   (d) an outer transition area where sustainable resource management practices are promoted and developed.

The seven selection criteria for Biosphere Reserves are also a reflection of a Biosphere Reserve's functions (see in particular Criterion 4 above). For this reason, Article 3 of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves is also mentioned here so as to provide the full picture of the admission criteria for biosphere reserve proposals:

Article 3 – Functions

In combining the three functions below, biosphere reserves should strive to be sites of excellence to explore and demonstrate approaches to conservation and sustainable development at a regional scale:

(i) Conservation – contribute to the conservation of landscapes, ecosystems, species and genetic variation;

(ii) Development – foster economic and human development which is socio-culturally and ecologically sustainable;

(iii) Logistic support – support for demonstration projects, environmental education and training, research and monitoring related to local, regional, national and global issues of conservation and sustainable development.

- **Monitoring and reporting:** If threats to a specific Biosphere Reserve become known, the International MAB Secretariat requests the MAB National Committee to submit a report on the state of conservation of the specific site. Article 9 of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves requests Member States to undertake a periodic review of their sites every 10 years following the date of the site's official designation by UNESCO. The International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves analyses the periodic review reports and provides recommendations to the MAB-ICC. The Council endorses or modifies the recommendations which are then submitted by the International MAB Secretariat to the National Committees of the Biosphere Reserves concerned.

- **Number of countries participating:** There are 158 MAB National Committees or MAB Focal Points (in principle, participation in the MAB Programme and its World Network of Biosphere Reserves is possible for all UNESCO Member States).

- **Number of countries with sites:** 120

- **Application/nomination process:** Member States, in general through the MAB National Committee and/or their National Commission for UNESCO, submit to the MAB Secretariat a nomination dossier for the proposed designation of a site as a Biosphere Reserve. The International MAB Secretariat checks the dossier for completeness. A desk-top evaluation of the dossier is done by the International Advisory Committee for Biosphere Reserves, which provides recommendations to the MAB-ICC and its Bureau. The Council and its Bureau review the nomination dossiers in the light of these recommendations and make the final decision on site approvals. The Director-General of UNESCO informs the State concerned of the decision of the MAB-ICC.

- **Deletions from the list:** Article 9, paragraph 8, of the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves stipulates the deletion of sites from the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. Should a State wish to remove a Biosphere Reserve under its jurisdiction from the network, it notifies the International MAB Secretariat. This notification shall be transmitted to the MAB-ICC. The area will then no longer be referred to as a Biosphere Reserve within the World Network. Some countries (such as Australia, Germany and the United Kingdom) have withdrawn Biosphere Reserves which were designated in the 1970s and 1980s as it was not possible for these sites to comply with the new requirements of the Seville Strategy for Biosphere Reserves (1992) which, for example, stipulates the occurrence of resident communities in the Biosphere Reserve's transition area. As a number of Biosphere Reserves (especially those that were designated in the earlier days of the MAB Programme) cannot, for various reasons, comply with the criteria of the Seville Strategy, the MAB Council at its 26th session (Sweden, 2014) adopted a so-called "exit strategy". According to this exit strategy, the MAB Council can decide to withdraw sites from the World Network of Biosphere Reserves if such sites do not, or no longer, function as a Biosphere Reserve.

- **Funding available as a result of membership:** Some seed money is available in the UNESCO Regular Programme to develop programmes in Biosphere Reserves, complemented by donated and extra-budgetary funded projects for specific activities in the reserves. Two research awards are available for Member States: the MAB Young Scientists Research Grant to encourage research

within the MAB Programme by young scholars, and the Michel Batisse Award for Biosphere Reserve Management which rewards outstanding management in existing Biosphere Reserves.

- **Mechanism to encourage greater national and international cooperation on the conservation of a particular site:** Donated funds-in-trust agreements with UNESCO can be secured by the MAB Secretariat and UNESCO regional offices to promote the conservation of particular Biosphere Reserves, complemented by efforts to enhance sustainable development, especially in developing countries. Moreover, the MAB Programme has several thematic networks (for example, on Coastal and Island Biosphere Reserves, or on Mountain Biosphere Reserves) as well as regional networks (such as AfriMAB for Africa, ArabMAB for Arab States, EuroMAB for Europe and Northern America and IberoMAB for Portugal, Spain and Latin American countries) and sub-regional networks (such as the East-Asian Biosphere Reserve Network, the South-East Asian Biosphere Reserve Network and the South and Central Asian MAB Network). All these networks have been created for the sharing of scientific expertise and management practices in Biosphere Reserves.

2.4 UNESCO Global Geoparks within the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme (IGGP)

- **Purpose:** UNESCO Global Geoparks encourage international cooperation among areas with geological heritage of international value, through a bottom-up approach to conservation, local community support, promotion of heritage and sustainable development of the area.

- **Main objective:** UNESCO Global Geoparks protect and use geological heritage, in connection with all other aspects of that area's natural and cultural heritage, to enhance awareness and understanding of key issues facing society in the context of the dynamic planet we live on.

- **History:** The Geopark concept arose in the mid-1990s as a response to the need to conserve and enhance the value of areas of geological significance in Earth's history. Landscapes and geological formations are key witnesses to the evolution of our planet and determinants for our future sustainable development. In 2004, with the support of UNESCO, 17 members of the European Geoparks Network and eight Chinese Geoparks came together to create the Global Geoparks Network (GGN). In 2015, the UNESCO General Conference, at its 38th session, decided on the establishment of UNESCO Global Geoparks within the IGGP and the inclusion therein of all existing Global Geoparks as UNESCO Global Geoparks.

- **Legal framework:** UNESCO Global Geoparks are admitted and function under Operational Guidelines which have been approved by the UNESCO General Conference at its 38th session. Sites can be proposed by all 195 Member States and nine Associate Members of UNESCO. Currently, 33 countries participate in the Global Geoparks Network.

- **Administrative arrangements:** Global Geoparks are embedded within the IGGP, which is a cooperative venture with the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) and UNESCO Global Geoparks. They come under the auspices of UNESCO with a Secretariat at the Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences located at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris (France).

- **Governance structure and bodies:** UNESCO Global Geoparks are governed by a Council of 12 members who are individuals appointed by the Director-General of UNESCO on recommendations of the Global Geoparks Network and of Member States. In addition, the Director-General of UNESCO, the President of the GGN, the Secretary General of the IUGS, the Director-General of IUCN or their representatives are *ex officio* members of the Council without the right to vote. UNESCO Global Geoparks also have a Bureau which consists of five members: the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson and the Rapporteur of the Council of the UNESCO Global Geoparks. The Director-General of UNESCO and the President of the GGN or their representatives are *ex officio* members of the Bureau without the right to vote.

- **Scientific and technical advice:** UNESCO Global Geoparks are evaluated – both during the initial application and during revalidation – by an independent team composed of desk-top advisors and evaluators carrying out field missions. The IUGS is asked to coordinate this role and to ensure that all statements on the scientific value and international significance of the geological heritage of an aspiring UNESCO Global Geopark are annually available in time so that evaluators can access them ahead of the field evaluation mission.

- **Governmental obligations:** Member States are obliged to ensure that the key, i.e. defining, geological sites within a UNESCO Global Geopark have legal protection.

- **Site admission criteria:** UNESCO Global Geoparks must contain geology of international significance. They are meant as living, working landscapes where science and local communities engage in a mutually beneficial way. There are eight site admission criteria which are contained in the Operational Guidelines for UNESCO Global Geoparks.

Criteria for UNESCO Global Geoparks

(i) UNESCO Global Geoparks must be single, unified geographical areas where sites and landscapes of international geological significance are managed with a holistic concept of protection, education, research and sustainable development. A UNESCO Global Geopark must have a clearly defined border, be of adequate size to fulfil its functions and contain geological heritage of international significance as independently verified by scientific professionals.

(ii) UNESCO Global Geoparks should use that heritage, in connection with all other aspects of that area's natural and cultural heritage, to promote awareness of key issues facing society in the context of the dynamic planet we all live on, including but not limited to increasing knowledge and understanding of: geoprocesses; geohazards; climate change; the need for the sustainable use of Earth's natural resources; the evolution of life and the empowerment of indigenous peoples.

(iii) UNESCO Global Geoparks should be areas with a management body having legal existence recognized under national legislation. The management bodies should be appropriately equipped to adequately address the area of the UNESCO Global Geopark in its entirety.

(iv) In the case where an applying area overlaps with another UNESCO designated site, such as a World Heritage site or Biosphere Reserve, the request must be clearly justified and evidence must be provided for how UNESCO Global Geopark status will add value by being both independently branded and in synergy with the other designations.

(v) UNESCO Global Geoparks should actively involve local communities and indigenous peoples as key stakeholders in the Geopark. In partnership with local communities, a co-management plan needs to be drafted and implemented that provides for the social and economic needs of local populations, protects the landscape in which they live and conserves their cultural identity. It is recommended that all relevant local and regional actors and authorities be represented in the management of a UNESCO Global Geopark. Local and indigenous knowledge, practice and management systems should be included, alongside science, in the planning and management of the area.

(vi) UNESCO Global Geoparks are encouraged to share their experience and advice and to undertake joint projects within the GGN. Membership of GGN is obligatory.

(vii) A UNESCO Global Geopark must respect local and national laws relating to the protection of geological heritage. The defining geological heritage sites within a UNESCO Global Geopark must be legally protected in advance of any application. At the same time, a UNESCO Global Geopark should be used as leverage for promoting the protection of geological heritage locally and nationally. The management body must not participate directly in the sale of geological objects such as fossils, minerals, polished rocks and ornamental rocks of the type normally found in so-called "rock-shops" within the UNESCO Global Geopark (regardless of their origin) and should actively discourage unsustainable trade in geological materials as a whole. Where clearly justified as a responsible activity and as part of delivering the most effective and sustainable means of site management, it may permit sustainable collecting of geological materials for scientific and educational purposes from naturally renewable sites within the UNESCO Global Geopark. Trade of geological materials based on such a system may be tolerated in exceptional circumstances, provided it is clearly and publicly explained, justified and monitored as the best option for the Global Geopark in relation to local circumstances. Such circumstances will be subject to approval by the UNESCO Global Geoparks Council on a case by case basis.

(viii) These criteria are verified through checklists for evaluation and revalidation.

- **Monitoring and reporting:** To ensure continuing high quality of UNESCO Global Geoparks within the IGGP, including high quality of their management, the status of each UNESCO Global Geopark is subject to a thorough revalidation every four years. One year prior to revalidation, a one-page summary of the UNESCO Global Geopark undergoing revalidation must be submitted to the UNESCO Secretariat. A progress report is then submitted to the UNESCO Secretariat by the management of the UNESCO Global Geopark three months prior to the field inspection. The UNESCO Global Geoparks Bureau will then send up to two evaluators on a mission to revalidate the quality of the site. A report from this mission is submitted to the UNESCO Secretariat for consideration by the Council at its annual meeting. Revalidation can result in renewal of the status as a UNESCO Global Geopark for a further four-year period (the so-called "green card") or renewal of membership for a two-year period after identification of some issues during the revalidation exercise (the "yellow card"). After this two-year period, a subsequent revalidation will either result in membership renewal for four years (the green card) or loss of status as a UNESCO Global Geopark (the "red card").

- **Number of countries participating:** 33 (in principle, participation in the IGGP and the UNESCO Global Geoparks is possible for all UNESCO Member States).

- **Number of countries with sites:** 33

- **Application/nomination process:** An application dossier (including evidence that the area has already been functioning as a *de facto* Global Geopark for at least one year) should be submitted through the official channels as defined by the National Commission for UNESCO or the government body in charge of relations with UNESCO to the UNESCO Secretariat involving, if applicable, the National Geoparks Committee. This should be accompanied by an explicit endorsement of any relevant local and regional authorities and a letter of support from the National Commission for UNESCO or the government body in charge of relations with UNESCO. So long as no objections from other Member States are received, a field evaluation mission will occur. The Council reviews each application. After positive assessment, the Bureau will recommend to the Director-General to include an item on the agenda of the UNESCO Executive Board to endorse the nominations decided upon by the Council. The UNESCO Secretariat notifies the applicant and the responsible national authority of the Executive Board decision.

- **Deletion from the list:** UNESCO Global Geoparks have a strict membership revalidation process which takes place every four years. The Council can revoke the status of any UNESCO Global Geopark at any time if that Geopark is unable to undergo the revalidation process, according to the specified rules, or if a Geopark is in clear breach of the criteria of UNESCO Global Geoparks.

- **Funding available as a result of membership:** UNESCO Global Geoparks are to be funded primarily from extra-budgetary sources with no additional financial costs to UNESCO. The GGN is expected to make a voluntary annual contribution to UNESCO equivalent to at least US$ 1,000 per Global Geopark to allow UNESCO to promote UNESCO Global Geoparks, to organise and facilitate capacity-building activities, and, in certain circumstances, to cover costs of evaluation missions.

- **Mechanism to encourage greater national and international cooperation on the conservation of a particular site:** National and international collaboration is compulsory as networking and balanced geographical representation across all UNESCO Member States are fundamental principles of UNESCO Global Geoparks. UNESCO, through its IGGP, encourages the strengthening of regional networks and the sharing of best practices between existing and aspiring Global Geoparks. Revalidation of existing sites takes into account the level of interaction within the GGN.

Table 2. Summary of the four designating instruments

	Ramsar Convention	World Heritage Convention	Man and the Biosphere Programme	International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme
Designation name	Ramsar Site	World Heritage property/site	Biosphere Reserve	UNESCO Global Geopark
Year established	Adopted in 1971	Adopted in 1972	Launched in 1971	Approved in 2015 (38th UNESCO General Conference)
Main objectives	Conservation and wise use of wetlands, as a contribution towards achieving sustainable development.	Identification and conservation of natural and cultural sites of outstanding universal value.	Biodiversity conservation and sustainable development based on local community efforts and sound science.	Protection of geological sites of international significance and the sustainable economic development of local communities.
Administrative arrangements	Secretariat hosted by IUCN in Gland, Switzerland. UNESCO acts as the depository for the convention.	Managed under the auspices of UNESCO. Secretariat at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, France.	Managed under the auspices of UNESCO. Secretariat at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, France.	Secretariat at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, France.
Legal framework	Legally binding instrument committing countries to maintain the ecological character of their Wetlands of International Importance and plan for the wise use of all their wetlands.	Legally binding instrument providing for international cooperation for the identification and conservation of the world's most outstanding natural and cultural properties.	The Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves functions as the "soft legal framework" for the development and formal recognition of Biosphere Reserves.	Statutes of the IGGP and the Operational Guidelines of UNESCO Global Geoparks adopted by the 38th session of the UNESCO General Conference.
Governance structure and bodies	Governed by the COP, which meets every three years, and an 18-member Standing Committee, the inter-sessional executive body which meets yearly. The Standing Committee represents the Contracting Parties in the implementation of work and in monitoring the activities of the Secretariat.	States Parties have a biennial General Assembly to decide on policy issues. The General Assembly also elects the World Heritage Committee, comprised of 21 States Parties, which meets annually to consider new nominations, review the state of conservation of existing sites, and decide on administrative and policy matters related to the implementation of the Convention.	The MAB-ICC consists of 34 Member States elected by UNESCO's General Conference. The MAB-ICC meets annually to guide and supervise the MAB Programme in all aspects of its implementation. It decides upon new Biosphere Reserves and considers periodic review reports on existing ones.	Governed by a five-member Bureau and a 12-member Council, the latter appointed by the Director-General of UNESCO upon nomination by the GGN and Member States. UNESCO and the GGN have *ex officio* positions in both the Bureau and the Council.
Scientific and technical advice	The STRP provides guidance to the COP, the Standing Committee and the Secretariat. Its members are appointed by the STRP Oversight Committee while the Standing Committee has the responsibility for STRP's work.	The Convention recognises three Advisory Bodies: IUCN for natural sites, and ICOMOS and ICCROM for cultural sites.	The IACBR advises the Director-General of UNESCO and the MAB-ICC. IACBR is composed of 12 members who are selected by the Director-General of UNESCO in their personal capacities.	The IUGS gives scientific advice on the geological content of UNESCO Global Geopark applications.

	Ramsar Convention	World Heritage Convention	Man and the Biosphere Programme	International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme
Governmental obligations	Parties commit to ensure the conservation and wise use of listed wetlands; include the wise use of wetlands in national planning; and consult with other Parties regarding shared water systems and species.	A State Party pledges to conserve not only the World Heritage property or properties situated on its territory, but also of those on other territories for future generations, which entails a collective responsibility.	Member States pledge to manage their reserves respective to the Seville Strategy and the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and the Madrid Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves.	Member States are obliged to ensure that the key, i.e. defining, geological sites within a UNESCO Global Geopark have legal protection.
Site admission criteria	Wetlands are selected on account of their international significance in terms of ecology, botany, zoology, limnology or hydrology according to nine criteria, agreed by Member Countries, based on their uniqueness/representativeness or their biodiversity values for waterbirds, fish and other taxa.	Properties must meet at least one out of ten criteria (six cultural and four natural). Among these are: areas of exceptional natural beauty, outstanding examples of major stages of earth's history and on-going ecological processes, and areas with vital habitats for biodiversity conservation. They also need to meet the integrity/ authenticity requirements and have adequate levels of protection and management.	Biosphere Reserves must fulfil seven criteria: mosaic of ecological systems representative of major biogeographic regions; significance for biological diversity conservation; sustainable development issues; spatial zonation supporting three specific functions; participatory governance arrangements; proper management mechanisms; and implementation of specific research programmes.	Eight criteria apply to UNESCO Global Geoparks. They must demonstrate geological heritage of international value, but also that there is local community involvement, and that they are active in the fields of education, sustainable development and conservation.
Nomination process	National governments have the sole responsibility of designating their wetlands to the Ramsar List based upon agreed criteria for eligibility. In cases where designations might not clearly meet those criteria, the Secretariat initiates a consultative process with the Party concerned.	States Parties prepare a nomination file and submit it to the World Heritage Centre. The Centre forwards it to the Advisory Bodies for both an on-site and desk-top evaluation. These provide a recommendation to the Committee which makes the final decision about inscriptions.	Member States submit a nomination dossier to the MAB Secretariat. A desk-top evaluation is done by the IACBR which provides recommendations to the MAB-ICC and its Bureau. These review the nomination dossiers in light of these recommendations and make the final decision on site approvals.	Member States apply directly to UNESCO through the national body linked to UNESCO. So long as no objections from other Member States are received, a field evaluation mission will occur followed by a recommendation by the UNESCO Global Geoparks Council. Final endorsement is through the Executive Board of UNESCO.
Monitoring and reporting	Parties provide national reports for each triennial COP, and are required to report any significant or likely change to the ecological character of their listed wetlands as a result of human interference. Parties are also invited to submit reports on the implementation of the Convention every six years.	States Parties are requested to participate in periodic reporting exercises every six years through an online formal questionnaire. They also need to respond to specific requests by the World Heritage Committee. Indeed, the Committee may ask for state of conservation reports based on evidence of serious conservation concerns at any time during the year.	Member States undertake a periodic review of their sites every ten years. IACBR analyses the reports and provides recommendations to the MAB-ICC for endorsement or modification. If threats to a site are known, the Secretariat requests the National Committee to submit a report on its state of conservation.	UNESCO Global Geoparks are subject to a four-year revalidation exercise, involving a progress report and field inspection. This results in renewal of membership for four years, or two years after identification of some issues. After this, a subsequent revalidation will either result in membership renewal or loss.

	Ramsar Convention	World Heritage Convention	Man and the Biosphere Programme	International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme
Funding available	Small Grants Fund available for all regions, as well as programmes for Neotropical and African Parties. All are intended for preparatory, conservation management, capacity-building, awareness-raising and emergency response projects.	The World Heritage Fund managed by the World Heritage Centre supports activities requested by States Parties in need of international assistance. Priority is given to the most threatened sites and to low or middle-income countries. Intended for nomination or Tentative List preparation, conservation and management, education and emergency support purposes.	Seed money plus contributions are available to develop projects in Biosphere Reserves. Two research awards are also available: the MAB Young Scientists Research Grant, and the Michel Batisse Award for Biosphere Reserve Management.	No funding results directly from being a UNESCO Global Geopark. However, funding made available to UNESCO by UNESCO Global Geoparks is used for capacity-building activities and can, in certain circumstances, be used to cover costs of evaluation missions.
Mechanism for promoting national and international collaboration	The Montreux Record is a register of wetlands on the Ramsar List where ecological changes have occurred. The Ramsar Advisory Mission provides help to solve the problems that make inclusion in the Montreux Record necessary.	The Committee may inscribe a seriously threatened property onto the List of World Heritage in Danger. The purpose is to incite rapid conservation action and raise the profile of the property both nationally and internationally.	Extra-budgetary funding can be secured to promote site conservation and sustainable development. There are also thematic as well as regional networks that share best practices in Biosphere Reserves.	National and international collaboration is compulsory. Revalidation takes into account the level of interaction within the GGN, as well as if local communities are working jointly together on common projects and knowledge sharing.
Number of sites (as of 31 October 2015)	2,218	1,031 properties, including 197 natural sites, 32 mixed sites and 95 cultural landscapes	651	120
Number of transboundary sites (as of 31 October 2015)	16	31, including 16 cultural sites, 13 natural sites and two mixed sites	15	4
Total surface area of designated sites (hectares)	214,131,110.18	271,684,539 (229 natural and mixed properties)	583,127,033.31	14,623,100 (96 UNESCO Global Geoparks)
Average surface area of designated sites (hectares)	96,542	1,186,395.36 (229 natural and mixed properties)	895,740.45	152,323.95 (96 UNESCO Global Geoparks)
More information	http://www.ramsar.org	http://whc.unesco.org	http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/biosphere-reserves/	http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/earth-sciences/global-geoparks/

Part III: Management of Multi-Internationally Designated Areas (MIDAs)

3. Multi-Internationally Designated Areas (MIDAs)

In the following sections, the benefits but also the challenges regarding areas with multiple international designations will be discussed. Such an analysis is a prerequisite for the formulation of recommendations on harmonising structures and management schemes for multi-internationally designated areas.

3.1 Benefits of multiple designations

Summary: There are advantages for an area having two or more forms of international recognition. Multiple designations have the potential to increase resilience of conservation areas to external pressures as they underline the exceptional and diverse values of a site at the global level. Linking conservation with sustainable development is common to all four designations and thus they may facilitate engagement of local communities in the area's conservation. Multiple international recognition accentuates the scientific significance of an area for research, education and public awareness and may be helpful in fostering transboundary collaboration, twinning of sites, global knowledge sharing and partnership programmes. At the national and international levels, MIDAs can provide a platform for strengthened inter-institutional cooperation. In many cases, multiple designations help fundraising efforts for the management of a site at the national level and contribute to securing financial resources from international donors. And finally, MIDAs contribute greatly to raising national visibility and global prestige, which in turn may bolster the economic base of an area through tourism, related visitor spending and the marketing of locally branded products and services.

3.1.1 Increased resilience to threats and reinforced protection

At the heart of all four designations is environmental conservation. The gazetting of an area under national laws and regulations is, of course, key to ensuring its conservation. An even stronger degree of protection is achieved by any area being recognised via international designation. Managers of MIDAs confirm that further protection can be achieved through an area having multiple international designations. In many cases, these render a site more resilient to the imposition of other competing land uses or encroachment, including agricultural expansion, mineral or oil exploitation, residential and tourism development, wetland use for irrigation, etc. Consequently, an increased level of biodiversity protection due to a site's multiple international designations has been reported (for example, Taï World Heritage site and Biosphere Reserve in Côte d'Ivoire; Ichkeul, a Ramsar and World Heritage listed site and a Biosphere Reserve in Tunisia; and Jeju Island in the Republic of Korea which has all four international designations).

It should be noted, however, that international designations cannot always guarantee long-term protection of a natural area. This has been evidenced in Oman's Arabian Oryx Sanctuary which was delisted from the World Heritage List in 2007 due to poaching pressures and because the size of the sanctuary was reduced in favour of hydrocarbon prospecting.

3.1.2 Linking conservation with sustainable development

The Biosphere Reserve designation is the one which spearheaded conceptual thinking on the need for linking environmental conservation with sustainable development for the benefit of local communities. This is evidenced by the fact that a Biosphere Reserve contains non-protected areas, where sustainable resource management practices are promoted, and which are usually larger than the legally protected parts in their core areas. But the other three designations also put an emphasis on sustainable development – inherently, as is the case with World Heritage properties, or explicitly for Ramsar Sites which underline the social and cultural wise use of wetlands. Moreover, UNESCO Global Geoparks herald sustainable economic development, which is considered an essential factor for a site to obtain revalidation of its status every four years. In fact, evidence of a listed area's contribution to sustainable development permeates all four designations and information on this is requested under each designation's reporting requirements.

When multiple designations occur at a single site, this creates potential model regions for nature conservation and sustainable development. Beautiful scenic landscapes with an abundance of flora and fauna, and related wildlife watching and other outdoor

recreation and sports opportunities for visitors may render MIDAs particularly attractive for nature-based tourism (see also section 3.1.9 below) which, if well managed, can bolster sustainable development by creating income opportunities for local communities. Additionally, in many cases, other income opportunities linked and dependent upon the designated areas are created such as the production and marketing of traditional handicrafts and local eco-products (see section 3.1.10). The case study of Ichkeul (Tunisia) illustrates this point.

Case study 1. Ichkeul (Tunisia): Biosphere Reserve, natural World Heritage site, Ramsar Site

Location and main characteristics

Ichkeul is located in the Governorate of Bizerte in northern Tunisia, in an area with a typically semi-arid climate. The site consists of marshes, an isolated and wooded massif (Djebel Ichkeul) and, in particular, a brackish/freshwater lake (Ichkeul Lake), which is the last of a chain of great freshwater lakes that once stretched the length of North Africa. The lake has a very specific hydrological functioning based on a seasonal variation of water levels and salinity: during the wet season (September to April), the surrounding water catchment areas feed the lake with fresh water; during the dry season (June to August), when the level of the lake is low, salt water from Bizerte lagoon flows into Ichkeul Lake. Three landscape units constitute the Ichkeul area: the lake itself stretching over some 8,500 ha; marshes occupying about 2,737 ha with rush vegetation providing an important food source for Greylag Geese; and a massif (*djebel*) consisting of Triassic and Jurassic rocks reaching 511 m above sea level. Ichkeul wetland is one of the most important sites in the entire Mediterranean region for wintering Palaearctic waterfowl, with records of up to 300,000–400,000 ducks, geese and coots present at one time.

Lake Ichkeul and mountains in Ichkeul National Park © IUCN Hichem Azafzaf

National and international designations

Already in 1890, a decree signed by Ali Pacha Bey, ruler of Tunisia at the time, gave protection to the coastal areas of Ichkeul Lake. Several other decrees followed, culminating in the creation of Ichkeul National Park in 1980 with its current extent of 12,600 ha. Three years earlier, in 1977, UNESCO had designated Ichkeul Biosphere Reserve with an area of 14,100 ha including inhabited areas with a resident population of around 350 people. During the year of the creation of the national park in 1980, Ichkeul also became a natural World Heritage site and a Ramsar Site, with the surface areas of the latter two international designations practically coinciding with the extent of the National Park (12,600 ha).

Entrance gate to Ichkeul National Park displaying its national logo as well as the three international logos © Thomas Schaaf

Birdwatching in Ichkeul's visitor centre © Thomas Schaaf

Conservation and sustainable development

The three international designations have greatly increased the visibility and recognition of this site. Thanks to these designations and their parent organisations, it was possible to secure funding to finance environmental conservation and education projects as well as to support a variety of community-oriented projects. These include, for example, the production and marketing of

local products such as honey, capers and vegetable oils. Ecotourism is one of the major assets of the Ichkeul area. Around the park, several infrastructure projects and initiatives for tourism have been developed, notably a visitor centre, restaurants, rural guesthouses, horse-drawn carriage itineraries, birdwatching stations, hiking and mountain biking trails. A special unit to raise water buffalos was created to rebuild a herd originating in the 19th century if not earlier. The protected areas (including the Ramsar and World Heritage sites) and the larger Biosphere Reserve are considered a development tool for the wider region. To this effect, an autonomous management unit with its own budget was established which tries to find solutions and legal compromises on sometimes conflicting land-use issues with all relevant stakeholders (park administration, local communities, pastoralists and cattle breeders, NGOs and civil society at large). Moreover, international designations have helped to render the site more resistant to other land uses, including agricultural and urban encroachment.

However, pressures on water availability are multiple, and derive from agricultural, pastoral and industrial needs as well as freshwater needs for human consumption. The ecological functioning of the lake-marsh system is closely determined by the inflow of fresh water from upstream areas and exchanges with the sea water downstream, both subject to the strong intra- and inter-annual precipitation variability which is characteristic of Mediterranean climates. The water management of the lake-marsh system is therefore a key element in the management of the ecosystem, which was facilitated by the construction of a regulatory dam between Ichkeul Lake and the saltwater lagoon of Bizerte.

However, it's important to note that not all economic activities within IDAs can be described as sustainable development. Most notably, the World Heritage Committee has adopted the clear position that oil, gas and mineral exploration or exploitation are incompatible with World Heritage status, since such activities have significant negative impacts on the OUV of World Heritage properties. This position has also been widely recognised in the private sector.

3.1.3 Engaging local communities in conservation and sustainable development

Outreach to and involvement of local communities in the conservation of a site is a common aspiration of all four international designations. When, often after years of preparation, international recognition is given to an area, local communities frequently respond with great appreciation. For instance, when Switzerland's Lavaux Vineyard Terraces along Lake Geneva were inscribed in the World Heritage List in 2007, all the church bells in the Vaud region rang to celebrate the event. When the world acknowledges the specific values and scenic beauty of a region, this often instils pride in a community as well as increasing a sense of local identity. However, it is also important to note that there may be resistance by local communities to international designation, at least in the initial stages when a site is proposed for or right after receiving international recognition. In the most difficult cases, local communities may even object to designation, sometimes as a consequence of a lack of respect for community and indigenous peoples' views and rights during these processes (as discussed in more detail in section 3.2.13).

MIDAs can significantly increase the potential for awareness raising and engaging local communities in conservation and sustainable development. The fact that not only one but several international bodies have recognised the importance of a specific area can help in engaging communities in site conservation, as multiple international designations strengthen acceptance and recognition by local communities of the values and significance of their area. MIDAs also provide opportunities for conserving and promoting local and traditional knowledge and practices that can be shared with the international community.

It is of the utmost importance to fully engage and collaborate with local communities and indigenous peoples in the long-term management, governance and conservation of MIDAs. Only with their involvement, participation and efforts can Ramsar and World Heritage sites, Biosphere Reserves and UNESCO Global Geoparks be maintained with their full integrity. Therefore, site management must respect international norms for communities and rights, and benefits obtained from international recognition must also be adequately shared with local communities. This reflects the current international conservation policy and best practice recognising that the involvement of local communities and indigenous peoples leads to management effectiveness and improved governance of protected areas.[19] In addition to improved conservation outcomes, sharing power and the benefits of conservation is important to rights-based approaches to conservation. In this regard, the enhancement of the role of local communities in the management and conservation of World Heritage properties was formally adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 2007, at its 31st session (Christchurch, New Zealand), as one of its Five Strategic Objectives for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention (Decision 31 COM 13B).[20] It can be expected that the focus on communities, indigenous peoples and their rights will continue to increase as a focus of all IDAs in the future, and so MIDAs will be looked to in particular as model areas that should demonstrate the highest standards of practice.

19 Borrini-Feyerabend, G., Dudley, N., Jaeger, T., Lassen, B., Pathak Broome, N., Phillips, A. and Sandwith, T. (2013). *Governance of Protected Areas: From understanding to action*. Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series No. 20. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN.

20 See http://whc.unesco.org/archive/2007/whc07-31com-24e.pdf.

3.1.4 Increased significance for research, education and public awareness

Areas with multiple international designations are more likely to attract researchers to conduct studies on these sites. Obviously natural scientists find excellent opportunities to study ecosystem structure, functioning and dynamics, but social scientists, interested in researching the interactions of people with their natural environment, or focusing on governance mechanisms through the participation of local communities in site management, will also find ample study subjects in MIDAs, and economists are keen to assess the economic importance of such sites in the local, regional and national economies.

Renewed interest from local communities and visitors alike to learn more about the natural and cultural values that contribute to various layers of international recognition is another benefit (as has been reported, for example, in Comoé and Taï national parks in Côte d'Ivoire, which are both designated as World Heritage sites and Biosphere Reserves). This can lead to the development of educational programmes for schools and non-formal education on the need to protect these sites and the various ecosystem services they provide. In addition to environmental education programmes, these areas are ideal centres for education on sustainable development at large. Outdoor recreational activities such as wildlife watching and the practice of nature-based sports, demonstration of environmental conservation and rehabilitation practices, visits to private and public companies practising sustainable development through the production and marketing of eco-products, learning about the advantages of renewable energy, are just a few examples of what most of these sites can offer to the public. Environmental education packages (such as the ones prepared by the MAB Programme[21] and the World Heritage Centre)[22] or tool kits for disaster risk reduction (currently in the planning stage for UNESCO designated areas) can be useful to all MIDAs.

Students performing an environmental education play at the Mare aux Hippopotames Biosphere Reserve and Ramsar Site (Burkina Faso) © Thomas Schaaf

3.1.5 International cooperation and knowledge sharing

Collectively speaking, MIDAs can provide an ideal platform for strengthening cooperation among sites in different parts of the world. All four designations have mechanisms in place that allow for the listing of areas as transboundary sites. These are relevant for border areas with shared ecosystems, as well as to foster peace and good relations between countries.[23] Moreover, networking and twinning arrangements for joint research and knowledge sharing are strongly encouraged by all four designating bodies. Government

21 See http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/capacity-building-and-partnerships/educational-materials/.

22 See http://whc.unesco.org/en/educationkit/.

23 Vasilijević, M., Zunckel, K., McKinney, M., Erg, B., Schoon, M. and Rosen Michel, T. (2015). *Transboundary Conservation: A systematic and integrated approach*. Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series No. 23. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN.

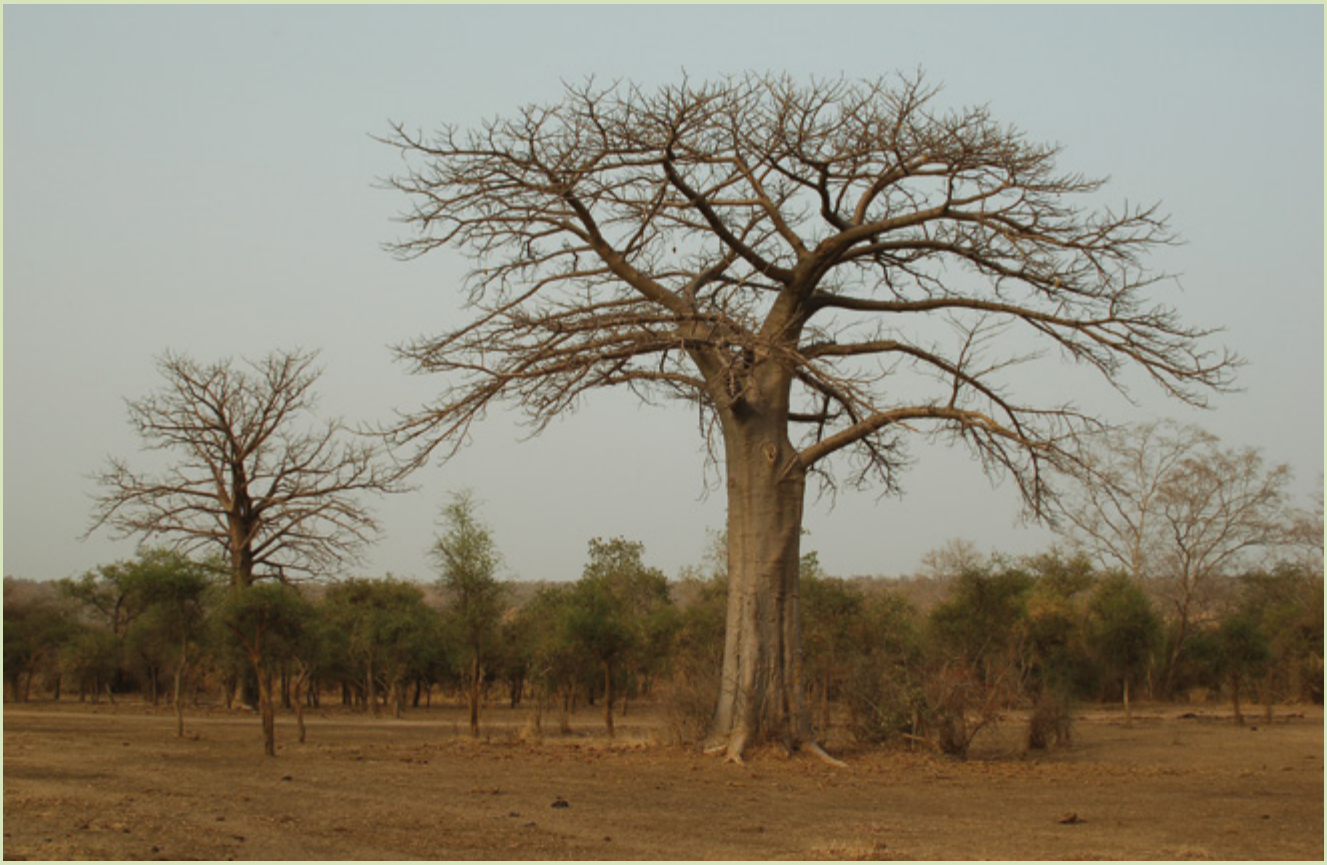
authorities in charge of designated areas can use their international recognition as ideal channels to foster diplomatic and political collaboration in the international arena.

As of 31 October 2015, there are 50 transboundary sites – four UNESCO Global Geoparks, 15 natural and mixed World Heritage sites, 15 Biosphere Reserves, and 16 Ramsar Sites. Transboundary sites can contribute to avoiding different, sometimes even conflicting, management and land-use practices as they provide a tool for joint management. They are also the official recognition of countries' political will to cooperate on the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources through the harmonised management of shared ecosystems in binational or even trinational frameworks. Most importantly, information and knowledge sharing among site management teams to combat threats such as poaching and illicit wildlife traffic is one of the main assets of multi-designated transboundary sites, as exemplified by the case study on the W Region in Niger, Benin and Burkina Faso.

Case study 2. W Region (Niger): Ramsar Site, natural World Heritage site, Biosphere Reserve (part of the Transboundary Biosphere Reserve shared by Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger)

Location and main characteristics

Straddled along the borders of Benin, Burkina Faso and Niger, the Niger River, as seen from the air, flows in a double bend in the shape of the letter "W" which gave the area its unusual name. The Nigerian part of the W Region is located about 150 km southeast of Niamey, in a transition zone between the Sudano-Guinean, Sudanese and Sahel biogeographic provinces and thus has a rich biodiversity. Savannahs, forest lands and gallery forests constitute the main important ecosystems. The area hosts one of the largest populations of ungulates in West Africa and its wild plant species are considered very important for conservation and genetic research. The fact that the park is contiguous with other protected areas in Benin and Burkina Faso is essential for the survival of species that need large habitats for their seasonal migrations.



***Parc national du W*, Niger © Roland (CC BY-SA 2.0)**

National and international designations

In 1954, the area became a national park named *Parc national du W du fleuve Niger*. In 1987, the site was designated a Ramsar Site under the name *Parc national du W* covering an area of 220,000 ha. Nine years later, in 1996, the national park was listed

as a natural World Heritage site also stretching over an area of 220,000 ha. During the same year, UNESCO designated the site as the *Région W du Niger Biosphere Reserve*, which in 2002 became Africa's first transboundary biosphere reserve with Benin and Burkina Faso, now entitled W Region Transboundary Biosphere Reserve. It is currently the largest transboundary Biosphere Reserve in Africa with a total area of 3,122,313 ha. With the extension of the site in 2002, the Nigerian part of the reserve now covers a total of 728,000 ha (including the national park of 220,000 ha as its core area). There were three main reasons for nominating the site under different international designations: to address and reverse several anthropogenic pressures and threats to the area; to conserve biodiversity and ecosystem services; and to overcome the limitations of traditional protected areas.

Transboundary cooperation

The multiplicity of the Ramsar, World Heritage and Biosphere Reserve designations has clearly enhanced national and international visibility of the W Region. Thanks to the site's international recognition and the fact that the W Complex is inscribed as a trinational transboundary Biosphere Reserve, direct collaboration among the three neighbouring countries and information exchange (for example, on site management and ecological research) has become common practice, benefiting all three countries. The site even participates in knowledge sharing at the regional level such as through the AfriMAB Network.

Moreover, international designations have guaranteed stability and attracted investors and donor organisations to fund projects on environmental conservation and sustainable development. Tourism to the W Region has increased, attracting visitors from abroad. A number of projects integrating the sustainable use of natural resources, conservation of biological diversity and community development have resulted in positive impacts on the local economy and environmental integrity. Local communities have also benefited through entrepreneurial opportunities, which were bolstered through a combination of the factors mentioned above.

Nevertheless, some classic challenges persist. The main challenges are game poaching, killing elephants for their tusks, illegal pastoralism in protected areas, spread of agricultural areas and deteriorating environmental conditions brought about by climate change. At site level, a permanent system of national and regional patrolling rangers should be instituted to help reduce illegal activities (such as ivory poaching) across national boundaries. The transboundary nature of the W Complex should facilitate the setting up of such a system, helping to motivate the rangers and improve enforcement of the law as well as environmental rules and regulations. The use of the software programme SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tools) for handling and analysing information related to poaching could further help in this regard.

***Parc national du W*, Niger © Mathieu Dessus (CC BY-SA 2.0)**

Elephants in the *Parc national du W*, Niger © Roland (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Twinning arrangements and North-South partnerships of sites (such as on flyways of migratory birds for Ramsar and World Heritage sites or the Marine World Heritage Site Network), and joint training and research projects within the regional and thematic networks of the MAB Programme, are other measures to improve horizontal collaboration for the sharing of data and information on site management. The Periodic Review Form for Biosphere Reserves underlines the networking function among Biosphere Reserves. Revalidation of a UNESCO Global Geopark includes assessing the level of interaction within the GGN, as well as local communities working together on common projects and knowledge exchange.

3.1.6 Strengthened institutional coordination and partnerships

At the national and international levels, multiple international designations can offer great opportunities to enhance institutional coordination and to implement partnership programmes. Where different government authorities are in charge of a specific Ramsar, World Heritage, Biosphere Reserve or UNESCO Global Geopark designation, these can find a common framework of action to support site management at the national level. For the three UNESCO designations, the UNESCO National Commissions should be encouraged to play a coordinating role to this effect by involving other national agencies and key NGOs as required.

At the international level, the four secretariats (Ramsar Convention Secretariat, World Heritage Centre, MAB Secretariat and the IGGP Secretariat) find common ground for information exchange and, more specifically, for embarking on joint projects and activities (see, for example, the box in Section 1.3 of this Guidance – Research project: Impacts of global change on mountain Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage sites). This includes conducting joint monitoring missions (as already happens for some sites that are Ramsar and World Heritage listed) or offering training sessions for site managers on an ad hoc basis. There is certainly latitude to strengthen collaboration among the four secretariats in this regard, and it is hoped that this Guidance will pave the way for mutually reinforced collaboration for the benefit of MIDAs. Coordination mechanisms to facilitate collaboration should be created, aimed at assisting horizontal cooperation between different sites, among different national authorities and among the four secretariats and their governing bodies.

3.1.7 Securing national and international funding

Some site managers have reported that when a site receives multiple international designations, national funding to enhance site management becomes more readily available. In general, this is true for both developed and developing countries. More importantly

for developing countries, there is easier access to international financial and technical assistance from multilateral aid, such as from the Global Environment Facility, or GEF[24] (administered by the World Bank, UNDP and UNEP), or from bilateral sources, private foundations and environmental NGOs. For donors, MIDAs are attractive for various reasons: they have demonstrated their global value for biodiversity conservation through different rigorous selection processes; multiple international recognition usually ensures stability for foreign investors and aid agencies; and all four designations support sustainable development for the benefit of local communities. Many management plans of MIDAs are of a holistic nature addressing both environmental and societal issues. Highlighting conservation as a tool for sustainable development is a great argument both for developing countries seeking international donor funding, but also for donor agencies and NGOs as they can be assured that their money is being spent wisely. One site showcasing this situation is the Saloum Delta in Senegal, which has three international designations.

Case study 3. Saloum Delta (Senegal): Biosphere Reserve, Ramsar Site, World Heritage cultural landscape

Mangroves in the Saloum Delta, Senegal © Jean-Marc Liotier (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Location and main characteristics

Located at the border with Gambia and about 150 km southeast of Dakar, the Saloum Delta is formed by the estuaries of three rivers: the Saloum, the Diombos and the Bandiala. Brackish channels encompassing over 200 islands and islets, swamps, sand dunes, dry forests, an Atlantic marine environment, as well as riverbanks and mangrove coasts characterise the area. Three main ecosystems are noted: a terrestrial ecosystem with large and medium-sized fauna (such as monkeys, antelopes, wart hogs); a delta ecosystem with mangroves which houses a wide variety of amphibians and which is the main reproduction, nesting and resting place for waterbirds and fish; and a marine ecosystem with a large variety of fish and crustaceans as well as a series of small islands and sandbanks which are important reproduction zones for sea turtles and birds.

National and international designations

Ecological and economic challenges were decisive for the creation of the Saloum Delta National Park in 1976 with an area of 76,000 ha. In 1980, the Delta du Saloum Biosphere Reserve was designated which comprises the national park as its core area, as well as additional terrestrial areas and flood plains amounting to a total surface area of 180,000 ha. Four years later, the area received its second international designation as the Delta du Saloum Ramsar Site covering 73,000 ha. In 2008, Africa's first transboundary Ramsar Site came into being linking Senegal's Saloum Delta National Park with Niumi National Park in Gambia. In 2011, the Saloum Delta was inscribed as a very large cultural landscape on the World Heritage List (145,811 ha), as the site is characterised by 218 shellfish mounds, some of them several hundred metres long, made by its human inhabitants over the

24 See https://www.thegef.org/gef/.

ages. Burial sites on 28 of the mounds take the form of *tumuli* where remarkable artefacts have been found and which testify to the long history of human settlement along the coast of West Africa.

Saloum Delta, Senegal © Jean-Marc Liotier (CC BY-SA 2.0)

Securing international support

Both the national designation as a national park as well as the international designations have helped to secure funding to strengthen the conservation of this site. The designation of Africa's first transboundary Ramsar Site underlines the international significance of the overall area. A number of projects sponsored by various organisations and NGOs (including UNESCO, IUCN, WWF, Wetlands International and BirdLife International) assist the Saloum Delta managers with environmental conservation programmes and sustainable development efforts for the benefit of local residents. These aim in particular to reduce poaching, illicit fishing, overexploitation of woody species (mangroves) and oysters, and the extraction of marine sands and shells. Thanks to a combination of national and international efforts, several alternative income-generating activities have been put into place: provision and installation of beehives for apiculture with honey-processing facilities; modern and more economical processes for oyster farming; and vegetable growing. Regarding environmental conservation measures, fire prevention belts have been created to combat the spread of bushfires, and mangroves have been replanted in areas where these had diminished significantly. With the help of additional *écogardes* (rangers), the patrolling and monitoring of ecologically sensitive areas have improved greatly and contributed to awareness raising on the need for environmental protection among the Delta inhabitants. Research projects have also contributed to a better understanding of local species behaviour (for example, tagging birds with GPS devices to trace flyways in their feeding areas).

However, most foreign-assisted projects are essentially bound in scope and time, and a developing country alone, given its limited financial resources, cannot shoulder the many measures needed to ensure the environmental integrity of the Saloum Delta. Continued partnership programmes and projects are therefore needed. This is particularly true for the impacts of climate change which have already resulted in a lower precipitation regime, increased coastal erosion, decreased vegetation cover, and saltwater intrusion into the delta's aquifers.

3.1.8 Increased visibility and prestige

When a site has been internationally designated for its value in environmental conservation and community development, it receives recognition not only nationally but in the global arena. International prestige is often the primary driving force for proposing a site for World Heritage status as it underlines the outstanding universal value of the area.[25] Similar thinking, although perhaps to a lesser extent, is also true for listing an area under the Ramsar Convention, the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and the Global Geoparks Network.

When a site has been recognised under two, three or even four international designations, it means that the area is renowned for a multitude of values, which give it an exceptional standing. Obviously, a Ramsar listing denotes a wetland of international importance. Recognition as a UNESCO Global Geopark signifies access to and display of interesting geological features within one or several geotopes. Acknowledgement as a Biosphere Reserve points to successful environmental conservation based on sustainable development measures and scientific studies, and World Heritage listing indicates a unique area thanks to its outstanding universal value. The various values complement one another and, in combination, can point to an extraordinarily special place on our planet.

More importantly, the increased global visibility and prestige of MIDAs can have a vital significance for communities at the local and national levels. As well as instilling pride in local communities, they can also provide a stronger platform from which to engage with local authorities and participate in the site's management and benefit sharing. This is especially important in the case of areas with indigenous communities (see Section 3.1.3 for more details).

Award ceremony for the Salzburger Lungau & Kärntner Nockberge Biosphere Reserve (Austria) © Thomas Schaaf

3.1.9 Marketing sites as tourism destinations

The accumulation of different international designations, if managed carefully and in harmony with site conservation, can be translated into sustainable economic benefits. In particular, the marketing of a site for visitors and tourists may generate alternative employment and income opportunities, both beneficial for the national economy at large and in particular for local communities (even though it can

25 This was a clear response to the question of why States Parties proposed sites for World Heritage listing, as presented by the Consultative Group to the 39th Session of the World Heritage Committee in Bonn (Germany, 28 June–8 July 2015), in its analysis of the Second Cycle of Reporting of World Heritage properties in the European region. Perceived benefits of World Heritage listing were indicated in the following order: enhanced prestige, increased tourism/public use, strengthened protection, wider community appreciation and enhanced conservation.

also present serious challenges to sites as evidenced in section 3.2.12). As most natural World Heritage sites, Ramsar Sites, Biosphere Reserves and UNESCO Global Geoparks are located in scenic natural landscapes with living cultural traditions, they can contribute to the development of ecotourism activities in a very prominent way. The importance that tourism plays in IDAs has led to the creation of different support programmes from the designating bodies, such as the UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme.[26]

Several studies (primarily regarding World Heritage sites and Biosphere Reserves) have revealed that the international listing of an area results in increasing numbers of domestic visitors and foreign tourists. Sustainable tourism can lead to local job creation, provide conservation incentives (by which an area becomes a tourism resource) and help to finance site conservation. This has often been reported as a desired side effect – if not even one of the main motivations – for international recognition: it strengthens the local and national economies through visitor spending, and benefits lead to direct and tangible payment flows into protected area regions, which are straightforward to quantify in monetary terms.[27] Jeju Island (Republic of Korea), for example, which carries all four international designations, has registered an increase in visitor numbers every year a new international designation has been obtained (see Part V of the Guidance for this case study).

It is important to note though that economic benefits deriving from tourism should be embedded within an overall communication and branding strategy sensitising tour operators and other tourism service providers as well as visitors on the specific values of each international designation and their combined added value, as well as the importance of site conservation.

Demonstration of traditional eagle hunting at Issyk-Kul Biosphere Reserve and Ramsar Site (Kyrgyzstan) © Thomas Schaaf

According to the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), tourism is one of the world's largest and fastest growing export sectors, contributing to 9% of the global GDP, and accounting for one in 11 jobs worldwide.[28] Making tourism businesses more sustainable will create more and better jobs, benefit local development and contribute to poverty reduction, while raising awareness and support for biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of natural resources.[29]

26 See http://whc.unesco.org/en/tourism/.

27 See, for example, Mayer, M. and Job, H. (2014). 'The economics of protected areas – a European Perspective'. *Zeitschrift für Wirtschaftsgeographie (The German Journal of Economic Geography)* 58(2-3): 73–97.

28 See http://cf.cdn.unwto.org/sites/all/files/factsheet_june2015.pdf.

29 See http://cf.cdn.unwto.org/sites/all/files/docpdf/greeneconomy2.pdf.

Indeed, many IDAs are located in remote, rural areas that may suffer from structural economic weakness and a general lack of employment opportunities for local residents, which is felt more acutely in developing countries. On the other hand, developing countries hold the largest proportion of global biodiversity which gives them a competitive advantage in tourism.[30] Therefore, visitor spending in IDAs and MIDAs can be a very important contribution to local and national economies and, consequently, provide an incentive for protecting these areas of natural beauty and biodiversity, as demonstrated by the case study of the Talamanca mountain range in Costa Rica.

Case study 4. Talamanca mountain range (Costa Rica): Biosphere Reserve, natural World Heritage site, Ramsar Site

Location and main characteristics

The Talamanca mountain range extends along the border between Costa Rica and Panama. It hosts a complex of protected areas that amount to more than one million hectares of protected territory, making this one of the major remaining blocks of native forest in Central America. A high altitudinal gradient, ranging from 150 m to 3,820 m, and a variety of environmental conditions have created a spectrum of ecosystems such as tropical lowland rainforest, mountain forest, cloud forest, oak forest and high-altitude bogs. Likewise, the area hosts the only isthmus *páramo* ecosystem, a type of tropical alpine grassland, in Central America. Its location, which allowed the faunas and floras of North and South America to interbreed, and its long-standing isolation have led to a remarkable degree of speciation and endemism. Additionally, most of the protected areas are surrounded by settlements of indigenous peoples of various ethnic groups making this a region of great cultural importance.

Resplendent Quetzal (*Pharomachrus mocinno*) in the Talamanca mountain range © Luis Sánchez Arguedas

National and international designations

In 1982, Talamanca's protected areas plus the indigenous territories and some rural communities were internationally recognised as La Amistad Biosphere Reserve covering 584,592 ha. The following year the area was designated a natural World Heritage property in Costa Rica. Later, in 1990, Panama's adjacent La Amistad National Park was inscribed on the World Heritage List as an extension to the Costa Rican property. Today, Talamanca Range-La Amistad Reserves/ La Amistad National Park (507,045 ha) forms one of the few transboundary World Heritage sites in the Americas and major joint efforts are carried out for its management. In 2003, *Turberas de Talamanca* was also inscribed on the Ramsar list. This site harbours 192,520 ha

30 See http://cf.cdn.unwto.org/sites/all/files/docpdf/biodiversity.pdf.

of high-altitude wetlands consisting of glacial lakes, bogs and peatlands located between 2,600 m and 3,600 m of elevation. Protected areas in the region are divided between three management units – La Amistad-Pacífico Conservation Area, La Amistad-Caribe Conservation Area and Pacífico Central Conservation Area – which belong to the National System of Conservation Areas under the Ministry of Environment of Costa Rica.

High-altitude peatlands in the Tapantí-Macizo de la Muerte National Park, part of the Turberas de Talamanca Ramsar Site © Luis Sánchez Arguedas

Tourism and community development

Having multiple international designations, which in the case of Costa Rica are ratified by law, gives this site a special legal status which obliges the State to carry out the necessary actions to ensure proper site management and secure for the long term its ecosystem services.

The region is the destination of thousands of international tourists, many attracted by these designations, who require many services which benefit the local economy. In fact, in a study which included the local Chirripó National Park, it was determined that for each *colón* received by the State from tourist visits to the park, another was invested in the services required to get there. This park holds the first concession of tourism services in the country fully managed by members of local community organisations, the profits of which are reinvested into the park and its communities.

International designations also give a boost to the State's efforts to preserve the site by giving it relevance internationally. They have enabled the capture of financial resources from international organisations through the implementation of projects that integrate protected area management as part of local community development. Some projects address threats to protected areas within and outside their boundaries while others aim to strengthen local communities by promoting options of community development. Presently, community organisations have become partners and participate in collegiate bodies for the management of these areas.

However, challenges remain to ensure long-term financial sustainability for the management of the designated areas and support of local communities. At the same time, the flow of goods and services provided by the ecosystems (in particular water resources) must be kept for the long term, as a means to support and develop local communities.

3.1.10 The value of branding

International recognition, effected through one or several designating bodies, may provide economic benefits to local communities – especially when places and products are branded in connection with international designations. For example, a study from the Federal Technical University in Zurich (Switzerland)[31] calculated the added value that the designation of the Entlebuch Biosphere Reserve (which

31 Knaus, F. (2012). *Bedeutung, Charakteristiken und wirtschaftliche Auswirkungen des Sommertourismus in der UNESCO Biosphäre Entlebuch. Resultate einer umfassenden Gästebefragung*. Interner Bericht, ETH Zürich und Biosphärenmanagement UBE, Schüpfheim, Switzerland. Unpublished.

also contains Laubersmad-Salwidili Ramsar Site) brought to its region. Results showed that 85% of all visitors to the area knew the label "UNESCO Biosphere Entlebuch" and 29% visited the area because of its positive connotation. The study estimated a direct added value of 2.9 million Swiss Francs (equivalent to roughly the same amount in US dollars) per year for the Biosphere Reserve, and a total added value of 5.1 million Swiss Francs for the entire region. This income is not just generated through overnight stays in hotels, but also from the sale of branded local products, termed *Echt Entlebuch* (genuine Entlebuch) such as cheeses, hams, drinks and timber products.

***Echt Entlebuch* branded products from the Entlebuch Biosphere Reserve/Laubersmad-Salwidili Ramsar Site (Switzerland) © UNESCO Biosphäre Entlebuch CH**

Similar branding benefits, such as from the sale of ecoproducts and traditional handicrafts, have also been reported by site managers in the Azores, Portugal (World Heritage, Ramsar, Biosphere Reserve and UNESCO Global Geopark), Ichkeul, Tunisia (Ramsar, World Heritage and Biosphere Reserve), and Jeju Island, Republic of Korea (Ramsar, World Heritage, Biosphere Reserve and UNESCO Global Geopark). Partners from Jeju Island have even suggested the creation of an Innovation Fund which would be supported through the selling of branded products deriving from the MIDA. In turn, the Innovation Fund would be used to sponsor community activities for the benefit of local residents.

However, concerns that the branding of local products with only one designation will lead to increased competition among the different producers and their specific labels have also been raised by some in the Biosphere Reserve and Ramsar constituencies. More challenges related to the branding of MIDAs are detailed in sections 3.2.14 and 3.2.15 of this Guidance.

Geopark soap from Jeju Island, Republic of Korea © Thomas Schaaf

3.2 Challenges of multiple designations

Summary: Challenges in the management of MIDAs come to the fore when different national authorities are in charge of the same area, and no harmonised legal or administrative framework exists, let alone a coordination mechanism for policies and intervention activities among the various institutions for the same site. Lack of coordination may also result in competition for national and international funding for site management. Different reporting requirements in terms of depth of information and time cycles solicited by the four designating bodies pose a heavy workload on (often understaffed) site managers and national authorities. Smooth information flows from site managers via national authorities to the four global secretariats and vice versa are not always ensured. Each designating instrument has its own primary objectives and approaches, and sometimes these are not necessarily compatible with the geographical extents for which sites have been listed following the purposes of other designations. International designation may also evoke resistance among local communities for fear of land-use restrictions, among other reasons. A multiplicity of forms of recognition risks confusing local communities and visitors regarding the significance of each designation, or else the perceived higher value of one international status over another may eclipse those designations that may be perceived of lower value. Finally, conservation can be at stake if ever growing tourist numbers jeopardise environmental integrity when a site becomes too famous through obtaining several forms of international recognition.

3.2.1 Lack of institutional coordination at the national level

Different national authorities may be in charge of the same area with multiple international designations. This situation occurs when different ministries or their subsidiary bodies have the sole responsibility for either Ramsar Sites, natural World Heritage properties, Biosphere Reserves or UNESCO Global Geoparks. Different national authorities (or regional authorities in countries with a federal structure) may have diverging policies and approaches regarding conservation and the use of natural resources in a given area.

This is often the case for historic reasons. In the past until about the late 1970s, it was mostly ministries of agriculture and forestry which were responsible for protected areas and, in this function, they were the line ministries for many Ramsar and natural World Heritage sites as well as for Biosphere Reserves. During the 1980s, many countries created specific ministries in charge of the environment and natural resources, which often – but not always – received the mandate to oversee protected areas within their national territories. Subject to national policy decisions, Ramsar Sites or natural World Heritage sites or Biosphere Reserves were then moved under the auspices of ministries of the environment, whereas, in some countries, one or two of these designations remained under the authority of ministries of agriculture and/or forestry.

On the other hand, since the World Heritage Convention is focused on natural and cultural heritage, its implementation is often the responsibility of ministries of culture. For example in Spain, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports is the formal ministry dealing with all World Heritage properties on its territory, while the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and the Environment deals with national parks (including for instance, Doñana National Park, which is simultaneously a World Heritage site, a Ramsar Site and a Biosphere Reserve).

In other countries, and in particular with regard to Biosphere Reserves, MAB National Committees very often come under the auspices of ministries of science and research or national academies of sciences, reflecting the scientific character of the UNESCO MAB Programme.

While the situation sketched out above is also true for nationally designated protected areas, the matter becomes far more complex when different international designations for the same site come into play – and accordingly, different national ministries or institutions. In China, for example, World Heritage properties come under the authority of the Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development, while Biosphere Reserves are serviced by the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and Ramsar Sites are administered by the Office of Wetland Conservation and Management under the State Forestry Administration. Another example is Viet Nam where Ramsar Sites fall under the auspices of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Biosphere Reserves under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, and UNESCO Global Geoparks under the Ministry of Science and Technology.

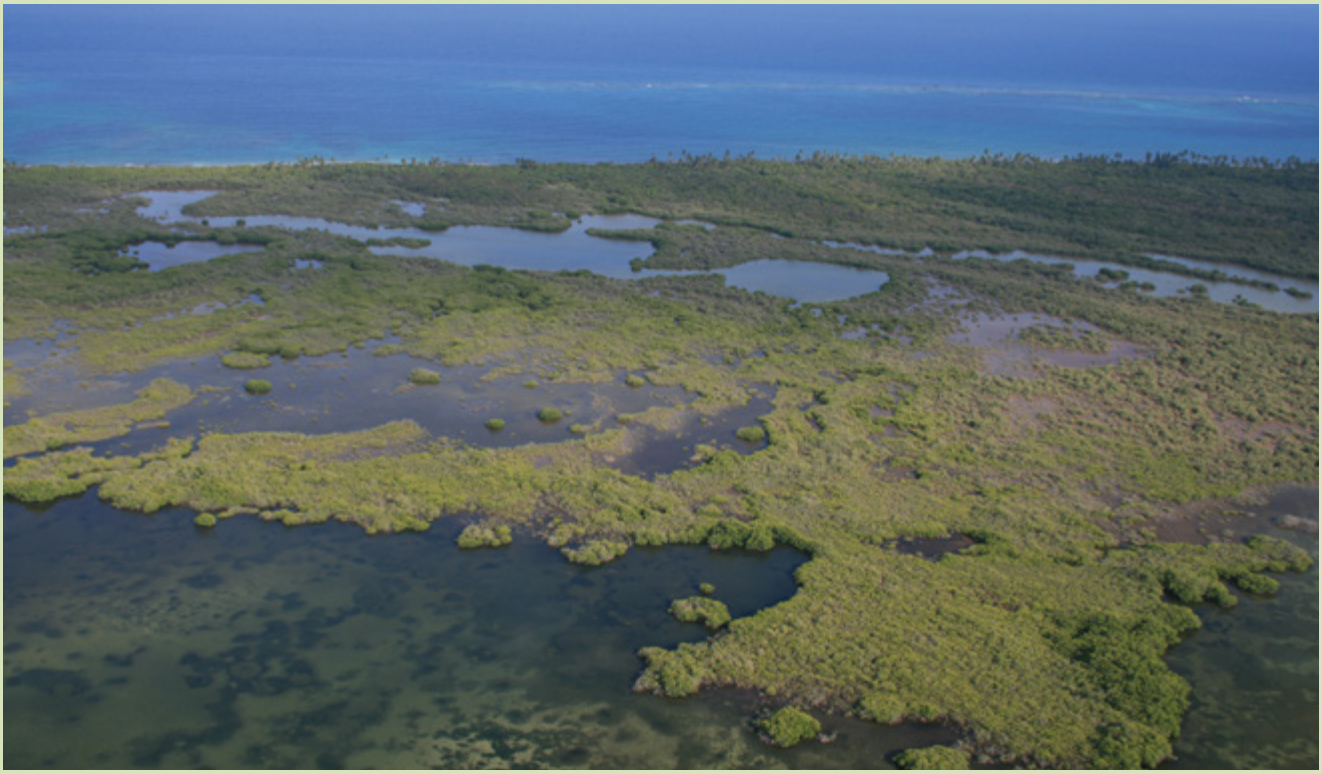
Of course, it is up to the country concerned to decide which authority is to have primary responsibility for the management of a site. Yet, when different national authorities are in charge of the same MIDA, establishing coherent management practices for the same site can become a challenge. In such cases, it would be useful to create a coordination mechanism, or at least a communication mechanism, among the various institutions to enhance the sustainable management of the MIDAs. This was discussed at the IUCN "Little Sydney Conference on Protecting Nature in Europe" (Hainburg, Austria, 28–31 May 2015), among other issues. In its Working Session 3B1, entitled "Multiple International Protected Area Designations", the ensuing Key Recommendation 2 urges States to "ensure there is communication between bodies responsible at national level for the implementation of the different instruments (e.g., National MAB Committees and National UNESCO Commissions)." Indeed, for the UNESCO designated sites, the UNESCO National Commissions could assume a coordinating role in this regard.

However, some countries have succeeded in having all international designations managed by the same institution. Sian Ka'an (Mexico) is a good example of this.

Case study 5. Sian Ka'an (Mexico): Biosphere Reserve, natural World Heritage site, Ramsar Site

Location and main characteristics

Sian Ka'an is located in the Mexican state of Quintana Roo on the eastern coast of the Yucatan Peninsula. The site is one of the largest natural reserves in Mexico and protects one of the most pristine wetlands in Mesoamerica. It comprises a wide range of lowland coastal features including a valuable part of the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef, lagoons, bays, dunes, marshes, swamps and mangroves, as well as mixed tropical forests and palm savannahs. Sian Ka'an also possesses a unique underground freshwater system interconnecting a number of rare natural features called *Petenes* and *Cenotes*. Such habitats provide for a rich biological diversity, comprising more than 300 bird species, 100 mammals, and 40 amphibians and reptiles. The tropical forests are home to charismatic mammals such as the Jaguar (*Panthera onca*), the Puma (*Puma concolor*), and the Ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*), as well as the endangered Black-handed Spider Monkey (*Ateles geoffroyi*), Yucatan Black Howler Monkey (*Alouatta pigra*) and Central American Tapir (*Tapirus bairdii*). A diverse marine life is also present with more than 400 fish species and four species of nesting marine turtles.



Aerial view of reefs, sand dunes and mangrove lagoons in Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve © Angel Omar Ortíz Moreno

National and international designations

Sian Ka'an was declared a national Biosphere Reserve in 1986 by the Federal Government, being recognised internationally by UNESCO's MAB Programme in the same year. Covering 528,148 ha, 99% of the reserve is Federal property. Shortly after, in 1987, Sian Ka'an was designated a natural World Heritage site covering 528,000 ha. Finally, the Ramsar Convention also recognised Sian Ka'an as a Wetland of International Importance in 2003. Covering a total of 652,193 ha, the Ramsar Site includes two neighbouring protected areas: Sian Ka'an Reefs Biosphere Reserve and Uaymil Flora and Fauna Protected Area. These constitute the reserve's buffer zone: Sian Ka'an Reefs Biosphere Reserve with 34,927 ha protects the reef system of the area, and the Uaymil Flora and Fauna Protected Area with 89,118 ha lies to the south of the property.

A single coordinating mechanism

All international designations are managed by Mexico's National Protected Areas Agency under the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources that cooperates with partners at all levels of government. Multiple designations are part of the management strategy of Sian Ka'an, supporting the conservation of a wide range of ecosystems. They have been used to implement

conservation and development projects by various national and international organisations. An example is the COMPACT initiative for community engagement in stewardship of World Heritage by the World Heritage Centre, UN Foundation and the UNDP-GEF Small Grants Programme.[32] These projects contribute to the maintenance of important environmental services provided by the area such as the preservation of hydrological cycles, nitrogen fixation, soil carbon sequestration, erosion control, plant pollination, biological pest control, organic waste degradation, and mitigation of climate change effects. The harvesting of food (such as fish and lobster), and the maintenance of the waterscapes, among others, depend on the preservation of these ecological processes.

Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve © Angel Omar Ortíz Moreno

Working with local residents has led to the creation of a community organisational system that leads to good practices of conservation and natural resource use. Multiple international designations played a role in the environmental education of these communities. They have become allies in the management of the reserve, understanding early on the competitive advantages of sustainable development.

Lobster fisheries in Sian Ka'an have international certification from the Marine Stewardship Council for their sustainable practices © Angel Omar Ortíz Moreno

Sian Ka'an currently has a management plan integrating the three protected areas of Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve, Sian Ka'an Reefs Biosphere Reserve and Uaymil Flora and Fauna Protected Area, which includes the regulation of activities such as fishing, tourism services and infrastructure construction for rural housing in the coastal zone. It also features a new sub-zoning of the area that strengthens sustainable use of local natural resources.

This management plan promotes the implementation of the conservation mandate of the three international designations including the local communities in the processes that provide them with economic benefits. It allows, for example, for the development of low-impact housing infrastructure in the coastal area through the concept of acceptable change, and includes studies on the carrying capacity of sub-zones destined for tourism activities. The implementation of this plan represents a challenge but it will hopefully enhance the quality of the site management. The progress of its implementation will be evaluated in 2020.

32 See http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/40/.

3.2.2 Lack of an effective legal framework

Only a few countries have formulated policies on IDAs or have specific legislation in place for the protection of such areas. In most cases, national or regional laws stipulate the protection status, ownership and governance of nationally designated sites. The lack of specific legislation for IDAs is not surprising as Ramsar Sites, Biosphere Reserves and UNESCO Global Geoparks are not necessarily considered legally protected areas as such, but they can contain one or several protected areas or other types of conserved areas in a much wider landscape.

This issue often poses a particular challenge for a site manager of an IDA or MIDA. In many cases, a site manager is in charge of a protected area on State-owned lands, and his/her mandate does not usually cover the surrounding non-protected areas which are mostly under private ownership. And yet, Ramsar Sites, World Heritage sites, Biosphere Reserves and UNESCO Global Geoparks explicitly or inherently subscribe to the concept of promoting sustainable development beyond the boundaries of protected areas. All four designating instruments do not consider protected areas as isolated islands, in whose adjoining areas every kind of economic activity is permissible. Rather, they wish to ensure that these sites are conserved and used sustainably for current and future generations also by mitigating adverse impacts from the surrounding areas, and by promoting sustainable economic activities that are in line with conservation objectives (e.g. ecotourism, organic agriculture, certified forest products). In seeking to be models of best practice, these sites should also demonstrate effective integration into wider landscapes and seascapes, and excellent connectivity, with links made for the protection of wider protected and conserved area networks, and conservation corridors.

A harmonised legal system on MIDAs should also address issues where sites are found to need corrective action, such as UNESCO Global Geoparks that receive a yellow card, and sites that are specifically recognised as being at risk (that is, Ramsar Sites listed on the Montreux Record, or sites appearing on the List of World Heritage Sites in Danger). In this way, when one designation is identified as being at risk, all the different national institutions in charge of that MIDA would cooperate to address the problem at hand and collaborate on finding the most appropriate solution for it.

It is beyond the scope of this Guidance to address all legal aspects with regard to IDAs as laws and regulations on the environment vary greatly from one country to the other. However, countries should in the long run aim to have an appropriate legal system which harmonises the different levels of national and international legislation. The case study on Jeju Island (Republic of Korea, see Part V of this Guidance) gives some thoughts on a more integrated legal system of this kind. In Korgalzhyn (Kazakhstan), reflections have started at the site level on the need for a harmonised legal framework for MIDAs. The Regional Government of Andalusia (Spain) has also started to make good progress in this regard.

Case study 6. Korgalzhyn (Kazakhstan): Ramsar Site, natural World Heritage site, Biosphere Reserve

Location and main characteristics

Korgalzhyn State Nature Reserve is situated in central Kazakhstan, 130 km southwest of the capital city Astana. The reserve consists of a complex system of shallow freshwater and saline lakes and brackish water bodies embedded in the dry steppe zone of Eurasia. Located at a crossroads on the Central Asian migratory bird flyways, this wetland is a key stopover for waterbirds on their way from Africa and South Asia to their breeding places in Western and Eastern Siberia. Consequently, the site presents one of the largest populations of waterbirds in Asia. Potential fodder reserves of several lakes in the area are able to provide food for up to 15 million birds, including up to 10–20% of the world populations of the threatened Dalmatian Pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*) and White-headed Duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*). The biodiversity of the site is unique, comprising more than 500 species of plants, 350 birds (112 waterbirds), 43 mammals, 14 fish, four reptiles and two amphibians. The importance of the steppe area should also be highlighted. Here, unique model areas of natural steppe ecosystem, degraded in other parts of Kazakhstan, are conserved and provide a home for the critically endangered Saiga Antelope (*Saiga tatarica*).

National and international designations

Korgalzhyn has been a strict State Nature Reserve since 1968. With an area of 543,171 ha, it is one of the largest reserves in Kazakhstan. In 1976, at the time still part of the former Soviet Union, the site received its first international recognition as Tengiz-Korgalzhyn Lake System Ramsar Site covering 177,200 ha. It was later expanded to 353,341 ha with the site inclusion on the Ramsar List as part of independent Kazakhstan. Its second international designation came in 2008 with the inscription of Saryarka – Steppe and Lakes of Northern Kazakhstan on the World Heritage List. This natural World Heritage site comprises two protected areas: Korgalzhyn State Nature Reserve and Naurzum State Nature Reserve totalling 450,344 ha. The reserves are complementary in their values despite the 350 km distance between them. More recently, in 2012, Korgalzhyn was designated as Kazakhstan's first Biosphere Reserve with the Nature Reserve corresponding to its core area. There were two main reasons for the

site achieving these international designations: compliance with the basic criteria set up for multiple recognition, and considerable assistance from international projects and organisations (such as the Nature Conservation Union of Germany (NABU), UNESCO and the UNDP/GEF Project on Wetlands Conservation) during the nomination processes.

Greater Flamingos (*Phoenicopterus roseus*) at Korgalzhyn State Nature Reserve © A. Koshkin

Saiga antelopes roam the steppe ecosystem of Korgalzhyn State Nature Reserve © A. Koshkin

Establishing legal IDA mechanisms

Recognition by different international designations led to an increase in the visibility and prestige not only of Korgalzhyn State Nature Reserve but also of the whole region and even country. The number of tourists in the area is increasing, with these being especially interested in visiting the site for its World Heritage listing. Consequently, new types of livelihoods have been introduced to the local community such as the selling of traditional products and handicrafts to tourists. This increased status is also reflected in its increased share of the State budget, namely by receiving additional technical staff and fuel.

Nevertheless, the site still struggles with challenges such as the lack of staff: the 543,171 ha of the reserve are managed by only 54 employees. And these sometimes lack the necessary expertise and experience to deal with the requirements of multiple international designations and their specific profiles. Since 2012, the biggest challenge faced by the reserve has been the incorporation of the regulations governing the activities of Biosphere Reserves. This latest designation highlighted the need for reformulation of national legislation addressing the management of areas of international importance. To date, there is no set of regulations addressing the management of areas with international designations in Kazakhstan. Therefore, site managers consider that the first step towards enhancing site management is the reformulation of national legislation focused on such sites.

Current reflections also focus on the creation of a unique site council with representatives of local authorities, local communities and reserve staff. The establishment of a working group with representatives of the different designating bodies would be useful to inform on the designations and to coordinate activities between them and site managers. The group could maintain a common database or website, which would contribute to knowledge sharing, hold capacity-building webinars and online sessions, and increase the visibility of these areas at the international level.

Training rangers in working with GPS at Korgalzhyn State Nature Reserve © A. Fedulin

3.2.3 Competition for national funding

In cases where different national authorities are in charge of MIDAs, inter-institutional competition for national funding has sometimes been reported. This is particularly an issue when sites with international designations do not fully match the same location, that is, when international designations only partially overlap. Moreover, international recognition often comes with different timelines: interest groups that have already worked hard in earlier years to obtain a specific international designation may fear that other interest groups preparing a nomination dossier for another international recognition will divert national funding resources.

Some site managers have also reported that despite the fact that an area has received one or several international designations, no additional resources have been allocated for the site's management from national (i.e. public) funding sources. International recognition

is likely to increase the responsibility and workload of site managers regarding site conservation, reporting, tourism management or outreach to local communities, to name just a few examples. An adequate allocation of funding for staff, equipment, as well as training courses for site managers on the purposes and responsibilities of the different international designations, is essential so that local and national staff in charge of MIDAs can cope with the specific requirements of each international designation.

Case study 7. Andalusia (Spain): Overlaps of Biosphere Reserves and UNESCO Global Geoparks

Andalusia is one of the Spanish regions with the highest number of both Biosphere Reserves (nine) and UNESCO Global Geoparks (three). It is also the region where both designations overlap more often, as the Cabo de Gata Biosphere Reserve and UNESCO Global Geopark share exactly the same boundaries, while Dehesas de Sierra Morena Biosphere Reserve partially overlaps with Sierra Norte de Sevilla UNESCO Global Geopark.

Global Geoparks were established in Andalusia in 2006, overlapping in some cases with Biosphere Reserves and other protected area regimes. This situation has not caused any conflicts since both designations seek the conservation and promotion of natural and cultural heritage, using different but convergent approaches.

Moreover, Article 50 of Law 42/2007 of December 13, on Natural Heritage and Biodiversity, which recognises UNESCO Global Geoparks as protected by an international instrument, indicates that their conservation regime is established by the corresponding instrument, plus the specific management and conservation regimes affecting other protected areas overlapping with them, provided that these regimes conform to the provisions of UNESCO Global Geoparks.

The jurisdictional conflicts that might have arisen – specifically with the duplication of management, planning and participation tools or bodies – have been resolved through the incorporation of these tools and bodies into the previously established protected areas. This approach is formally implemented by a regulation about to be passed by the Andalusian Government: a regional decree on incorporating planning, management and citizen participation obligations into international protected area programmes, conventions or agreements to which Spain is a party.

Since UNESCO Global Geoparks do not require any zoning and their most important and distinguishing feature is the geological heritage they host, their conservation regimes are limited to the protection of the most outstanding elements of this geological heritage. Zoning similar to that of Biosphere Reserves is not proposed for two main reasons: first, the geological heritage elements often consist of very small areas found scattered throughout the territory. Secondly, zoning could lead to conflicts with local communities that, at the time of designation, assumed the UNESCO Global Geopark designation did not bring them any new land-use restrictions. This is why it is essential to always disseminate clear information to local communities, while showcasing this multiplicity of designations as an opportunity for the area.

As a consequence, the Andalusian Environmental Regional Government takes the position that the coexistence of both designations does not depend on the degree of overlap between them, but on the existence of effective coordination in the area's management, planning and citizen participation, as required by law. It is also understood - as local community representatives have sometimes noted - that this model may help develop synergies that eventually result in greater opportunities and strengths.

3.2.4 Multiplication of externally funded and supported projects

MIDAs can also greatly benefit from external donor support, in particular in developing countries where domestic financial resources are often inadequate. In fact, it is often thanks to the support of international donors that nomination proposals for international designations are sponsored and worked out. Bilateral aid (such as through the German Society for International Cooperation (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* or GIZ)), multilateral assistance (from the GEF), international NGOs (including BirdLife International, Wetlands International and others) and many other foundations and organisations have paved the way for a site's international recognition.

However, at site level, it is sometimes not clear what each international organisation is working on and where. A multitude of well-intentioned projects may occur in MIDAs but often they have diverse objectives and use different approaches that may not always be complementary. Good oversight of past, on-going and future project activities is needed with regard to Ramsar, World Heritage, Biosphere Reserve and/or UNESCO Global Geopark listed sites. This requires that the focal point for the various designations (or focal points in case they come under different national authorities) should be mandated and empowered to assume a coordinating role for the harmonisation of interventions and projects to avoid duplication of efforts, or simply to avoid donor-driven interests. The creation of donors' roundtables with the participation of government officials and site managers would also be helpful in this regard. In the case of UNESCO Global Geoparks, new sites which become part of the network commit themselves to provide training to staff on donor-assisted projects.

3.2.5 Different objectives and approaches for each designation

Each international designation has its specific conservation objectives and approaches to reach these objectives. While the Ramsar and World Heritage conventions, the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and the UNESCO GGN largely have similar general objectives (such as environmental conservation, coupled with sustainable development), each international instrument has its own specific purposes. These are reflected in detail on the site selection criteria for each designation, highlighted in Part II of this Guidance. In essence, Ramsar Sites target the conservation and wise use of wetlands, while UNESCO Global Geoparks exist to protect geological heritage. World Heritage properties conserve sites of outstanding universal value, while Biosphere Reserves aim at harmonising the management and conservation of biodiversity with economic and social development in representative, not necessarily outstanding ecosystems of a country.

Site managers of MIDAs have to address largely similar objectives, but in detail essentially differing concepts. However, landscape management issues such as ecosystem connectivity and resilience, for example, might entail quite similar approaches and solutions even if viewed from other conventions' or programmes' perspectives, leading to mutually beneficial outcomes.

In any case, it is indispensable that site managers fully understand the different purposes and objectives of each designating instrument. The same is true for national authorities when providing the necessary institutional and financial support for these areas. Is the wise use of wetlands under the Ramsar Convention fully compatible with the exclusive protection approach of natural World Heritage properties or core areas of Biosphere Reserves? If degraded, should a site be restored to its original state, for example, by allowing only native species, or can it be rehabilitated by introducing non-native species that can also have economic value for local communities? It is important that this thought exercise is done even before nominating a site for international recognition, as this may help local and national authorities realise which designation is more appropriate for a site (and even if the site really needs more than one international designation).

3.2.6 Different site boundaries

As can be seen from the surface areas of MIDAs described in the List of MIDAs in Annex 2 of this Guidance (or using UNEP-WCMC's World Database on Protected Areas),[33] some of the listed areas are practically identical in their spatial extent while others are not. For example, Ichkeul (Tunisia) was designated a Ramsar Site and a World Heritage site in 1980 and both listings followed the geographical extent of Ichkeul National Park with an area of 12,600 ha. The Biosphere Reserve (previously listed in 1977) is slightly larger with 14,100 ha comprising also coastal areas with resident communities living outside the National Park. Owing to their specific zonation pattern with (protected) core areas, buffer zones and (non-protected) transition areas, Biosphere Reserves should essentially be larger than natural World Heritage properties or Ramsar Sites for which the primary goal is conservation.

However, there are other examples where the spatial relationship is the reverse: Wuyishan Biosphere Reserve (China) designated in 1987 with its 56,527 ha is about half the size of the overlapping Mount Wuyi World Heritage site listed 12 years later, and which comprises 99,975 ha. The same is true for Slowinsky Biosphere Reserve (Poland, designated in 1976) with 20,790 ha and Slowinski National Park Ramsar Site, that accounts for 32,744 ha, and which was listed some 20 years after the Biosphere Reserve designation. Despite the fact that these IDAs overlap and bear the same names, they can differ considerably in size.

The situation becomes even more complicated when the different areas in MIDAs overlap only partially. For example, Canada's Stonehammer UNESCO Global Geopark shares only a small portion of land area with the Fundy Biosphere Reserve. Serengeti-Ngorongoro Biosphere Reserve (United Republic of Tanzania) contains two separately listed World Heritage sites: Serengeti National Park and Ngorongoro Conservation Area which come under different institutional management regimes. The Azores UNESCO Global Geopark (Portugal) covers essentially the entire archipelago of the same name, thanks to its many geological features on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge spanning three tectonic plates, but only three of its nine main islands (Graciosa, Corvo and Flores) are also Biosphere Reserves, listed as three separate reserves. Furthermore, the archipelago's calderas of Graciosa and Corvo are two relatively small Ramsar Sites within the much larger Biosphere Reserves of Graciosa Island and Corvo Island. Similarly, in Mexico, several smaller Ramsar Sites are fully or partially embedded in larger Biosphere Reserves and World Heritage sites.

Hence, a site manager who is in charge of a single international designation may not automatically be in charge of the other international designations given sometimes huge spatial differences[34] among the four designations. Close coordination is therefore needed among all site managers responsible for the various designations that do not fully overlap or where different institutional authorities come into play. The case study on the Azores (Portugal) provides an insight into how a joint coordination mechanism for geographically disaggregated sites can work. Avoidance of incoherent boundaries is also a key consideration for national authorities when considering establishing MIDAs.

33 See http://www.protectedplanet.net/.

34 The IUCN "Little Sydney Conference on Protecting Nature in Europe" (Hainburg, Austria, 28–31 May 2015) discussed, among other things, the issue of accurate boundaries. Working Session 3B1, entitled "Multiple International Protected Area Designations", formulated the following action point: "Deliver accurate (digital) data on boundaries to WCMC (responsible for the management of the World Database on Protected Areas) and regularly update them and make protected area managers understand boundaries and management responsibilities."

Case study 8. Azores (Portugal): World Heritage cultural landscape, 13 Ramsar Sites, three Biosphere Reserves, UNESCO Global Geopark

Location and main characteristics

The Azores Archipelago is a Portuguese Autonomous Region consisting of nine volcanic islands and several islets in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. With a total surface area of 2,324 km^2, the archipelago's islands are divided into three main groups: Flores and Corvo, to the west; Graciosa, Terceira, São Jorge, Pico and Faial in the centre; and São Miguel and Santa Maria to the east.

The islands' vulcanism is associated with its location above an active triple junction between three large tectonic plates, and is characterised by 16 major polygenetic and about 1,750 monogenetic volcanoes. This geoheritage is expressed in a wide range of structures such as calderas, lava fields, lakes, caves, hot springs, among others. The Azores are also highly rich in biodiversity, as evidenced by the presence of about 4,400 species of plants and terrestrial animals. Its geomorphology, isolation and Atlantic climate have created distinctive ecological conditions which support a significant number of endemic species, and remnants of Laurissilva Forest, a relic of European vegetation dating back to the Tertiary Age. Due to its location in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, the islands are a stopover for many migratory birds, as well as cetaceans such as Sperm Whales, Bottlenose Whales and Dolphins, making this one of the world's largest whale sanctuaries.

Luxuriant vegetation of Poço da Alagoinha on Flores Island © Paulo Henrique Silva/SIARAM

National and international designations

In 2007, the Azores Regional Government created its own network of protected areas comprising nine Island Natural Parks and one Marine Park. The archipelago received its first international designation in 2004 when the Landscape of the Pico Island Vineyard Culture was listed as a World Heritage cultural landscape covering 987 ha. This site is managed by a Technical Cabinet of the Environmental Department of the Regional Government. The region also comprises three Biosphere Reserves: Corvo Island (25,853 ha) and Graciosa Island (12,172 ha) inscribed in 2007, and Flores Island (58,619 ha) inscribed in 2009. These Biosphere Reserves include the entire land area of the islands and surrounding marine zones. Thirteen Ramsar Sites were also inscribed from 2005 to 2012. Each Biosphere Reserve and Ramsar Site is integrated into and managed by the respective Island Natural Park. Finally, the wider Azores Geopark was designated in 2013, covering 1,288,400 ha and encompassing all Azorean islands and islets and four marine geosites.

Enhanced coordination within an Autonomous Region

The biggest challenge of the area was in achieving good coordination between the management of the different designations. Fortunately, this situation has improved greatly since 2007 with the adoption of regional legislation on protected areas that created the Island Natural Parks, already taking into account their international designations. The parks now function as the management units for the World Heritage and Ramsar Sites and Biosphere Reserves, as well as the local delegations of the UNESCO Global

Geopark, under the coordination of the Environmental Department of the Regional Government. Due to its insular nature, the UNESCO Global Geopark has local delegations in all the islands and is represented in each one by the Director of the respective Island Natural Park.

Walking trail at Sete Cidades Caldera in São Miguel Island © Eva Lima

The Azores Regional Government aims to have its territory internationally recognised as a destination of excellence for sustainable tourism. Therefore, the listing under international designations is an essential part of the local agenda for economic and structural development, especially given the region's isolated location. For example, since the creation of the UNESCO Global Geopark, a strong strategy in geotourism has been implemented. Rural tourist accommodation and activity holiday companies are now offering a wide range of experiences connected with geotourism including walking trails, geotours and speleological activities. Some partners of the UNESCO Global Geopark have also developed geo-products which are traditional quality products with geological themes.

Locals and visitors enjoy the thermal baths of Caldeira Velha on São Miguel Island © Eva Lima

International recognition led to the islands becoming priorities in the allocation of government funding. For example, the Biosphere Reserves had priority in the implementation of waste prevention and waste management projects. And due to its designation as World Heritage cultural landscape, Pico Island received funds for the rehabilitation and maintenance of its traditional vineyards. This is renewing the interest of the local community in returning to these sustainable practices which had previously been almost abandoned.

3.2.7 Different monitoring and reporting requirements

A considerable challenge for MIDAs is the monitoring and related periodic reporting to the four designating bodies and their secretariats. The content and depth of information required varies from one to another.

- The Ramsar Convention uses the web-based Ramsar Sites Information Service[35] where site information is uploaded into a database and can be publicly accessed through site maps and Ramsar Information Sheets (RIS) for each listed site. A RIS has 35 chapters and is accompanied by an explanatory note and guidelines for its completion, as well as annexes such as the Ramsar Classification System for Wetland Types, criteria for identifying Wetlands of International Importance, and additional guidelines for the provision of maps and other spatial data.

- The World Heritage Convention puts great emphasis on reporting with a view to assessing application of the Convention at the national level and to ensuring the state of conservation of World Heritage properties at the site level. The reporting process is complemented by regional capacity-building and networking activities among sites. At its 22nd session (Kyoto, Japan, 1998), the World Heritage Committee decided that Periodic Reporting on the Application of the World Heritage Convention was required from States Parties every six years. The Committee also decided to examine the States Parties periodic reports in a cycle and region by region starting with the Arab States, and followed by Africa, the Asia and Pacific region, Latin America and the Caribbean, and finally Europe and North America, before a new cycle starts. The format for the Periodic Reporting[36] on the Application of the World Heritage Convention covers some seven pages in the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention.*

- Periodic Reporting under the World Heritage Convention is complemented by Reactive Monitoring, which entails reporting to the World Heritage Committee on the state of conservation of specific World Heritage properties that are under threat. To this end, States Parties submit State of Conservation reports whenever requested to do so by the Committee, on an ad hoc basis, when a specific threat to the properties' OUV emerges. Until 2015, States Parties submitted their State of Conservation reports with the structure, length and content of their own choosing. At its 39th session (Bonn, Germany, 2015), the World Heritage Committee decided on a standard format for the submission of State of Conservation reports as part of the Reactive Monitoring Process. This new format is contained in Section IV.A of the 2015 *Operational Guidelines.*[37]

- For Biosphere Reserves, a 27-page Periodic Review Form must be completed (plus various annexes relating to the MABnet Directory of Biosphere Reserves, promotion and communication materials, and the Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves). The periodic review questionnaire for Biosphere Reserves is the most detailed among the four international designating instruments. The Biosphere Reserve Periodic Review form is available in both Word and pdf formats on their website.[38]

- For revalidation of a UNESCO Global Geopark and its maintenance within the GGN, a nine-page Excel form, entitled "Evaluation Document A – Self Evaluation", needs to be completed by the site manager. This self-evaluation is complemented by an on-site evaluation mission by two external UNESCO Global Geopark experts who record their observations in a separate Excel form: "Evaluation Document B – Progress Evaluation". Both forms are available on their website.[39]

When comparing the content of the required reporting, some information is obviously similar such as the name of a site, its state of conservation (or changes in conservation), and on-going educational and scientific programmes.

Other requested information however can differ quite substantially from one international designation to another. UNESCO Global Geoparks, for example, require detailed evidence on how the sites and their managers have contributed to the work of the Network in terms of number of conferences attended, common projects carried out within the network, or articles provided for the Global (or European) *Geoparks Network Newsletter*. On the other hand, the Periodic Review Form for Biosphere Reserves requires a detailed and analytical spectrum of information to assess whether a Biosphere Reserve is still fulfilling its conservation and sustainable development functions, as well as to evidence its governance status and management system.

Streamlining reporting requirements under the four designating instruments would facilitate the workload of site managers and national focal points. In Recommendation 4.3.5 of this Guidance, an attempt has been made to outline the common content of such a streamlined report.

35 See https://rsis.ramsar.org/.
36 See http://whc.unesco.org/en/periodicreporting/.
37 See http://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/.
38 See http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/biosphere-reserves/periodic-review-process/.
39 See http://www.globalgeopark.org/aboutGGN/Documents/9995.htm.

3.2.8 Different reporting timelines

Reporting requirements for the four international designating bodies not only vary in content but also have different timelines.

- Reporting for UNESCO Global Geoparks takes place every four years and is essential for the revalidation of an existing UNESCO Global Geopark. The report is complemented by an on-site assessment executed by two independent experts selected from other UNESCO Global Geoparks.
- Reporting cycles for Ramsar Sites are at least every six years. However, updating the status of a Ramsar Site can also be done at any time via the Internet, in particular when any major changes to the ecological character of the site have occurred or are likely to occur, or when the site's area has changed.
- World Heritage sites require reporting every six years, and every year, a different world region is subject to review (see previous section). Usually, there is a one-year interval before the next reporting cycle begins to allow for reflection and improvement of the exercise.
- Biosphere Reserves have the longest interval regarding periodic reporting – a Periodic Review Form must be submitted to the MAB Secretariat every 10 years. In case of non-compliance, the site may run the risk of no longer being part of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (this measure may be applied starting from the 29th session of the MAB-ICC in 2017).

It would facilitate work if a centralised reporting register was maintained at site level (and even at the national level). Besides the different reports, the reporting register should also archive the specific recommendations from the international experts assessing a site, and follow-up actions taken to respond to these recommendations and ensure site conservation.

Moreover, the global secretariats, which also archive the periodic reports, should share these assessments amongst themselves and their governing bodies. This is particularly relevant for the World Heritage Convention with its List of World Heritage in Danger, and the Ramsar Convention with its systematically applied procedures expressed in Article 3.2,[40] and the overlapping Montreux Record, to avoid discrepancies between the two lists. Special care should be taken to avoid giving conflicting recommendations to improve the management of sites in danger, and information sharing is a crucial step to achieve this. It may also avoid situations in which a site has been deemed to fulfil all requirements under one designation but failed to do so under a different designation. This issue has arisen in the past, although it can be argued that the site had met the specific profile of one designation but not the explicit purpose of the other.

3.2.9 Insufficient funding for site management and reporting

Many site administrations are understaffed and underfunded given the considerable requirements for a site's appropriate environmental management and monitoring, outreach to local communities, and reporting. While this is particularly true for developing countries, many site administrations in developed countries are confronted with the same challenge since the public sector is usually requested to keep expenditures as low as possible.

For MIDAs, this challenge can become critical. Not only do national requirements have to be met but reporting on the site's environmental integrity and management activities to the international designating bodies also has to be carried out. Any reporting takes time and effort since data for environmental monitoring has to be collected and summarised, and achievements in sustainable development efforts have to be detailed. One or several staff members need to be allocated to this important task. External donor support is usually no help in this regard, as only in very rare cases is funding given to continuously support and to strengthen institutional capacities on site. In essence, externally funded projects are bound in time, space and scope (for example, for the reintroduction of locally extinct species or the rehabilitation of degraded habitats) and cannot provide long-term assistance for site management and monitoring, including reporting. Therefore, adequate funding should be given to site management teams when an area receives multiple international designations so that they can cope with the additional workload that comes with the international designating bodies' requirements. The case study of Socotra (Yemen) illustrates one of the most challenging situations affecting any MIDA.

3.2.10 Lack of capacity building in handling international designations

Most site managers and their teams are well-trained experts with regard to the management of conservation areas – at the national and local levels. Many staff members have also attended regional training centres, such as the College of African Wildlife Management in Mweka (United Republic of Tanzania) for English-speaking African countries or the Garoua Ecole de Faune (Garoua Wildlife School) in Garoua (Cameroon) for French-speaking African countries.

40 Article 3.2: "Each Contracting Party shall arrange to be informed at the earliest possible time if the ecological character of any wetland in its territory and included in the List has changed, is changing or is likely to change as the result of technological developments, pollution or other human interference."

Case study 9. Socotra (Yemen): Biosphere Reserve, Ramsar Site, natural World Heritage site

Location and main characteristics

The Socotra Archipelago, in the north-western Indian Ocean, is located 235 km off the Horn of Africa and 380 km off the coast of Yemen. It consists of a major island to the east (Socotra Island) covering about 354,900 ha, three smaller islands to the west (Samhah, Darsah and Abd al Kuri) and a few rocky limestone outcrops. The main island of Socotra presents three geomorphological terrains: the granite highlands that compose the Haghier Mountains, reaching a maximum altitude of 1,540 m; a limestone plateau permeated with karstic caves and dominated by the endemic Dragon Blood Tree (*Dracaena cinnabari*); and the coastal plains.

Relatively isolated from the rest of the world and lying between three biogeographic regions (African, Oriental and Palearctic), these islands form a living laboratory which has preserved intact unique ecosystems, a bizarre xerophytic flora, and a traditional culture in balance with the local environment. As part of the Horn of Africa Biodiversity Hotspot, Socotra boasts a remarkably rich biodiversity and a high endemism of plant and animal species which has led to the archipelago being known as the Galapagos of the Indian Ocean. In fact, 37% of its 850 vascular plant species, 90% of its 600 insect species and 90% of its reptile species do not occur anywhere else in the world. The marine life is equally diverse, comprising 730 species of fish, 300 species of crustaceans, as well as whales, dolphins, cuttlefish and two breeding species of sea turtles.

Dragon blood tree on the island of Socotra © Haifaa Abdulhalim

National and international designations

The Socotra Island Protected Area covering 362,500 ha and the Socotra Biodiversity Project were created in 1996. A Conservation Zoning Plan established in close consultation with local communities was approved in 2000. In 2003, the Socotra Archipelago

was designated a Biosphere Reserve with 2,681,640 ha. Later, in 2007, the Detwah Lagoon (Ditwah Protected Area) covering 580 ha was listed as a Ramsar Site. One year later, in 2008, cabinet decrees were passed providing increased protection for the islands, limiting damage from road building, promoting sustainable ecotourism, reducing the effects of grazing by uncontrolled livestock, and securing funding for a management structure. In that same year, the Socotra Archipelago was listed as a natural World Heritage site encompassing over 75% of the total land area (410,460 ha). All international designations are managed by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), an administrative body of the Ministry of Water and Environment. The main reason for the listing of the site under different international designations was to address and reverse several anthropogenic pressures and threats such as uncontrolled development, invasive species, over-exploitation of resources and loss of valuable traditional knowledge.

International recognition and current challenges

Recognition by different international designations has enhanced the national and international visibility of the Socotra Archipelago, and has attracted sponsor organisations to fund local projects on environmental conservation and sustainable development. The collaboration established with international organisations (such as UNEP, UNDP, GEF and GIZ) thanks to this recognition has boosted important information and knowledge exchanges at the global and regional level. These different projects integrating the biodiversity conservation, sustainable use of natural resources and community development have improved the environmental integrity of the islands as well as the local economy. As a consequence, the number of foreign tourists visiting the area was increasing.

However, more recently, tourist numbers have dropped with the onset of warfare in Yemen as all flights to Socotra require a stopover on the mainland. Even worse, the unstable environment in Yemen has also left Socotra in a precarious situation. Budgets for infrastructure and recreation have dropped amid the turmoil. It is, therefore, not surprising that funding for conservation staff and site management is a challenge.

Land degradation due to excessive exploitation of resources is starting to be an increasing problem, as well as soil erosion. Invasive species are also a real threat especially without a system for monitoring new introductions. Activities such as logging for fuel wood due to lack of cooking gas, the killing of sea turtles for their meat, or illegal fishing in protected areas continue to take place. Furthermore, national and international projects to support the protection and sustainable development of the Socotra archipelago are still scarce. It can only be hoped that when peace returns to Yemen, national and external support for Socotra will resume. The site's administration needs to be strengthened in terms of budget but also by increasing capacity-building opportunities for the local staff through short and long-term training. Moreover, it is essential to reinforce the role of local communities in environmental management and ecotourism activities in the area.

Detwah Lagoon in Socotra Island is recognised as a Ramsar Site © Haifaa Abdulhalim

In various other parts of the world, where English or French are not the main languages spoken, foreign language capabilities can become an issue. The secretariats of the four international designating bodies use English and French as their working languages, and to a lesser extent Spanish. It is often a challenge for national authorities and site managers to communicate with the international designating bodies in a language which is not their mother tongue and not spoken on the ground within the MIDA (see also Case study 6 on Korgalzhyn, Kazakhstan). Decisions and guidelines of the four designating bodies have to be translated into national languages to be fully understood. The same is true for periodic reporting when texts need to be translated from national languages into the working languages of the international secretariats.

Site managers also report a general lack of capacity-building, systematic training and networking opportunities on international designations. Moreover, to date there are no training centres or programmes which provide training to site managers and national authorities on the harmonised management of MIDAs. Such programmes should offer training modules which spell out the specificities, similarities and potential for synergies of the four international instruments and should demonstrate good practices in harmonised management of MIDAs. If possible, these modules should also be made available in more languages than the ones used by the designating bodies (English, French and Spanish) in order to reach more people at site level.

3.2.11 Lack of communication among site managers, national focal points and global secretariats

In essence, there are three levels of responsibility regarding IDAs: site managers at the local level; ministries or public authorities at the national level with a designated national focal point in charge of the respective international designation; and the designating bodies of the four international instruments.

Along this vertical chain of responsibility, communication flow is not always as swift and efficient as could be desired. Information is not always transmitted rapidly from one level to the other, which is especially important in emergency cases at site level or when new decisions and policies of the designating bodies have to be implemented at site level. When two, three or even four international designations come into play, the complexity of interactions between the three levels increases accordingly. An institutionalised coordination mechanism as mentioned in section 3.2.1 may ensure closer and swifter interaction between site managers and national focal points and/or between national focal points and the global secretariats.

This is also true for horizontal interaction among site managers, national focal points and the global secretariats to share information in sub-regional, regional and international contexts. Networking among site managers and national focal points is strongly encouraged by all four global secretariats, but there is still much room for improvement on international interaction and collaboration to enhance knowledge sharing among sites across national boundaries. Unfortunately, there is often a lack of incentives to make this happen. It is not only a question of funding but of demonstrating the benefit of such networking versus the time invested in it by site managers.

3.2.12 Uncontrolled and damaging tourism

The accumulation of various international designations often leads to an increase of visitor numbers in MIDAs, thanks to a higher degree of national and international visibility and prestige.

However, excessive visitor numbers can pose a challenge to the environmental integrity and conservation of an area. Sensitive biotopes and ecosystems, such as wetlands with their precious waterfowl habitats, or drylands and mountains with shallow soil cover, may not be able to sustain large numbers of visitors. In many sites, especially the more vulnerable ones, visitor numbers should be controlled either in space (such as establishing marked trails for tourists to follow) or in time (imposing limits on the number of visitors at specific times of the day or year).

Specific installations and amenities for tourism purposes usually require hefty infrastructure investments (not only to build hotels to allow for overnight stays, but also to construct main access roads or feeder roads, to provide food supply chains, to handle waste disposal, etc.) which need to be taken into account for the overall management of the area,[41] including establishing restrictions where needed. Local and national authorities should ensure a shift from uncontrolled mass tourism to sustainable tourism by implementing sustainable tourism strategies that also include regulations on site accessibility, tourist accommodation, infrastructure, branding, licensing of tourist activity providers, etc. This is of key importance to all four designations. For example, for the revalidation of a UNESCO Global Geopark, the positive and negative impacts of tourism development must be evidenced. Also, the Periodic Review Form for Biosphere Reserves requests information on the impact of tourism on the local environment.

3.2.13 Conflicts with local communities and indigenous peoples

Local communities and indigenous peoples may be opposed to the creation of a protected area. Sometimes this situation highlights conflicts related to questions of land tenure, land-use restrictions and access to natural resources. While this is not an uncommon phenomenon for protected areas, especially in the early stages of implementation, the issue becomes even more complicated when an area is proposed for international designation, and possibly multiple international designations. It is reported that local communities often state that they do not wish to be governed by an international organisation, or that they do not wish to be told how to use their land by an outside body. This happens despite the fact that proposals for international site listing are the result of decisions of sovereign governments and do not emanate from the Ramsar or UNESCO secretariats.

41 See the World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme at http://whc.unesco.org/en/tourism.

While visitor flows to the ochre rocks at Roussillon (Parc naturel régional du Lubéron UNESCO Global Geopark/Lubéron-Lure Biosphere Reserve, France) are well-managed through designated trails, some tourists still attempt to climb the rocks. © Thomas Schaaf

Experience of IDA designation shows it takes time, often several years, and frequent and transparent communication and collaboration to reach agreement with local communities on the benefits that international recognition may bring. The organisation of a series of information and consultation meetings and workshops with local communities is essential to understand and address fears regarding suspected foreign control of an area through international bodies. Such reservations must be taken very seriously and they should never be disregarded as irrelevant. The benefits of international recognition need to be emphasised (including increased domestic and international visibility, creation of alternative livelihoods such as sustainable tourism activities and services, as well as the marketing of local products), and the authorities need to ensure that the implementation of a MIDA achieves these and addresses the community's concerns. Even though these types of meetings are a challenge, as they are time-consuming and may involve considerable costs, they are an essential factor in paving the way for international designations.

It should be further noted that for some communities, and in particular where indigenous peoples' territories are involved, the question of rights is a central concern. This goes beyond the concept of stakeholders and addresses rightsholders. Ideally, international designation should be supported by local communities and indigenous peoples, but there are also notable cases where international designation has not respected rights, including the principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) established in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.[42] These situations are no longer acceptable if IDAs and MIDAs are to be regarded as models of international best practice. Good management and equitable and effective governance of protected areas (including IDAs and MIDAs) should ensure the principles of legitimacy and voice, direction, performance, accountability, and fairness and rights. Rights include both substantive rights (such as basic human rights to life and liberty, or material and financial rights under specific contractual conditions such as access to a given territory) and procedural rights (as in rights to information, participation and access to justice). Both substantive and procedural rights of indigenous peoples should be respected in relation to the designation of IDAs and MIDAs.[43]

42 See http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf.

43 Borrini-Feyerabend, G., Bueno, P., Hay-Edie, T., Lang, B., Rastogi, A. and Sandwith, T. (2014). *A primer on governance for protected and conserved areas. Stream on Enhancing Diversity and Quality of Governance, 2014 IUCN World Parks Congress*. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN.

These concerns regarding respect for communities and rights continue after recognition of an area by the Ramsar and World Heritage conventions, the MAB Programme and/or the IGGP, since the process of maintaining the environmental integrity and conservation of a site is everything but closed. Initial enthusiasm may diminish after a few years or fade into oblivion and some obligations and agreements in established management and governance plans may no longer be respected. Again, it is a challenging task for site managers and local and national authorities, but they should ensure that local communities continue to perceive the benefits of international recognition, and continue to participate and benefit from it. An interesting case study in this regard is Cilento, Vallo di Diano and Alburni (Italy), where the three UNESCO designations of the area gained a new momentum in 2013 with the inscription of the Mediterranean diet on the List of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. Cilento was chosen as the Emblematic Community representing the Mediterranean diet in Italy.

Case study 10. Cilento, Vallo di Diano and Alburni (Italy): Biosphere Reserve, World Heritage cultural landscape, UNESCO Global Geopark

Location and main characteristics

Located in the province of Salerno in southern Italy, the Cilento, Vallo di Diano and Alburni National Park extends from the Tyrrhenian coast to the Campania Mountains. Its territory is characterised by low dolomite mountains with typical karst features such as sinkholes and caves and a coastline made up of cliffs, bays and sandy beaches. The presence of 130 million year old Mesozoic limestones and dolomites, Mesozoic pelagic deposits and 16–6 million year old Miocene siliciclastic turbidites helps to tell the evolutionary history of the central Mediterranean and highlights the area's geological heritage. Habitats in the park vary greatly according to their altitude, ranging from dry coastal garrigue to Holm oak woodlands, mixed oak forests, hornbeam and alder, and natural forests of European beech to high-altitude grasslands. The area is notable for its birds of prey, especially the Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), and their favourite prey: the Rock Partridge (*Alectoris graeca*) and the Italian Hare (*Lepus corsicanus*). The presence of these two species is important as they represent typical Apennine populations, now extinct in a good part of the Italian territory. The cultural heritage is also particularly rich, with traces of human occupation going back to Palaeolithic times, and historical vestiges of a succession of civilisations, notably the archaeological sites of the cities of Paestum and Velia and the monastery of Certosa di Padula.

Sella del Corticato mountain and the town of Teggiano © Cilento, Vallo di Diano and Alburni National Park

National and international designations

The Cilento, Vallo di Diano and Alburni National Park was created in 1991. Its first international recognition came in 1997 with the designation of Cilento and Vallo di Diano as a Biosphere Reserve covering 181,000 ha. Shortly after, in 1998, Cilento and Vallo di Diano National Park with the Archeological Sites of Paestum and Velia and the Certosa di Padula was designated a World Heritage cultural landscape with 159,110 ha. And finally, the GGN recognised the Cilento and Vallo di Diano Geopark, covering 184,100 ha, as one of its members in 2010. In addition, in 2013, UNESCO inscribed the Mediterranean diet on the List of the UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, with Cilento being chosen as the Emblematic

Community representing the diet in Italy. The limits of the Biosphere Reserve, World Heritage site, UNESCO Global Geopark, and Emblematic Community of the Mediterranean diet practically coincide with the boundaries of the National Park. The different designations are managed by the same Park Authority with the exception of the archaeological and historical sites of the World Heritage property which are managed by the Italian Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

View of Palinuro Cape on the coast of Cilento © Cilento, Vallo di Diano and Alburni National Park

Natural, cultural and social linkages

Conflicts between the Park Authority and the local community (both residents and the local administrative institutions) are common due to land-use restrictions in the National Park, usually seen as a system of constraints preventing the development of the region. However, international designations are contributing to mitigating the challenges in affirming the area's global importance within the community. Recognition of Cilento as the Emblematic Community for the Mediterranean diet led to the establishment of a network of farmer custodians of the park's agricultural heritage. The farmers collect the seeds of traditional crops (such as cereals, vegetables and fruits) and work on the recovery and cultivation of these crops. Additionally, being part of a very active and experienced network of European Geoparks helped the park greatly in developing sustainable tourism and marketing strategies.

The range of different designations received by the National Park has also helped to raise awareness of its importance as a research site which allows for the study of the complex interactions between natural, cultural and social elements. Studying the services rendered by each of these components contributes to a better understanding of the linkages between ecosystem services, sustainable development, and social wellbeing. The park's managers hope to develop awareness and communication campaigns and programmes about the National Park and its international designations targeted at the local community and decision makers to turn these audiences into stronger supporters.

Members of the network of farmer custodians of the Mediterranean diet © Cilento, Vallo di Diano and Alburni National Park

3.2.14 Confusion among local communities and visitors

Although the international designating bodies request that their logos be visibly displayed on-site, a proliferation of different logos often confuses visitors and local residents alike. Site managers have reported that national logos (e.g. of a national park or a state nature reserve) are usually well-known among local communities as well as domestic and foreign tourists. Yet, visitors can rarely identify the specific meanings of the Ramsar, World Heritage, Biosphere Reserve and/or UNESCO Global Geopark logos. In fact, many MIDAs avoid overloading information panels and promotional materials with a multitude of different logos. Rather, they prefer to describe what can be seen on-site using maps, images and short informative texts.

Ramsar
CONVENTION ON WETLANDS
(Ramsar, Iran, 1971)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization · World Heritage Convention

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization · Man and the Biosphere Programme

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization · UNESCO Global Geoparks

The logos of the four international site designating instruments

MAB, World Heritage and UNESCO Global Geoparks logos in front of the Jeju World Natural Heritage Centre (Jeju, Republic of Korea) © Thomas Schaaf

Local communities and visitors alike often fail to understand why an area has different international designations, what their specific purposes and values are, and what this means for its daily management. If they exist in the area, MIDAs should use visitor centres and museums to highlight their international status, give background information on each designation and explain what these mean for site management and conservation at the local, national and global levels. Many visitor centres take pride in exhibiting their site's status as an internationally recognised area. Some even display the official certificates given to the area by the designating bodies such as in Jeju (Republic of Korea).

Ramsar, World Heritage, Biosphere Reserve and UNESCO Global Geopark certificates in Jeju Island (Republic of Korea)

The international designation bodies should also contribute to these efforts by developing branding and communication strategies that do not compete with each other but communicate the added value of each distinct designation.

3.2.15 One designation may eclipse the others

As mentioned in Section 3.2.14, sometimes not all the international logos (as well as background information on the designations) are displayed on-site. Some site managers and national focal points have reported that UNESCO designations bring more visibility and fame to a site and, therefore, UNESCO emblems are more often used than the Ramsar one (although in other sites and countries the opposite may also apply).

For example, the administration of the Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony National Park (Germany) has taken a deliberate decision to display only the trinational Wadden Sea logo (shared by Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands) and the World Heritage logo on their information brochures and interpretative panels, even though the Wadden Sea area of Lower Saxony also contains Ramsar Sites and a Biosphere Reserve. This decision was taken after lengthy deliberations to avoid overburdening promotional materials and information panels with a multitude of logos and consequently confusing visitors. The reasoning behind this decision is that an inflation of logos and information on the designations will dilute the more didactic messages they wish to transmit such as the occurrence of species or environmental processes that can be found on-site.

Case study 11. Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony (Germany): three Ramsar Sites, natural World Heritage site (shared by Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands), Biosphere Reserve

Location and main characteristics

The Wadden Sea is the largest unbroken system of intertidal sand and mud flats in the world. As for protected areas, the Wadden Sea covers the Dutch Wadden Sea Conservation Area, the German Wadden Sea National Parks of Hamburg, Lower Saxony and Schleswig-Holstein, and most of the Danish Wadden Sea Maritime Conservation Area. In this case study, the focus is primarily on the Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony (Germany), which comes under one single park administration.

Located at the northern fringes of the federal state of Lower Saxony in north-western Germany, this part of the Wadden Sea is home to more than 10,000 animal and plant species. The intertidal mudflats (which make up 50% of the site's surface area) are an extreme habitat as they are flooded twice a day with the changing tides. One square metre of mudflat may contain up to 100,000 shrimps, 100,000 snails, 20,000 young blue mussels or 50 thick mud worms which testifies to a higher production of biomass than in a tropical rainforest. Subtidal areas and gully systems account for 43% of the site and are important nurseries for fish and other marine animal species. Saltmarshes (4%) provide a home for 400 insect species that are dependent on 25 saltmarsh plant species, and are vital breeding habitats for many bird species. Dunes, beaches, bogs and heath areas are additional landscape elements, which ensure habitats for many plant and animal species. An average of 10–12 million migratory birds stop twice a year at the Wadden Sea. In essence, the Wadden Sea is one of the last remaining large-scale intertidal ecosystems where natural processes continue to function relatively undisturbed.

Aerial view of the Wadden Sea © Pedro Rosabal

National and international designations

The National Park of the Lower Saxony Wadden Sea was created in 1986, with a surface area of 240,000 ha. Several revisions of the National Park Act resulted in an extension of the site, with a total area of 346,000 ha since 2010. Preceding the nomination of the park, the Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony was already internationally recognised with three Ramsar Sites in 1976: the Wattenmeer, Elbe-Weser-Dreieck (38,460 ha), the Wattenmeer, Jadebusen & westliche Wesermündung (49,490 ha), and the Wattenmeer, Ostfriesisches Wattenmeer & Dollart (121,629 ha). In fact, the designation of the three Ramsar Sites paved the way

for the creation of the National Park. In 1992, came the designation of the Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony Biosphere Reserve, which has the same surface area as the National Park in 1986 (that is, 240,000 ha; however, an extension of the Biosphere Reserve into the terrestrial hinterland behind the dykes is currently being considered). Finally, the designation as a natural World Heritage site came into effect in 2009.

Waterbirds in the Wadden Sea © Pedro Rosabal

Aerial view © IUCN Wendy Strahm

Dealing with multiple international recognition

A Common Wadden Sea Secretariat was established in 1987 (in Wilhelmshaven, Germany) which promotes trilateral cooperation between Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands, for example, by organising regular trilateral governmental conferences on the protection of the Wadden Sea. The National Park administration is responsible for the day-to-day management of its international designations.

The multiplicity of logos to be showcased at the site is often confusing to tourists as the majority of visitors is usually unaware of the specific significance of each logo on information panels or promotional materials. Following long discussions with outreach experts and professional designers, it was decided to use only the trinational Wadden Sea logo and the World Heritage logo in publications and other information material – even at the risk of eclipsing the Ramsar and Biosphere Reserve designations for the public at large.

However, the National Park administration is well aware of the area's other international designations and does not wish to undermine the significance of Biosphere Reserve and Ramsar recognition. In 2015, the National Park started to prepare information brochures on the specific characteristics of these two denominations, thus complementing outreach and information activities for all international designations.

In other cases, sites received their international designations several decades ago and this recognition has simply shifted into oblivion at site level. Consequently, the logos of some designations are not – or no longer – displayed and explained in some MIDAs. This occurs despite the fact that nomination forms for all four international designations specifically request clarification on whether a proposed site has already been listed by another international designating body. For UNESCO Global Geoparks listing, for example, a letter of support from the national authorities in charge of the other international designations is required, together with a statement on how the various local and national institutions will collaborate at site level. If the UNESCO Global Geopark logo is not exhibited on-site but those of other international designations are, the site may run the risk of not being revalidated.

3.2.16 Dilution of the effectiveness of international designations

Ramsar Sites, World Heritage properties and Biosphere Reserves have been designated since the 1970s and UNESCO Global Geoparks since 2004, with more sites being added to the respective lists every year. Consequently, there are concerns as to whether an ever-increasing number of IDAs can lead to inflationary figures and – more importantly – a dilution of the effectiveness of the international designations.

The Ramsar Convention, the World Heritage Convention, the MAB Programme and IGGP with their governing bodies and respective secretariats have different approaches concerning a possible inflation of IDA numbers. The Ramsar Convention welcomes the on-going addition of new Ramsar Sites as they are considered to globally enhance the protection of sensitive wetlands and their wise use. The World Heritage Convention, on the other hand, has restricted the number of site nominations for World Heritage listing: only one cultural property and one natural property (or one cultural landscape) can be nominated for inclusion in the World Heritage List by each country every year. Moreover, and under the current rule, no more than 45 nominations for listing should be presented to the World Heritage Committee at its annual sessions, and often not all site nominations are approved.[44] For UNESCO Global Geopark designation, only two applications can be made per country per year. No such restrictions exist for Biosphere Reserves but the selection criteria have increased over the years to ensure that proposed sites fulfil the functions required for Biosphere Reserve listing. Over the last few years, only about 70–80% of proposed sites have been approved as Biosphere Reserves by the MAB-ICC.

With ever-growing numbers of Ramsar and UNESCO designated sites, the number of MIDAs is certain to grow accordingly. Ever inflating numbers of IDAs and MIDAs may give rise to brand confusion amongst Ramsar and UNESCO listed sites, and a loss of the distinctive roles of these different instruments. Care must be taken that IDAs and MIDAs retain their values as a selected set of places of global significance, and that the effectiveness of international designation is not diluted by a proliferation of listed sites or overlaps that do not add to overall conservation outcomes and the reinforcement of the work of the different IDAs.

44 IUCN has developed a number of thematic studies looking at limiting the number of natural World Heritage nominations to those most likely to be inscribed on the World Heritage List. See http://www.iucn.org/theme/world-heritage/resources/publications.

Part IV: Recommendations

4. Harmonising the management of MIDAs

In the previous chapters, the benefits and challenges brought to sites by multiple international designations were discussed, substantiated by a number of case studies. The main issue to be resolved is how the management of MIDAs can be enhanced to ensure long-term site conservation based on engaging with local communities and promoting sustainable development at large.

An improved MIDAs management system should be based on the complementarity and synergies of the different designations that apply to one area. Complementarity can only be achieved when two or more items have essentially different properties but in combination serve to accomplish the same overall goal. Synergy is the interaction of elements that produce a whole that is greater than the simple sum of its parts. The four international designations referenced in this Guidance have varying properties in terms of selection criteria, approaches and modalities of functioning. However, and more importantly, the four international designations have the potential to achieve synergy if they mutually reinforce each other in supporting enhanced environmental conservation and sustainable development.

In this chapter, a number of recommendations are put forward in order to harmonise the management of MIDAs. These are meant as guidance but it is up to the governing bodies of the four designating instruments – the Ramsar Conference of the Parties, the World Heritage Committee, the MAB-ICC, and the UNESCO Global Geoparks Council with their respective secretariats – to consider the recommendations and, if deemed appropriate, to take them on board.

The recommendations have been structured according to the different target groups at which they are aimed:

- site managers of MIDAs at the local level;
- focal points of the four designating instruments and stakeholders at the national level (ministries and affiliated national authorities, and other national stakeholders);
- decision-making bodies of the four international designating instruments and their respective secretariats at the international level.

4.1 Recommendations for site managers at the local level

Site managers of MIDAs have a larger portfolio than managers who are in charge of a nationally designated site or a site with only one international designation. In certain sites, they may be customary managers, traditional custodians, or private-sector and community-led bodies, reflecting the diversity of governance models for protected areas. Site managers of MIDAs may need to report to different national authorities and ministries, pending the prevailing structures and mandates of their parent authorities liaising with UNESCO and the Ramsar Convention. They need to be fully aware of the different objectives and requirements which each international designation entails, including reporting obligations, and they need to interact with local communities and to reach out to visitors through environmental education in order to showcase the values of the site's various international designations.

4.1.1 Improve staff capacity building

Site managers and the staff of their partners, as well as stakeholders and rightsholders, need to fully understand the similarities but also the different purposes and approaches of each international designation. While all four international designations essentially share the same goal – environmental conservation – there are indeed differences with regard to the specific aims of each designation. These different aims have an impact on site management for each designation. Management plans of MIDAs need to be fine-tuned and harmonised to accommodate the management and conservation objectives of the two, three or even four international designations a site might possess.

Many Ramsar and World Heritage sites as well as Biosphere Reserves were designated more than thirty years ago. Since their designation, new generations of site managers have come into office who may not always know the specific purposes of each designation or why a site has received multiple international designations in the past. In such cases, it would be useful to organise training courses for site managers, possibly at the national or regional levels, to inform them of the objectives, similarities and specificities

of each designation. Capacity building on the specific purposes of each designation and on how to adequately manage and conserve a site carrying multiple designations is key to accomplishing a harmonised management system.

Training and capacity-building activities for site managers on the specificities, similarities and potential for synergies of the four international designating instruments should be institutionalised as part of regular in-service training for protected area staff, as well as for other local stakeholders.

4.1.2 Create a joint coordination mechanism at site level for all international designations

One of the most important measures to improve and harmonise the management of MIDAs is to create an inter-institutional coordination mechanism at site level for all overlapping international designations. This mechanism would be in charge of: meeting reporting requirements for national authorities and international designating bodies; engaging local communities for site management discussions, benefit-sharing and awareness-raising purposes; securing funding from national and international sources for site conservation and management; leveraging a unified fund-flow mechanism for the MIDA; preparing information brochures, interpretive signboards, visitor walking trails and other environmental education materials and activities; and representing the site in the international arena for collaboration and knowledge-sharing purposes.

The joint coordination mechanism could also be responsible for keeping a centralised reporting register at site level that would archive the specific recommendations from the international experts assessing a site, and follow-up actions taken to respond to these recommendations and ensure site conservation. This is particularly relevant in the case of sites identified as damaged or in danger (e.g. UNESCO Global Geoparks that receive a yellow card during the revalidation process, Ramsar Sites listed under the Montreux Protocol, or sites listed on the List of World Heritage in Danger). In this way, when one designation is identified as being at risk, all the different institutions in charge of that MIDA would cooperate to address the problem at hand and collaborate on finding the most appropriate solution for it.

This joint coordination mechanism at site level should also have a certain degree of management and decision-making capacity in order to respond swiftly to potential cases of conflicts of interest among different designations. It should also be adapted to reflect the nature of the physical overlap between designations: where a MIDA has the same boundaries, or major overlaps are evident, undoubtedly having only one management unit for the whole range of designations would be the most effective. Where there are only limited overlaps, then the management mechanism should reflect both the overlapping areas of common concern, and the synergies that could come from coordinating the different IDA activities in a wider region or landscape.

Members of the joint coordination mechanism at site level could also forge collaboration with units of other MIDAs (including in different countries and regions) through twinning arrangements or even through a network of MIDAs. This would promote the exchange of information and lessons learned regarding specific issues related to the conservation and management of MIDAs.

To the extent possible, a joint coordination mechanism, with sufficient management and decision-making capacity, should be institutionalised at site level for all overlapping international designations. This mechanism would be in charge of harmonising the different objectives and requirements of a site's international designations.

4.1.3 Revise and update management plans

If a management plan (or other documented management system) already exists for a site, it is essential that the plan effectively reflects the objectives of the Ramsar, World Heritage, Biosphere Reserve and/or UNESCO Global Geopark designations.

When an area has become a MIDA, a new and consolidated single management plan should be developed and implemented. The single management plan for MIDAs should include common – or harmonised – strategies on achieving environmental conservation, promoting sustainable land use, fostering sustainable economic stimuli (such as ecotourism, production and marketing of local sustainable products, organic agriculture), joint outreach to local communities, and environmental education and awareness raising. As in Recommendation 4.1.2 concerning a joint coordination mechanism, the area's management plan should reflect the nature of the physical overlap between designations: a MIDA with major designation overlaps will require a different management scheme from a MIDA with only marginal overlaps.

The World Heritage Centre has prepared a number of materials in this regard which could also be useful for the other three designations, such as the publication *Enhancing our Heritage Toolkit – Assessing management effectiveness of natural World Heritage sites*.[45]

45 See http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/23.

IUCN has also prepared a compendium textbook, *Protected Area Governance and Management*, with the purpose of providing highly accessible and relevant information to underpin competent, effective and professional management decisions for protected areas, which might prove extremely useful for revising management plans.[46]

If an area has obtained multiple international designations, a new coherent and single management plan should be worked out (or updated if it already exists) to accommodate all the objectives and requirements of the respective international designations.

4.1.4 Engage with and respect the rights of local communities and indigenous peoples

The gazetting of new protected areas (as well as IDAs and MIDAs), particularly if done in a top-down manner, may meet with resistance or objection from local communities. Some economic activities may no longer be allowed with designation, and even when these areas have been gazetted for decades, damaging activities such as encroachment, expansion of agriculture, poaching, illegal logging, among others, remain a problem in all regions of the world. Perceived or real land-use restrictions may lead to negative reactions from local communities. These concerns should be addressed and livelihood loss due to designation may require adequate compensation and the establishment of alternative benefit streams and agreements.

Several site managers have reported that having multiple international designations has facilitated site conservation practices. When a site is designated not by one but several international organisations, this contributes to local communities more easily recognising the unique values that their area has – not only at the local and national levels but also in the global arena. Delight and pride brought by multiple international designations are qualitative assets that must not be underestimated, as they encourage people to identify with their place of origin and their natural environment. Thus, multiple designations significantly increase the potential for awareness raising and engaging local communities in site conservation and sustainable development. If visitor numbers increase as a result of multiple international designation and enhanced global visibility, and alternative employment and livelihood opportunities come to the fore, local community support will become ever stronger.

Engagement with local communities, and especially indigenous peoples, must also include actual and concrete sharing of responsibilities and benefits deriving from site conservation. In the light of global policy developments and research, including those of the rights-based approaches to conservation and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing adopted by the CBD,[47] communities must have a more profound role in the planning and management of conservation areas, becoming partners and meaningfully involved in management through various governance mechanisms, as well as receiving concrete benefits from conservation. This will lead to management effectiveness and improved governance of conservation areas, including IDAs and MIDAs.

It is essential that nominations and all other IDA processes observe the principle of FPIC when considering the rights of indigenous peoples, in line with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.[48] Regarding World Heritage, local communities and indigenous peoples should be involved in the site nomination process at its earliest stages and not only once the site is inscribed on the World Heritage List, as stated in Paragraph 123 of the Operational Guidelines:

> *Participation in the nomination process of local communities, indigenous peoples, governmental, non-governmental and private organizations and other stakeholders is essential to enable them to have a shared responsibility with the State Party in the maintenance of the property. States Parties are encouraged to prepare nominations with the widest possible participation of stakeholders and to demonstrate, as appropriate, that the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples has been obtained, through, inter alia making the nominations publicly available in appropriate languages and public consultations and hearings.*

The engagement of communities is a prerequisite for ensuring long-term conservation, and MIDAs should demonstrate the highest standards and quality of practice in this regard, including where appropriate, empowering governance through community-led, community co-managed or private sector governance models for protected areas. For more information on governance of protected areas, IUCN has issued the publication *Governance of Protected Areas: From understanding to action* as part of IUCN's Best Practice Protected Area Guidelines Series.[49] This publication aims to enhance governance diversity and quality for the world's protected area systems and consequently is a useful tool for the planning of IDAs and MIDAs.

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46 See https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/45127.

47 The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the CBD (2014) is an international agreement which aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way. See https://www.cbd.int/abs/.

48 See http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf.

49 See https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/29138.

Local communities and indigenous peoples should be fully engaged and participate in the planning and management of MIDAs through various governance mechanisms, as well as receiving concrete benefits from site conservation. All MIDA processes should observe the principle of free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) when considering the rights of indigenous peoples.

4.1.5 Promote communication, education and awareness raising

All four international designations place a strong emphasis on environmental education as well as on education for sustainable development at large, and this is usually an essential mandate for site managers working with local communities, visitors and other stakeholders.

For several years, Ramsar's work programme on Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness (CEPA)[50] has been promoting the vision of "people taking action for the wise use of wetlands" by targeting people in general, governments at all levels, international and regional organisations, the business sector, and the education sector and learning institutions (Ramsar Resolution X.8, 2008). Developed in 1998 and available in 37 languages, the *World Heritage in Young Hands Educational Resources Kit*[51] for secondary school teachers is one of the main tools of the World Heritage Education Programme, aimed at sensitising young people to the importance of preserving their local, national and world heritage. Two of the 31 targets in the Madrid Action Plan for Biosphere Reserves relate to education. One target promotes Biosphere Reserves as learning sites of excellence for sustainable development within the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) programmes, in conjunction with education and research institutions. The other target fosters the exchange of educational resources for widespread adaptation and application. For a UNESCO Global Geopark to obtain revalidation every four years, an entire section (out of five sections in total) in the Evaluation/ Revalidation Form is dedicated to information and environmental education.

The *Management Manual for UNESCO Biosphere Reserves in Africa* (German Commission for UNESCO) underlines the importance of education and public relations as ways of involving local communities, and is applicable to all four site designations:

> *Environmental education should have the following results: children, youth and adults should understand how ecosystems and the environment function. And more importantly, they should adopt suitable behaviour such as to minimize negative impacts on the environment. Environmental education is clearly not limited to the school system; in fact, protected areas and biosphere reserves are ideal places for environmental education. Environmental education is clearly not limited to materials such as books and brochures; actually, outdoor and experiential education is an ideal form of environmental education.*

The preparation of environmental education programmes for indoor and outdoor activities is a lengthy and costly exercise as it involves conservation practitioners, environmental scientists, education experts and professional designers to create awareness-raising activities and related teaching materials on the environment at large. Rather than using a fragmentary approach for each designation that a MIDA has, it would be more economical to work out educational programmes that pool efforts under the four designations. Where different national authorities are in charge of a MIDA, joint funding could be pooled to raise communication and education profiles for the same site. The GEF,[52] for example, is increasingly interested in funding activities that address synergies and more coordinated and coherent implementation of several multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs).

Communication, education and awareness-raising programmes regarding the environment should be showcased in MIDAs, by site managers and responsible national authorities, combining their resources and expertise to promote the multi-faceted recognition of the area.

4.1.6 Manage tourism and visitor numbers

Tourism operators often respond to site branding. With several forms of international recognition given to an area, promotion of a site for ecotourism (and sometimes more general tourism) purposes can increase significantly. Most sites recognised under the four designations are located in scenic natural areas with an abundance of wildlife, geology and/or magnificent landscapes. Entrance fees can help generate income for site management, including to cover running costs such as staff salaries and site-relevant infrastructure (such as observation towers, demarcation and maintenance of trails, visitor centres), but these can also be re-invested into the local communities.

50 See http://whc.unesco.org/en/series/23.
51 See http://whc.unesco.org/en/educationkit/.
52 See https://www.thegef.org/gef/.

Tourism – and especially sustainable tourism – creates employment for local communities in the service industry. Opportunities for operating hotels and guesthouses, food services, marketing sustainable and locally produced food and handicrafts, and guided tours and other outdoor recreation activities offered by private operators are among some of the assets of international recognition. The Biosphere Reserve and UNESCO Global Geopark designations especially are often used as sustainable economic instruments for stimulating local and regional development in remote and structurally weak areas of a country.

The joint marketing of the different international designations in a coherent manner should be a clear asset of MIDAs, although its full potential is not always realised. There is still much room for improvement in promoting the different designations (and as a consequence the site values they represent) such as through information materials, activities and services showcasing the specific characteristics of a site (wildlife, geological features, aesthetic beauty of a landscape, etc.); past and on-going environmental processes occurring on-site; or indigenous and traditional knowledge and livelihoods and cultural traditions. Even greater synergy in attracting and educating visitors could come to the fore if the different authorities in charge of a MIDA, and the local and national tourism operators, joined efforts in promoting the site in a coherent manner, highlighting the specificities of each designation.

At the same time, it should be stressed that tourism can only bring sustainable and long-term economic benefits to an area and its local communities if the site's conservation and environmental integrity is safeguarded. The accumulation of international designations can raise an area's degree of fame, for example by being more publicised in tourist guidebooks and other types of media, which in turn can attract more visitors to the site. Care must be taken to ensure that an area's environmental carrying capacity is not overburdened. This can be done with appropriate visitor management schemes (such as spatial and temporal control of visitor numbers) or by applying construction and development restrictions where needed. Therefore, local authorities and stakeholders should develop and implement sustainable tourism strategies that regulate and take into account issues like site accessibility, tourist accommodation, infrastructure, branding, licensing of tourist activity providers, etc.

Visitor numbers should be adequately managed, and sustainable tourism strategies and plans should be developed and implemented in order to safeguard the conservation and environmental integrity of a MIDA. Tourism activities should be fully compatible with the conservation objectives of all the different designations that apply to the area.

4.1.7 Develop and display branding that transmits the site's values

Site branding is often considered as one of the main motivations for obtaining one or more international designations. However, many people are not aware of the significance of the different designations. Notice-boards and information panels should carry the logos of all the international designations the site carries, and preferably they should be displayed jointly on one single board or panel. If a visitor centre exists, the logos should be displayed both outside (at the entrance gate) and inside the centre. This would ensure that one international designation does not overshadow the others which have been given to the site.

UNESCO's supreme governing bodies, the General Conference and its Executive Board, recommend the use of the UNESCO (temple) emblem in conjunction with the site-specific logo (the World Heritage logo, the MAB logo for Biosphere Reserves and/or the UNESCO Global Geoparks logo). However, according to the new World Heritage branding guidance,[53] allowances are made for the separate use of the World Heritage logo. The revalidation of a UNESCO Global Geopark every four years also depends on proper on-site branding displays as well as relevant information materials and other Geopark-related products.

Yet, in terms of branding, what is even more important than displaying the different logos, is successfully translating the site's values, which were recognised by the international designations, into appropriate and sustainable tourism, and information products and activities which can transmit these values and educate visitors.

The branding of a MIDA should successfully translate the site's values into appropriate and sustainable tourism and information products and activities, which can transmit these values and educate visitors. Additionally, the logos and significance of each international designation should be clearly displayed and explained on site.

4.1.8 Use visitor centres to raise awareness of international designations

The public at large does not always understand the significances of Ramsar and World Heritage sites, Biosphere Reserves or UNESCO Global Geoparks. Visitor centres have the function of providing information and interpretation of an area's specific natural and cultural features. Therefore, visitor centres are the ideal places to showcase that an area is not only important for conservation at the local and

53 Annex 14 of the *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, as adopted by the World Heritage Committee at its 39th session in Bonn, 2015.

national level, but also in the international arena as testified by their international recognition through the Ramsar and World Heritage conventions, the MAB Programme and/or the IGGP.

When a site presents several international designations, it is recommended that a specific section of the local visitor centre, if there is one, be dedicated to raising awareness of the public to the values of the area at the global scale. This should include information on the specific purposes and approaches of each international designation, as well as their networking functions (e.g. depicting regional and global maps of listed sites under the respective networks, or twinning arrangements between sites with the same designation) and the benefits that they bring to the area. Moreover, the various designations should be explained in an informative and easy-to-understand manner.

It should also be noted that environmental education activities on-site should be geared towards reaching the objectives for which a site has been listed under the various designations.

Visitor centres and educational activities should be used to raise awareness amongst local communities, the general public and decision makers, in an easily understandable manner, of the site's various forms of international recognition and the primary objectives of each designation.

4.2 Recommendations for authorities and focal points at the national level

Authorities at the national level are usually the primary decision makers for proposing sites to be nominated as IDAs. Their designation focal points liaise with the individual sites on the one hand and the secretariats of the designating bodies on the other, thus ensuring information flow from the secretariats to site managers and *vice versa*. They are expected to inform site managers of decisions made by the designating bodies at the global level for subsequent implementation at the site level. They should also inform the secretariats of the designating bodies when sites are facing serious conservation threats and challenges. In fact, representatives of national environmental, scientific or cultural authorities usually participate in meetings of the designating bodies and help shape policy decisions regarding IDAs. The following recommendations address the duties of national authorities and their designation focal points, as well as other stakeholders, regarding management of MIDAs at the national level. A key point across all these recommendations is that establishing a MIDA is not always a good strategy, and should not be sought without very careful prior reflection on costs versus added value. In particular, investment in a new designation should not be done at the expense of the effective implementation of an already existing designation.

4.2.1 Choose the most appropriate international designation

Accumulating a variety of different international designations is often a matter of global prestige. But does a site really need all these designations? What is the specific value of the area? In which respect would one international designation have a comparative advantage over the other international designations, making it better suited for the respective site and its local communities? Would a more focused approach be better for maintaining the special character of the area?

These questions should be asked and discussed carefully prior to embarking on preparing often costly international nomination proposals and dossiers. Sometimes, the staff time and financial resources used for this exercise could be better spent to bolster the conservation and management of the existing site with only one international designation. This would also sharpen the profile of specific values for which an area has been recognised in the international arena and thus help fine-tune branding and marketing strategies and opportunities, such as for local sustainable tourism. Interesting geological features in UNESCO Global Geoparks are not necessarily visible in Ramsar wetlands of international importance. A World Heritage site is only approved if it presents an outstanding value for the whole of humankind, while Biosphere Reserves are meant to be representative areas of major biogeographic regions and platforms for participatory management. Therefore, establishing a MIDA is not always advantageous. National authorities and other stakeholders should carry out a careful reflection on the benefits versus challenges and on costs versus added value of pursuing new international designations. In particular, investment in a new designation should not be done at the expense of the effective implementation of an already existing designation.

Establishing a MIDA is not necessarily advantageous for a site so these should only be created with careful consideration. National authorities should first focus their attention on the specific comparative advantage that a site could receive according to the profile of each designation. Choosing the most appropriate designation for a site should aim to contribute to improving its management effectiveness and governance arrangements, as well as sharpening the appropriate branding and marketing profile of the area.

4.2.2 Assess the added value of international designations

Several site managers and national delegates or representatives point out that some international designations have more value than others. The fact is that all international designations, thanks to their specific profiles and if managed appropriately, have the potential to add value to each other in some circumstances, and to act synergistically to enhance site protection and management. However, such added value needs to be carefully considered and be based on the combined special characteristics and focus of each international designation.

Ramsar Sites promote the concept of the wise use of wetlands. They are not protected areas as such, although many contain or are located within conservation areas. Rather, Ramsar wetlands and their resources can be used if such use is practised wisely. The Ramsar Convention was, and still is, a landmark agreement in shaping thinking on how to strictly protect natural resources versus sustainably use natural resources for the benefit of communities. Since its inception in the early 1970s, the Ramsar idea continues to have essential conceptual ramifications for all other international designations.

Natural World Heritage properties, thanks to their evidenced outstanding universal value, are the most emblematic natural sites around the world. Their prestige highlights the significance of an area in the global arena. However, even more important in the Convention is the requirement that a State Party takes the appropriate legal, scientific, technical, administrative and financial measures necessary for the protection and rehabilitation of its heritage, and that all States Parties recognise that such heritage constitutes world heritage for whose protection it is the duty of the international community as a whole to cooperate. Financial assistance provided by the World Heritage Fund and World Heritage campaigns in special emergency cases to restore degraded sites is an essential factor for safeguarding environmental integrity. When an area carries not only the World Heritage recognition but also other international designations, financial provisions made available thanks to the World Heritage title are certainly beneficial for all other designations in terms of site conservation as well as global visibility.

In the early days of the MAB Programme, **Biosphere Reserves** were meant for the conservation of natural areas and the genetic material they contain; moreover, they served as important research areas for scientists to study ecosystem processes and interactions of people with their environment. In the wake of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), Biosphere Reserves then promoted the sustainable development concept by encouraging innovative ways to harmonise environmental conservation with economic development. In particular, the zonation pattern of a Biosphere Reserve into a core area (legally protected for long-term biodiversity conservation), a buffer zone (surrounding or contiguous to the core area(s) where only activities compatible with conservation objectives can take place) and an outer transition area (where sustainable resource use practices are promoted and developed) has become a blueprint for integrated and holistic conservation and sustainable development approaches. Most modern site management plans are inspired by the zonation pattern of Biosphere Reserves and can be useful in planning and managing Ramsar Sites, World Heritage properties and UNESCO Global Geoparks.

UNESCO Global Geoparks, with their relatively novel concept, value (often neglected) geological heritage by promoting awareness of key issues facing society in the context of the dynamic planet we live on. UNESCO Global Geoparks are meant to inform about the sustainable use and need for natural resources, whether they are mined, quarried or harnessed from the surrounding environment, and other issues like geoprocesses and geohazards. In this regard, they play an important role in environmental education in the context of geotourism. Yet, UNESCO Global Geoparks are not just about geology. While they showcase geological heritage of international significance, their purpose is to explore, develop and celebrate the links between that geological heritage and all other aspects of the area's natural, cultural and intangible heritage. In this regard, UNESCO Global Geoparks transcend a purely geological perspective by encompassing an all-inclusive earth-human nexus, which is also reflected in various mixed World Heritage sites and cultural landscapes, Biosphere Reserves and Ramsar Sites.

Nomination forms for the proposal of new sites under the four international designations contain sections asking if a proposed site is already listed under any of the other designations. At the local level, but more particularly at the national level, evidence should be provided that all relevant authorities and stakeholders have agreed – through a consultative process and based on a consensus decision – that one or several additional international designations do indeed provide a complementary and added value to an already existing one. Such a consensus decision taken by all relevant national stakeholders, particularly those in charge of Ramsar and/or UNESCO designated sites, should be clearly documented in the nomination dossier.

Thanks to their specific profiles, international designations have the potential to add value to each other in some circumstances, and to act synergistically to enhance site protection and management. However, such added value needs to be carefully considered, and so, for new designation proposals, evidence should be provided of such added value. Any additional international designation(s) should be agreed upon by all relevant national stakeholders.

4.2.3 Monitor designation effectiveness

Do these four international designations actually help in the conservation of sites? Obtaining international recognition from the Ramsar Convention and UNESCO just for tourism purposes should never be the primary motivation for international designation, even if it singles out a site in the global arena. The main purpose of the four designations is to demonstrate that a site fulfils the criteria of enhanced conservation, environmental integrity, sustainable resource use, environmental education, and engagement and benefit sharing with local communities. The provision of international titles implies a recognition that local and national efforts have helped to create a site that is a model of environmental conservation and sustainable development.

In the case of MIDAs, national (and local) authorities should critically assess if each designation effectively contributes to reaching the goals for which an area has been internationally recognised, pending the respective purposes of the four designation instruments. Accumulating international designations just for the sake of enhancing site prestige will lead to an inflation of titles. Even worse, the specific profile of each designation will become diluted at site level and outreach efforts describing the values of the area will be weakened.

The responsible national authorities should critically assess if each international designation of a MIDA effectively helps the area in its efforts to enhance environmental conservation, sustainable development and resource use, and engagement and benefit sharing with local communities.

4.2.4 Improve coordination and information sharing among different authorities

Where different national authorities are in charge of specific international designations in the same area, inter-institutional coordination among the respective national authorities should be fostered, to share information and harmonise the management of the area. Where such coordination does not exist, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) between the different authorities could provide the appropriate platform for collaborative work. Annual or biannual meetings between representatives and focal points of the different national authorities and other relevant stakeholders will not only facilitate information exchange, but will also help to achieve joint and harmonised reporting following the reporting requirements of the four international designation instruments. Establishing a good internal governance system for MIDAs will prevent duplication of efforts and expenses and, consequently, help to focus attention on the synergies that international designations can bring to a site. In the case of UNESCO designated sites, the UNESCO National Commissions could play a coordinating role in this respect.

Several countries have concentrated the focal point functions for different international designations within the same national institution, or even the same person/position. For example in Mexico, there is one person who is the focal point for sites listed under the World Heritage Convention and the UNESCO MAB Programme, and another focal point for the Ramsar Convention, but both are part of the same institution – the National Commission of Natural Protected Areas of Mexico. In Germany, the secretariat for the national MAB Committee is hosted by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (a subsidiary body of the Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety), while the same agency is also in charge of advising the federal ministry on Ramsar Sites and natural sites of the World Heritage Convention.

When MIDAs are the responsibility of different national authorities, they should ensure an adequate and effective coordination structure for enhanced site management, information sharing and reporting. Assigning focal point functions for Ramsar and UNESCO designated sites to a single national institution could prevent duplication of efforts and expenses, and should be sought where possible.

4.2.5 Align conservation policies and institutional mechanisms across different regions and countries

Some MIDAs are very large and can span different provinces or states within the same country (for example, the Mata Atlântica Biosphere Reserve in Brazil covers over 29 million ha and contains Ramsar as well as World Heritage sites). In these cases, the alignment of environmental and site conservation policies should be ensured, especially when different provinces and states have disparate environmental policies in place, sometimes subject to the political colour of the respective government. This can be the case in countries with a federal governance system where environmental affairs are often the prerogative of individual states or provinces.

When MIDAs are transboundary sites between two, three or even more countries, aligning policies is even more important, and regular coordination meetings among the various representatives and focal points should become the rule.

The UNESCO MAB Programme has developed recommendations for the establishment and functioning of transboundary biosphere reserves. The principles of these recommendations can also apply to large MIDAs located in different administrative provinces or

states of the same country, and may also be of interest to the other three international designations. These recommendations propose, among other things: the signing of an official agreement between the different governmental authorities; the creation of a coordination structure with a permanent secretariat; and the establishment of regular means of communication between the coordinators/managers of the different parts of the transboundary site.[54]

IUCN's publication *Transboundary Conservation: A systematic and integrated approach*[55] makes a compelling case for transboundary conservation approaches and promotes an array of innovative methods based on contemporary principles. It was developed primarily to provide transboundary conservation managers with advice on how to work more effectively and how to address the challenges that are specific to transboundary conservation.

In the case of transboundary MIDAs, or MIDAs spanning different administrative provinces or states within the same country, aligned environmental and site conservation policies and institutional mechanisms should be sought between the different responsible authorities.

4.2.6 Ensure an effective legal framework on MIDAs

Some countries which have ratified the Ramsar Convention and the World Heritage Convention have set up legal provisions in their national laws and regulations with regard to areas designated under these two international instruments. However, this is not necessarily the case for Biosphere Reserves, as only a few countries have embarked on defining legal regulations governing Biosphere Reserves. To the authors' knowledge, no such regulations exist as yet for UNESCO Global Geoparks.

Although this may be a long-term process, countries with, or planning to seek, IDAs and MIDAs should consider the stipulation of an effective legal framework for such sites at the national level. A first step would be to define rules and regulations for Biosphere Reserves and UNESCO Global Geoparks in compliance with national legislation. In a second step, a harmonised legal framework for MIDAs should be worked out. In doing so, a coherent approach for the conservation and management of MIDAs could be ensured. Such a framework should also address connectivity issues, linking sites with wider protected and conserved area networks, and collaborative corrective action by different national authorities when one designation is identified as being at risk.

Where possible, these frameworks should support the implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs),[56] the principal instruments for implementing the CBD at the national level.

IUCN's *Guidelines for Protected Areas Legislation*[57] could be useful in this process, as they are particularly aimed at legal drafters working closely with protected areas authorities as well as others involved in the legislative process.

States with, or planning to seek, IDAs and MIDAs should establish an effective and harmonised legal framework for such sites at the national level to ensure coherence in their conservation and management.

4.2.7 Establish coordinated fundraising efforts

International recognition of a site appeals to donors for a number of reasons including the following:[58]

- Long-term stable, legal and administrative frameworks;
- One or several management units which can be held accountable;
- A clear set of multi-dimensional goals formulated in the management plan (especially if one coherent management plan exists for all different designations);
- A culture of local community participation (especially required by Biosphere Reserves and UNESCO Global Geoparks);
- Adaptive site management based on periodic reviews and reporting;
- Greater global visibility in case of emerging problems or threats.

54 UNESCO (2001). *Seville+5 Recommendations for the Establishment and Functioning of Transboundary Biosphere Reserves*. Paris, France: UNESCO.
55 See https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/45173.
56 See https://www.cbd.int/nbsap/.
57 See https://portals.iucn.org/library/node/9869.
58 German Commission for UNESCO (2015). *Management Manual for UNESCO Biosphere Reserves in Africa. A Practical Guide for Managers*. Bonn, Germany: German Commission for UNESCO.

Coupling environmental and conservation efforts with fostering local and regional sustainable development in structurally weak regions opens the door to private, bilateral and multilateral funding sources and complements financial provisions from national sources. Most developed countries have the focus area of environmental conservation (often under the umbrella of climate change and biodiversity) in their Official Development Aid (ODA) portfolios. Multilateral funding mechanisms (such as the GEF) invest in Ramsar and UNESCO designated sites, and provide support for the preparation of nomination dossiers for World Heritage and Biosphere Reserve listing. Many private foundations and international NGOs also sponsor Ramsar and UNESCO designated sites. In some cases, the secretariats of the four international designations have even forged partnership agreements with the private sector to support the functioning of specific sites or to foster collaboration among the respective site-specific networks. Finally, multi-bi-lateral funds-in-trust agreements implemented by UN bodies, and IUCN for example, and the relatively new modality of private-public partnerships, are additional funding options for the enhanced conservation and management of environmentally significant areas.

In this way, site management teams and national authorities can benefit from the different layers of international recognition in securing additional funding from external sources. Proposals to fund programmes and projects in MIDAs through any of the above-mentioned funding mechanisms can be greatly enriched if they are formulated in such a way that all values under each international designation are emphasised. Therefore, the various authorities in charge of a MIDA should establish coordinated fundraising efforts, in which the conservation goals and requirements of all international designations of the site are taken into account.

National authorities and site managers in charge of MIDAs should actively use the complementarity of international recognition to secure external financial support needed for enhanced site management and conservation. These fundraising efforts should be coordinated and should take into account the conservation objectives of all international site designations.

4.2.8 Use expertise from different supporting communities

Each international designation attracts a different supporting community. In the case of the Ramsar Convention, it was often the birdwatching community and wetland experts which lobbied to have a site recognised. This is reflected in the convention's original title: *Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat.* Moreover, BirdLife International and Wetlands International are among the five NGOs affiliated to the Ramsar Convention Panel as IOPs. As regards natural World Heritage sites, environmental conservationists perceived a need to enlist natural properties because of their outstanding universal value, and in particular to safeguard the integrity of a site's unique characteristics for future generations. Nominations for Biosphere Reserves were mostly driven by the scientific community which needed well-conserved areas for the study of the structure, functioning and dynamics of ecosystems, research on the interactions between people and their natural environment, and a global platform for joint study programmes using Biosphere Reserves as research sites. Finally, UNESCO Global Geoparks were promoted by the geological community to value geological heritage and to sensitise the public to Earth's geological history and the evolution of life.

In the course of time, the original purposes of each designating instrument (especially the three older ones, that is, the Ramsar and the World Heritage conventions and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves) converged to a large degree towards similar objectives: conservation and sustainable development. Nevertheless, the four instruments still retain their specific constituencies and supporters. The pooling of expertise of these different communities – ornithologists and wetland experts, geologists, environmental conservationists, education experts and natural and social scientists – is certainly beneficial for the conservation and sound management of a site, including the sustainable use of its natural resources. As environmental processes can never be entirely understood through sectoral approaches alone, inter- and transdisciplinary expert teams are needed to address environmental and societal concerns and find solutions to the challenges faced by MIDAs.

National authorities in charge of MIDAs should ensure that the great variety of expertise of the different communities supporting each designation is jointly shared, in an inter- and transdisciplinary manner, to the benefit of site conservation, management and educational activities.

4.3 Recommendations for the designating bodies at the international level

The governing bodies of the Ramsar Convention, the World Heritage Convention, the MAB Programme and the IGGP decide on the policies of the four international site-designating instruments and their modalities of application. The four secretariats are requested to ensure implementation of policy decisions taken by their governing bodies. The following recommendations are meant for consideration by the governing bodies of the Ramsar and UNESCO designating instruments, their advisory bodies and the four global secretariats so as to help harmonise the conservation and management of MIDAs.

4.3.1 Improve coordination and information exchange among the designating bodies

UNESCO houses its three secretariats in the same building, which greatly facilitates coordination efforts. Consultations among these three secretariats regarding World Heritage properties, Biosphere Reserves and UNESCO Global Geoparks take place on an ad hoc basis as and when the need arises. However, it would be useful to formalise the coordination among the four secretariats, including the Ramsar Secretariat, either by updating existing agreements or by preparing a new overall framework agreement.

A MoU between Ramsar and the World Heritage Centre was signed in 1999 with the objective "to cooperate with a view to enabling the Contracting Parties to the Conventions to identify and strengthen conservation of those sites of international importance which are recognized by both Conventions."[59] Ramsar has also developed a Programme of Joint Work (PJW) with UNESCO's MAB Programme. The latest version of this programme was agreed by the MAB Council in October 2004 and by the Ramsar Standing Committee in February 2005. On the Ramsar website, it is possible to find the earlier version of the programme agreed by Ramsar in December 2001 and by MAB in May 2002.[60] However, the 2004–5 version had a theoretical end-date of 2010 so the general status of this cooperation (as with UNESCO) would merit review.

According to the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016–2025, provisions are made for cooperation between the Ramsar Convention and other MEAs. For example, paragraph 32 stipulates synergies as a priority area of focus as follows: "Enhancing efforts to streamline procedures and processes including reporting and to facilitate data sharing amongst parties responsible for – or cooperating in – the implementation of this and other MEAs and related agreements. Through cooperation, aim to increase the identification of synergies with collaborating MEAs and other international processes at national and global levels" (Ramsar COP12 Resolution XII.2, Annex, paragraph 32).

A renewed framework agreement or an overall Memorandum of Understanding between Ramsar and UNESCO could improve coordination mechanisms among the four designating instruments. This would not only update existing bilateral agreements (i.e. between Ramsar and the World Heritage Centre, and between Ramsar and the MAB Programme) but also include UNESCO Global Geoparks. A few suggestions on the contents of such an agreement are indicated in the recommendations below.

UNESCO and the Ramsar Convention are also part of the Biodiversity Liaison Group[61] – a Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions set up by the Parties to the CBD. The aim of the group is to enhance coherence and cooperation in implementation, and to explore opportunities for synergistic activities and increased coordination. UNEP is also involved in this effort,[62] and currently facilitates the MEA Information and Knowledge Management Initiative[63] which brings together several MEAs to develop harmonised information systems for the benefit of the Parties and the environmental community at large. At the moment, this initiative covers the following MEAs: CBD, Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the Ramsar Convention and the World Heritage Convention.

The four designating bodies in charge of Ramsar and UNESCO designated sites should review existing cooperation agreements and, where appropriate, update these to ensure complementary support for the benefit of MIDAs.

4.3.2 Hold regular meetings among the secretariats

Regular joint meetings, at least on an annual basis, should be instituted among the four global secretariats. These could serve to assess new overlapping sites for inclusion in a joint database of MIDAs (see also Recommendation 4.3.4). More importantly, the joint meetings could serve to assess the state of conservation of MIDAs facing significant damage or danger such as Ramsar Sites listed in the Montreux Record and World Heritage properties listed in the List of World Heritage Sites in Danger. Here, ways could be explored on how to assist countries to improve their sites' state of conservation in collaboration with the Contracting Parties (Ramsar Convention), States Parties (World Heritage Convention), MAB National Committees or National Geopark Committees. This could be done through joint fundraising and mobilising experts for technical and scientific advice for the benefit of such critical sites.

Indeed, these meetings should go beyond the purpose of sharing information, and serve as forums for discussing and developing joint policies, projects and activities focused on training opportunities for site managers, local community engagement, and research on common threats affecting sites, among other issues. These discussions should also ensure consideration of the cultural values of MIDAs, where relevant, in view of the connections that all the international designating instruments seek to establish between nature and culture.

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59 See http://archive.ramsar.org/cda/en/ramsar-documents-mous-ramsar-mou-with-the/main/ramsar/1-31-115%5E21517_4000_0__.

60 See http://archive.ramsar.org/cda/es/ramsar-documents-mous-moc-mab/main/ramsar/1-31-115%5E25271_4000_2__.

61 See https://www.cbd.int/blg/.

62 UNEP (2015). *Sourcebook of Opportunities for Enhancing Cooperation among the Biodiversity-related Conventions at National and Regional Levels*. Nairobi, Kenya: United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

63 See http://informea.org/.

The four secretariats should hold regular, at least annual, joint meetings for information exchange, maintenance of a joint MIDAs database, provision of support for sites facing significant damage or danger, and discussion of other coordinated policies, projects and activities.

4.3.3 Participate in governing meetings of the designating bodies

To the extent possible, Bureau members of the governing bodies and representatives of each global secretariat as well as relevant advisory bodies should also participate in the governing meetings of the other designating bodies. This would ensure that all governing bodies and secretariats are informed on decisions emanating from these meetings as these decisions can have important policy impacts on overlapping Ramsar and UNESCO designated sites.

Several delegates and institutional representatives of national authorities attending meetings of the governing bodies of the Ramsar and UNESCO-site-based instruments have double (sometimes even triple) focal point functions for any combination of designations regarding the Ramsar Convention, the World Heritage Convention, the World Network of Biosphere Reserves and the Global Geoparks Network. Therefore, there are already overlapping positions and functions among the participants of these meetings that the process of harmonising MIDAs policy and conservation could profit from. Decisions of each governing body shape policies of IDAs and as such have an impact on MIDAs. Policy decisions emanating from the four governing bodies should take into account how site conservation and management, sustainable development, engagement and benefit sharing with local communities, and environmental education, among other issues, could be streamlined and harmonised in a coherent manner for MIDAs.

Participation of representatives of each designating body (including their secretariats and relevant advisory bodies) in meetings of the governing bodies of all four international instruments is recommended, in order to increase information flow and coherence on policy decisions affecting MIDAs.

4.3.4 Maintain an up-to-date list of MIDAs

Regular updating and maintenance of an online list or database of all MIDAs recognised by the international designating bodies will increase visibility of these sites at the global level. It will also help to promote collaboration among the designating bodies and even among sites.

All four international secretariats maintain online lists of sites recognised by their respective designating instruments. On a bilateral basis, some also maintain specific lists on sites which totally or partially overlap with other international designations; however these are not always updated. The MIDAs List (appended as Annex 2 to this Guidance) could be used on the websites of all four designating instruments. This would be in line with the clearing-house function of all secretariats. The secretariats could work out a specific protocol on the maintenance and updating of the consolidated list of MIDAs in a joint database. Ideally, updating the list would take place in the second half of a given year, since new World Heritage sites, Biosphere Reserves and UNESCO Global Geoparks are usually designated between April-July (while new Ramsar Sites are listed on an ad hoc basis without a specific annual deadline).

As an already existing tool, the *Ramsar Sites Information Service* website[64] can be used to display lists of Ramsar Sites overlapping with World Heritage sites and with Biosphere Reserves (using the "Statutory designation taxonomy" filter).

Another existing tool is the BiosphereSmart portal.[65] BiosphereSmart is a global observatory created to share ideas, knowledge, good practices, and experiences among Biosphere Reserves on issues related to climate change, green economies, and sustainable development. The interactive website displays the location of biosphere reserves and their spatial zonations, along with overlaps with World Heritage sites, Ramsar Sites and UNESCO Global Geoparks.

Finally, the Protected Planet website[66] is the online interface for the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA), a joint project of IUCN and UNEP-WCMC. It is considered the most comprehensive global database of terrestrial and marine protected areas and features Ramsar Sites, World Heritage sites and Biosphere Reserves. Ideally, the list of MIDAs would be integrated within the WDPA so as to incorporate MIDAs information with this already very well known and well used platform.

The joint creation and maintenance of an online list of MIDAs, ideally integrated within the IUCN/UNEP-WCMC World Database on Protected Areas, is recommended as a basic requirement for collaboration, and is consistent with the clearing-house function of the four secretariats.

64 See https://rsis.ramsar.org/.
65 See http://www.biospheresmart.org/.
66 See http://www.protectedplanet.net/.

4.3.5 Harmonise reporting and ensure joint monitoring

The four designating bodies and their secretariats should consider joint monitoring of MIDAs and harmonisation of periodic reporting requirements. The current practice of joint missions to some MIDAs when monitoring takes place (as already happens for some sites that are Ramsar and World Heritage listed) should be extended and made consistent for all MIDAs.

Sections 3.2.7 and 3.2.8 of this Guidance laid out the various differing periodic reporting requirements in terms of content, depth of information, and timelines, which impose a considerable workload on site managers and national focal points. Obviously, each international designation has its specific profile and objectives, and reporting under each designation must respond to the specific criteria for which a site has been designated in the first place. However, some of the information requested for global monitoring and periodic reporting can serve double, triple or even quadruple purposes and could feed into a common information and reporting system. Similar information provided under the various international designations could be shared among the governing bodies and their secretariats and advisory bodies through the creation and maintenance of a joint repository of site-based reports.

In the table below (Table 3), reporting requirements for the four designations have been analysed. The table only lists reporting requirements that are requested by at least two international designating bodies. Specific reporting requirements, applicable to only one international designation, were not listed (such as "Indication of wetland types" for the Ramsar Convention, or "Statement of Outstanding Universal Value" for the World Heritage Convention). For the column "Reporting requirements", generic titles were used to the extent possible, to allow for a comparison among the four periodic review forms; these titles do not necessarily follow the same wording of the individual reporting forms.

Table 3. Reporting requirements of the four designating instruments

Reporting requirements	Ramsar Site	World Heritage site	Biosphere Reserve	UNESCO Global Geopark
I. General information				
Name of the site	✓	✓	✓	✓
Country	✓	✓	✓	
Designation date of the site	✓	✓	✓	
Name, authority or compiler of the report (evaluators for GG)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Date of the report (date of revalidation for GG)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Geographical coordinates of the site	✓	✓	✓	
Change of the site's boundaries	✓	✓	✓	
Provision of (up-to-date) maps	✓		✓	
II. Conservation and natural characteristics				
State of conservation/changes in conservation	✓	✓	✓	✓
Physical characteristics of the site	✓	✓	✓	✓
General ecological characteristics	✓	✓	✓	
Flora and fauna	✓	✓	✓	
III. Economic, social and cultural significances				
Economic development (and pressures)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Social and societal benefits	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cultural values	✓	✓	✓	✓
Tourism and recreation (including visitor surveys)	✓	✓	✓	✓
IV. Education and science				
Education, communication, public awareness	✓	✓	✓	✓
Visitor centres, nature trails	✓	✓	✓	✓
Scientific research and related infrastructure	✓	✓	✓	✓

V. Networking				
Participation in common projects			✓	✓
Exchanges of information and staff			✓	✓
VI. Governance and management				
Territorial jurisdiction / land ownership	✓	✓	✓	✓
Management authority in charge of the site	✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff for site management		✓	✓	✓
Financial resources for site management		✓	✓	✓

I. General information: As one would expect, all reporting forms ask for the site name, as well as the name of the authority/compiler of the report and its date of preparation. While Ramsar Sites, World Heritage sites and Biosphere Reserves have to provide information on the geographical coordinates and changes of the site's boundaries, no such information is solicited for UNESCO Global Geoparks. This is probably due to the fact that UNESCO Global Geoparks are still quite new, and area changes may not have occurred since the first designations.

II. Conservation and natural characteristics: All four designations focus on the state of conservation and/or changes in conservation, accompanied by information on the physical characteristics of the site. For Ramsar Sites, World Heritage sites and Biosphere Reserves, information has to be provided on ecological characteristics as well as on the site's flora and fauna. This is not a requirement for UNESCO Global Geoparks since they focus on abiotic features.

III. Economic, social and cultural significances: All four designations put a strong emphasis on site-specific economic development (and related pressures), social and societal benefits for local communities in relation to an area's international designation, cultural values of the site, as well as on-site tourism and recreation management. So even though all four designating instruments are superficially known for their environmental conservation mandates, they all promote a holistic environmental-societal relationship.

IV. Education and science: All reporting forms require information on education and science in a wide sense. Are there educational and awareness programmes in place? Is the international designation of the site well communicated to the public? Do visitor centres and walking trails with explanatory signboards exist? What scientific projects have been or are being carried out and is the infrastructure sufficient to support research?

V. Networking: Information on networking among sites is only required for Biosphere Reserves (in the context of MAB's thematic and regional networks) and UNESCO Global Geoparks (for example, participation in regional or global geopark conferences, staff and knowledge exchanges, local communities working on common projects). While the networking function exists among Ramsar Sites and World Heritage properties, their reporting and monitoring forms do not request any such information. In the case of World Heritage, this may be explained by the fact that periodic reporting takes place regionally thus implicitly entailing regional collaboration.

VI. Governance and management: All four designations solicit information on a site's territorial jurisdiction (which is essential knowledge for intergovernmental dealings) and information on a site's landownership. In all cases, the management authority over a site must be known. Internal and on-site information regarding the number of staff and financial resources for site management is only requested for World Heritage sites, Biosphere Reserves and UNESCO Global Geoparks.

This table may help to harmonise the reporting and even the management system of MIDAs, in particular if the designations are mostly or entirely of an overlapping nature. Online tools and even decision-support systems could provide a "one-stop solution" towards the effective monitoring and management of MIDAs.

In the long run, the four secretariats should reflect on further harmonised monitoring and reporting by drafting a periodic reporting form that satisfies most of the needs and criteria of all IDAs. This would help to reduce barriers between the different designating bodies and facilitate improved management systems for MIDAs. Revised periodic reporting forms would be useful to evaluate the effective management of MIDAs by site managers and national authorities, and may help in the updating of management plans taking into account the specific conservation objectives of each international designation. This would, however, entail substantial coordination efforts among the four secretariats and will necessitate approval by the four respective governing bodies.

Harmonised reporting to the designating bodies should be established for MIDAs, since it will be more cost-efficient if reporting requirements for one designation can also feed into the requirements for the others. This will enhance the quality of reports and facilitate joint technical assessments and monitoring. The current practice of joint missions to some MIDAs when monitoring takes place should be extended and made consistent for all MIDAs.

4.3.6 Share information during nomination and reporting processes

When a site is proposed for international recognition under the Ramsar Convention, the World Heritage Convention, the MAB Programme or the IGGP, and this site is already recognised by any of the other three designation instruments, it would be useful for reviewers of the proposed site also to consider the nomination form that was submitted to the other secretariats. In these cases, some kind of institutional mechanism should be established for consultations/coordination among the different technical evaluation groups or advisory bodies reviewing new site proposals, to avoid, for example, contradictions or challenges regarding zonation and functions of proposed MIDAs. In this way, reviewers can also obtain complementary information on the site's characteristics and values as evidenced by other international designations.

In the interest of promoting complementarity and synergy, the international secretariats should also request letters of support from the national authorities in charge of a site's already existing designation(s) so that future collaboration among national authorities is ensured for sites with multiple designations. In fact, UNESCO Global Geoparks are already implementing such a protocol. The nomination forms for all four designations should include a section soliciting information on whether a site has already been listed (and since when) under any of the other international instruments.

In a similar manner, the sharing of information for the periodic reporting on MIDAs should also be enhanced. Existing reports on the functioning and state of conservation of MIDAs should be made available for consultation to all four secretariats and their governing bodies. The maintenance of an updated list of MIDAs and a joint repository of site-based reports would facilitate this work. This is particularly relevant for sites identified as in danger such as World Heritage sites listed on the List of World Heritage in Danger or Ramsar Sites listed on the Montreux Record. In these cases, the designating bodies and their secretariats and advisory groups should take special care to avoid giving conflicting recommendations to improve the management of sites in danger, and information sharing is a crucial step to achieve this.

The four secretariats, and their technical groups and advisory bodies, should routinely share existing information on proposed and existing MIDAs (nomination dossiers, periodic reports, ad hoc state of conservation reports), in order to ensure harmonised approaches between the applications of the different designating instruments.

4.3.7 Organise joint capacity-building activities on the operations of each designation

The four global secretariats should consider conducting joint regional capacity-building and training seminars and other activities for national focal points, site managers and other relevant stakeholders. These capacity-building activities could be organised on a cost-sharing basis and would inform on the specific purposes and approaches of each designating instrument, their similarities as well as their specificities. They could also be used to provide information on specific reporting requirements for Ramsar and UNESCO designated sites. The different terminologies and processes that exist under the various designations could be explained and the profiles of each designation could be sharpened in line with emerging designation-specific communication and branding strategies.

Capacity-building and training activities should focus on the complementarity and synergies that the four designations can offer to sites. Communication and branding strategies for each designation, and added value deriving from MIDAs should be worked out and implemented at the local, national and global levels. In related workshops and activities, different experiences and examples of good practices regarding the harmonised management and conservation of MIDAs should be shared. All these activities should be considered as important ways of capacity building and even networking at the local, regional and national levels. They should also be organised in the languages spoken at the local, national or regional levels and not only the languages more commonly used by the designating bodies (English, French and Spanish).

The development of online tools and materials is another possible option to reach even more site managers, national focal points and other relevant stakeholders. The InforMEA online platform[67] – a project of the MEA Information and Knowledge Management Initiative facilitated by UNEP – could be a first step in this direction. InforMEA hosts an e-learning tool aimed at building knowledge and greater understanding of international environmental law (IEL) that provides free training materials on IEL concepts and the development and implementation of MEAs. For the time being, this only includes courses on the Ramsar Convention and the World Heritage Convention.

67 See http://www.informea.org.

The four secretariats should organise joint capacity-building activities for site managers, national focal points and other relevant stakeholders on the specific profiles of each designation. These should aim to foster possible synergies among the international instruments, and facilitate the exchange of best practices in the management of MIDAs.

4.3.8 Implement joint projects and networking at site level

Many sites face similar challenges be it climate change, pollution, land degradation, encroachment, poaching, development threats, invasive species, or the lack of sustainable livelihood opportunities for local communities. One advantage of a site having multiple designations is the possibility of securing external funding and technical support to redress adverse site conditions.

Based on site-specific needs, the four secretariats could combine forces to support MIDAs in securing funding from international and multi-bilateral donors and assist with implementation of joint projects at site level, especially for sites facing significant damage or danger which need external assistance. By calling on the expertise of their various expert groups and scientific and advisory bodies, the secretariats could provide a global platform for assistance and conservation projects drawing from a variety of technical and scientific disciplines. These projects should always ensure consideration of the cultural values of MIDAs and enlist the participation and support of local communities.

An example of such cooperation between designating bodies is the new joint project by the Ramsar Secretariat and the World Heritage Centre, funded by the MEA Information and Knowledge Management Initiative. This project presents a set of five regional case studies that illustrate where the two conventions have been instrumental in addressing the drivers of wetland loss and degradation, and how cultural values and community participation have contributed to conservation success. These case studies will facilitate the sharing of good practices and will be compiled into a brochure that highlights “Success Stories and Lessons Learned”, providing opportunities for possible site-specific projects.

Since site managers of MIDAs share many concerns of a similar nature (such as the harmonised management and monitoring of such sites as well as reporting), twinning arrangements and networking among MIDAs would greatly facilitate information exchange on best practices and lessons learned. The four secretariats should facilitate these types of twinning arrangements and networking of MIDAs at the regional and global levels.

By combining their expertise and outreach capabilities, the designating bodies should assist MIDAs in implementing joint projects of common interest at the site level, and in fostering twinning and networking arrangements among MIDAs.

4.3.9 Develop harmonised branding and communication strategies

Branding of Ramsar and UNESCO designated sites is particularly important when these overlap, making specific brand recognition blurred by the variety of international designations given to more or less the same area.

The subject of possible ways to protect and strengthen brand recognition of Biosphere Reserves, World Heritage properties and UNESCO Global Geoparks was discussed by the UNESCO Executive Board at its 196th session (Paris, April 2015). Document 196 EX/5 Part II, prepared by the UNESCO Secretariat for the consideration of the UNESCO Executive Board, stated:

> *Essential to ensuring the protection and strengthening of brand recognition is tackling the issue of overlapping brands, that is, when two or more different brands talk to similar audiences and have similar offerings. Do UNESCO brands dealing with conservation compete for resources and steal limelight from one another? What may seem like substantial programme differences internally may be invisible to the outside world.*
>
> *UNESCO must clearly explain the opportunities for synergies between the different programmes through integrated systems and efficient management and in parallel must communicate the added value of each distinct brand.*

Branding and communication strategies for MIDAs should be developed at the local and national levels but certainly also at the global level. Developing branding and communication strategies is essential for all four international designations discussed in this Guidance, and several initiatives have already commenced addressing the issue. World Heritage branding was discussed extensively by the World Heritage Committee for the 40th anniversary of the Convention. The MAB Secretariat has also initiated a Communication and Branding Biosphere Project in 2014 that was first tested in the EuroMAB regional network, and which was met with great interest by the other MAB regional networks (such as at the 9th meeting of the Southeast Asian Biosphere Reserve Network held in Malang, Indonesia in October 2015).

It is essential that these branding and communication strategies do not promote competition between labels but communicate the added value of each distinct designation, and highlight the potential for cooperation and synergistic activities.

The designating bodies should develop branding and communication strategies for their respective designations that do not compete with each other, but rather focus on communicating the added value of each designation and highlighting their potential for cooperation and synergistic activities.

Part V: Jeju Island, a MIDA with four international designations

5. The Jeju Island experience

Jeju Island, a Special Self-Governing Province of the Republic of Korea, is currently the only site in the world where all four international designations overlap in the same location. This chapter outlines the island's features and provides a summary of the evolution of international designations in Jeju, showing how one international designation paved the way for obtaining the others. The chapter also highlights in more detail the benefits and challenges that come with multiple forms of recognition. Finally, it presents the Jeju proposals of how the management of MIDAs could be streamlined and operationalised in the island – and, in this way, may provide insights for other countries and regions with MIDAs.

5.1 Jeju Island's features

Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clézio, Nobel Prize laureate in Literature, referred to Jeju as one of the world's last islands of outstanding natural beauty. Indeed, Jeju Island is the only place in the world where four international designations overlap: it comprises a natural World Heritage site, a Biosphere Reserve, a UNESCO Global Geopark and a total of five Ramsar Sites, two of which are embedded within the other three designations. So what has enabled Jeju to achieve these multiple forms of international recognition?

Jeju is the largest and southernmost island isolated from the Korean peninsula. A volcanic eruption created the island around 500,000 years ago. During the next eruption stage, 200,000–300,000 years ago, Hallasan Mountain reached its present height. Finally, 5,000 years ago during the Neolithic age, Seongsan Sunrise Peak and Songaksan Mountain rose from the sea in volcanic eruptions. Jeju is like a vulcanology open-air museum where hundreds of volcanic cones and other structures offer magnificent landscapes. The 1,950 m high Hallasan Mountain that rises in the centre of the island, for example, presents a variety of distinctive ecosystems comprising some 2,000 plants ranging from subtropical to subpolar species. Jeju is also home to more than 360 monogenetic volcanoes which are called *oreum* in Korean.

Mount Hallasan and the clusters of *oreum* spread across Jeju Island © Jeju Tourism Organization

Jeju Island was granted autonomy as a so-called self-governing province in 2006. It has an area of 1,845.55 km^2 and a population of 610,000 residents. It presents a mild subtropical climate with an average precipitation of 2,000 mm of rain per year. As a volcanic island, the soil layers of Jeju are a mixture of volcanic rock, volcanic ash, sand and gravel, allowing rainwater to easily soak into the ground. This means that river beds are usually dry and water runs only when it rains. Rain also causes ground water to come out through spring openings close to the surface. This is the reason why villages have traditionally been established near the ocean.

The rich local seafood has led to a very marine-oriented culture, especially obvious with Jeju's "Diving Women" or *Haenyeo* – the practitioners of a form of marine ecology stewardship. These women have been gathering seafood in Jeju for thousands of years, thus representing a model of harmonious co-existence between humans and nature.[68]

***Haenyeo* harvesting and sorting their catch © Jeju Special Self-Governing Province**

68 The Haenyeo culture is in the process of applying for recognition under UNESCO's Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Jeju is trying to create its own development model using a future vision for the island which many residents helped design. Through this process, the core values of the island were narrowed down to two: **cleanliness** and **coexistence**. Cleanliness aims to realise the virtuous circle of nature, and coexistence describes the achievement of happiness through harmony between humans and nature, tradition and creation, and tolerance and generosity. Jeju's plans for the future are focused on solving pending issues and formulating policies based on these core values, which are also followed by the local public and private sectors.

5.2 Preparing a hub of IDAs

Both the national and local authorities carried out systematic institutional efforts to preserve the local natural environment before Jeju obtained international recognition. Mount Hallasan's highest area was designated a Natural Monument in 1966, which subsequently became a National Park in 1970. Since then and until the year 2000, the top of Mount Hallasan (starting approximately at 600 m above sea-level (a.s.l.) and comprising about 11% of the whole island) was protected under the Natural Parks Act and the Cultural Heritage Protection Act. The national government then enacted the Special Act on the Establishment of Jeju Special Self-Governing Province that includes stricter rules for environmental criteria and impact assessment and new standards for ground-water, scenery and ecosystem management. Environmental conservation is a priority, and their Nature First policy states that conservation should come before development.

Therefore, Jeju is protected by national laws as well as multiple international designations. Through integrated management of internationally and nationally protected sites, the province tries to pursue the goals of each protection regime. Jeju's international recognition has even contributed to the amendment of laws regarding the systematic management of nationally protected sites. Geosites, for example, identified during the UNESCO Global Geopark designation process, and scattered throughout the island, have been included in the Natural Parks Act; and areas designated as Biosphere Reserves now have a legal basis to obtain national funding by the Natural Environment Conservation Act. Meanwhile, the province also established the Ordinance for Management of Registered Heritages on the Island to better manage the local IDAs.

Jeju recognises the environment as valuable while, at the same time, promoting the wise and rational use of its environmental resources. Residents of areas near geosites have developed various tourist activities and programmes such as eco-tours, the selling of sustainable agricultural and seafood products, and local festivals in an attempt to promote and better utilise the island's international designations, in particular the UNESCO Global Geopark one. In addition, the province has tightened environmental regulations for mid-slope areas of the island and made efforts to make waterfront space a public domain.

The province has also set up a particular environmental governance system, made up of committees consisting of environmental specialists, residents, provincial councillors and other relevant people for every international designation. The committees cooperate closely with international bodies like IUCN and UNESCO. As an example, islanders decided to create the Gotjawal Trust of Jeju to preserve the local ***gotjawal*** forest which is formed on rocky lava areas developing a distinctive type of vegetation.

5.3 Environmental conservation linked to each international designation

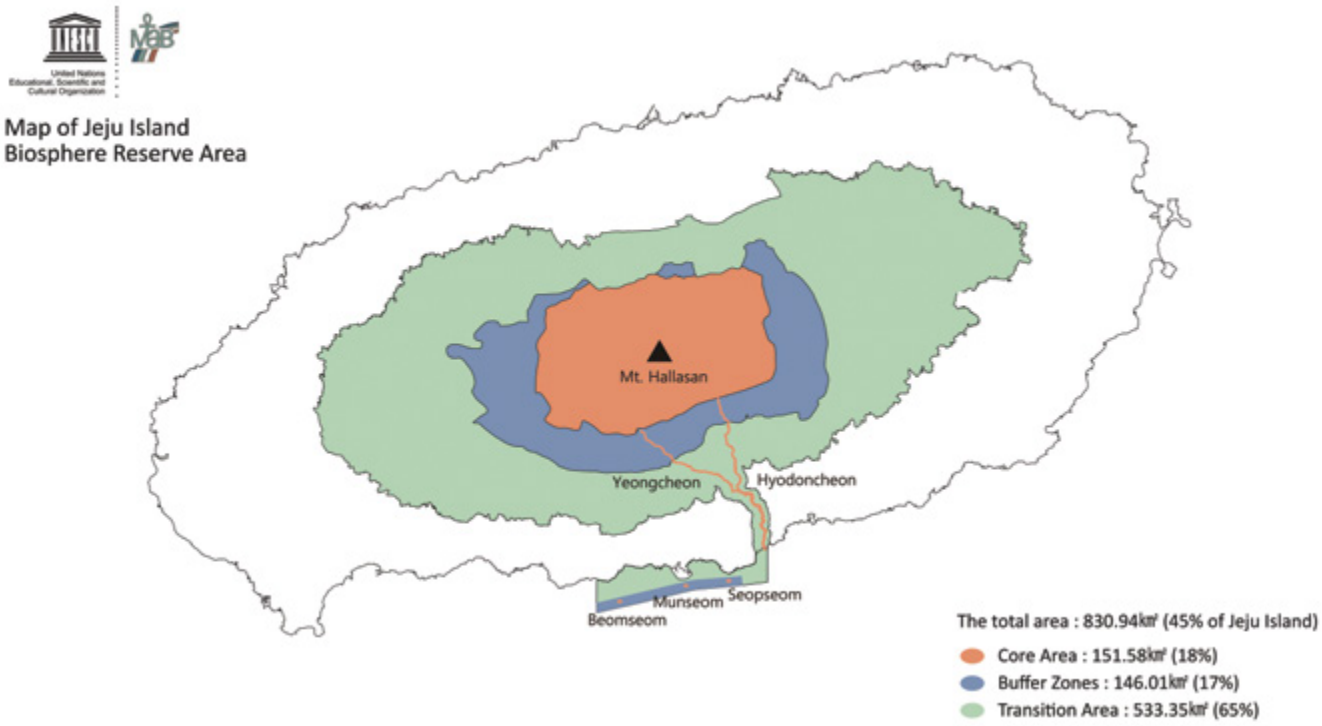
5.3.1 Conservation awareness paves the way for Biosphere Reserve designation

Jeju's Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) *per capita* was higher than the national Korean average before the 1990s thanks to the production of mandarin oranges and specialty crops. However, the GRDP started to fall below the national average during the 1990s. Construction works for new infrastructure such as hotels, golf courses and coastal roads quickly destroyed natural areas, and local residents became concerned that these actions might harm the island's environmental assets. Meanwhile, the MAB National Committee of the Republic of Korea began discussions on designating Hallasan Mountain as a Biosphere Reserve in 1999, and the province applied for the designation in 2002 and obtained it in November of the same year.

The Biosphere Reserve delineates the Hallasan National Park area as a core zone (almost identical to the boundaries of the National Park), the areas 600–800 m a.s.l. as buffer zones, and the areas 200–600 m a.s.l. as transition zones.

With the designation of the Biosphere Reserve in 2002, all three zones of the reserve gained international recognition, creating a rationale to protect the whole area without controversy. This also stirred the interest of many people on the importance of protected areas both in Jeju and in other parts of Korea. Nowadays, locals and visitors usually think of the whole Biosphere Reserve as a site deserving special conservation, irrespective of its three distinct zones.

In 2012, the World Network of Island and Coastal Biosphere Reserves (WNICBR) was established to share experiences and knowledge on biosphere reserve management among its members. The WNICBR Secretariat is based in Jeju and carries out educational and training programmes, among other activities, for Korean and overseas managers of Biosphere Reserves located in coastal areas and on islands.



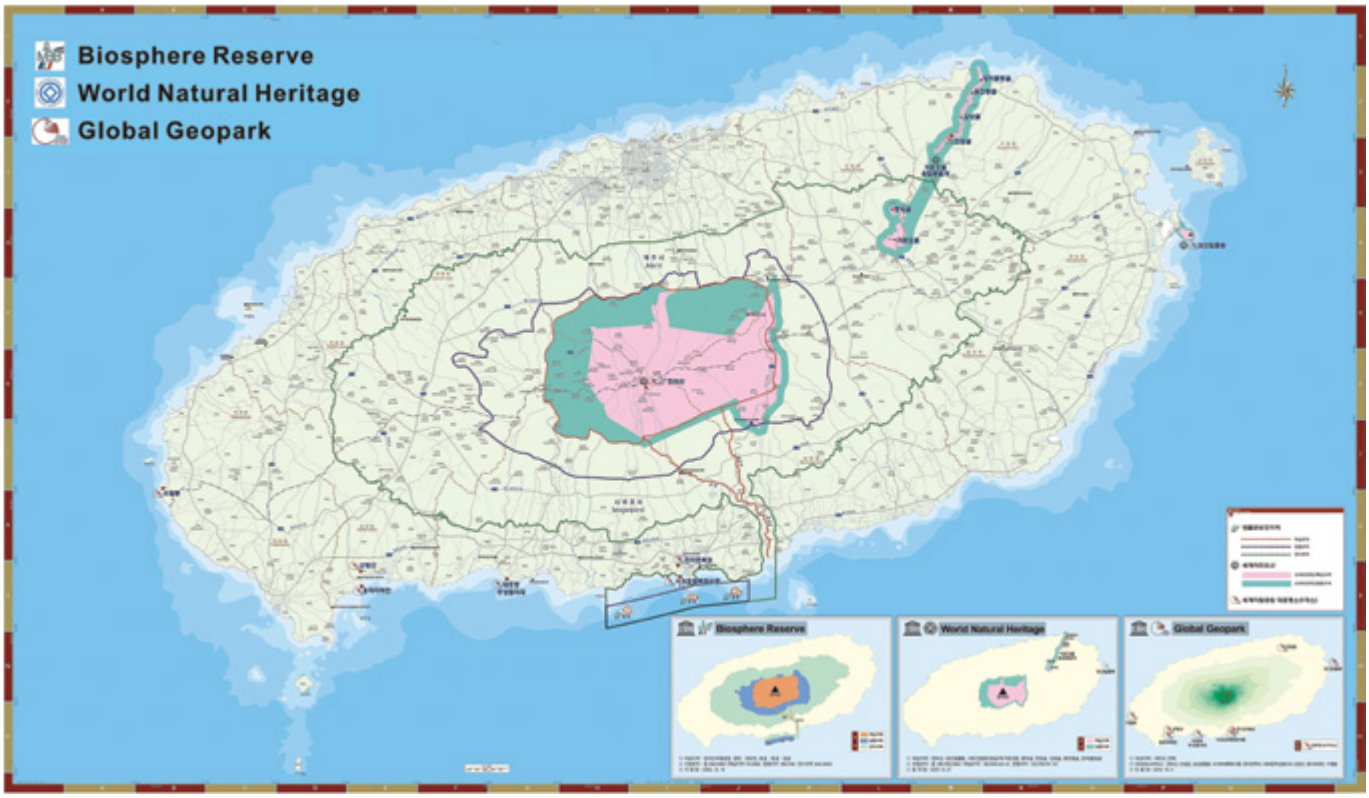
Zonation of Jeju Island Biosphere Reserve © Jeju Special Self-Governing Province

Visitors on an eco-tour © Jeju Special Self-Governing Province

5.3.2 Quest for international recognition rewarded by World Heritage title

With the successful designation of Jeju as a Biosphere Reserve, locals started to recognise that the island was worth further protection at the international level and that systematic conservation of the environment was needed for sustainable development. Considerable efforts then began, to inscribe the island on the World Heritage List. The province and the national government (through the Cultural Heritage Administration) launched a one-year comprehensive academic survey in 2002, finished the consultation process with local residents in 2006, and finally submitted the nomination of the volcanic island and lava tubes of Jeju for natural World Heritage listing. Local authorities also collected signatures in support of the nomination from more than 1.5 million Koreans and foreigners.

Jeju received its World Heritage designation in 2007. Its volcanic lava tubes, decorated with calcareous stalactites originating from the shells of overlying formation and revealed to the public after the nomination, were endorsed as having outstanding universal value. The property covers essentially the core area of the Biosphere Reserve (Mount Hallasan National Park), but also includes an area to the northeast of the island.



Map delineating the location of the World Heritage site © Jeju Special Self-Governing Province

The successful designation as a natural World Heritage site gave rise to a significant increase in visitor numbers to the island; intensified media exposure and tourism marketing possibilities; increased allocation of financial support from both the national and local governments for site management; increased recognition of the campaign promoting the *Nature First* policy among local residents; and encouraged the scientific community to contribute their time and efforts to researching further natural values outside the World Heritage property.

5.3.3 Benefits for the entire island and its residents: UNESCO Global Geopark

When Jeju was recognised as a Biosphere Reserve and World Heritage site, benefits from these designations were limited to communities living close to the designated areas. Therefore, local authorities became interested in international designations that involve wider communities, leading to sustainable development for the entire island and bringing positive outcomes to all its residents. For this reason, the province started efforts to apply for UNESCO GGN membership.

While continuing to manage the ecosystems of the Biosphere Reserve and World Heritage site, Jeju also presents other interesting sites with distinctive landscapes and geological features. These geological assets include local villages and were already known tourist attractions. In this context, the Jeju government considered that the entire island could be recognised as a UNESCO Global Geopark which aims for sustainable development for all the territory through appropriate and wise use of its natural environment.

Exploration of Yongcheondonggul **cave © Jeju Special Self-Governing Province**

Entrance to "The Lake of a Thousand Years" (cave lake) © Jeju Special Self-Governing Province

Visitors on a geo-trail © Jeju Special Self-Governing Province

In 2010, the entire island was finally designated as the Jeju UNESCO Global Geopark. This third designation resulted in the local creation of the so-called "UNESCO Triple Crown" brand,[69] which made the island very popular with domestic tourists thanks to a high level of media coverage. The Jeju UNESCO Global Geopark includes three components of the natural World Heritage site and four other sites with distinctive geological features.

The impact of recognition by all three UNESCO designating instruments was so powerful that now, according to a survey, at least half of all Koreans know about the UNESCO sites. Local communities agree that the natural environment is the most important value to preserve in the island. The UNESCO Global Geopark designation was even the inspiration for a Congressman to submit an amendment to the Natural Parks Act, including articles on the national Geoparks framework, financial support, international cooperation, among other issues, which is now the legal framework for six national Geoparks in the Republic of Korea.

5.3.4 Water scarcity at the origin of Ramsar listing

While Jeju's volcanic landscape is an attraction for visitors, its geological and geomorphological features pose a problem of water storage. The shield-type volcano has a relatively steep slope and the short lengths of streams cannot hold enough water, thus creating water scarcity and harsh living conditions for residents. Even worse, the porous and fractured lava beds and the rare impermeable bedrock make the rains seep deep into the ground soon after and during precipitation. This means that Jeju residents can only live near the coastline where natural spring waters occur. For these reasons, people in Jeju have historically suffered from serious water shortages.

With the development of deep ground-water exploitation that started in the 1960s, Jeju residents no longer have to worry about water quantity. The island produces and sells its own natural mineral water, *Samdasoo*, and desalinates saline ground water – however, water quality remains a prime concern.

Some *oreums* can retain water in their craters that can be utilised by people, plants and animals. Craters holding water are rare and crucial for their adjoining ecosystems, which helped to increase local communities' awareness of the importance of maintaining surface-water and ground-water availability on the island. The Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea and the Jeju government started listing Ramsar Sites in 2006. There are five local sites currently on the Ramsar List: Mulyeongari-oreum (designated in 2006), Muljangori-oreum wetland (2008), Mount Hallasan's 1100 Altitude Wetland (2009), Dongbaekdongsan (2011) and Sumeunmulbaengdui (2015).

69 Note that the term "UNESCO Triple Crown" is only used internally in the Republic of Korea and is not an official term endorsed by UNESCO.

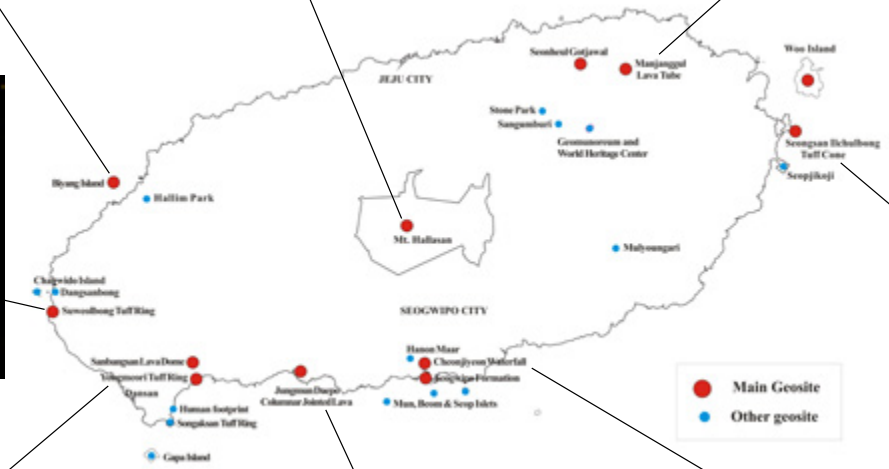
Global Geopark

Biyang Island

Mount Hallasan

Manjanggul Lava Tube

Suweolbong



Seongsan Ilchulbong

Yongmeori coast

Columnar joint

Cheongiyen waterfalls

The representative geosites of the Jeju UNESCO Global Geopark © Jeju Special Self-Governing Province

Mulyeongari-oreum, Muljangori-oreum wetland and Sumeunmulbaengdui sites are located in craters of volcanic cones. The 1100 Altitude Wetland and Dongbaekdongsan sites are not crater-type wetlands; they are located on a relatively flat area with sediments among scattered rocks. These are rare in Jeju. As wetlands on the island are the only available large landing areas in the East Asian Sea, they play a key role for migratory birds. Local communities understand the importance of these wetlands and are coming up with plans for the balanced co-existence of communities and wetlands while protecting them.

Dongbaekdongsan Ramsar wetland © Ko Jeryang

Sumeunmulbaengdui Ramsar wetland © Jeju Special Self-Governing Province

Two Ramsar Sites – 1100 Altitude Wetland and Muljangori-oreum wetland – are located within the boundaries of the World Heritage property, the Biosphere Reserve and the UNESCO Global Geopark. It is here that all four international designations overlap precisely. Sumeunmulbaengdui Ramsar Site is embedded within the Biosphere Reserve and the UNESCO Global Geopark (triple international designation), while Dongbaekdongsan and Mulyeongari-oreum wetland coincide with the UNESCO Global Geopark as double designated sites.

5.4 Benefits of quadruple international designation

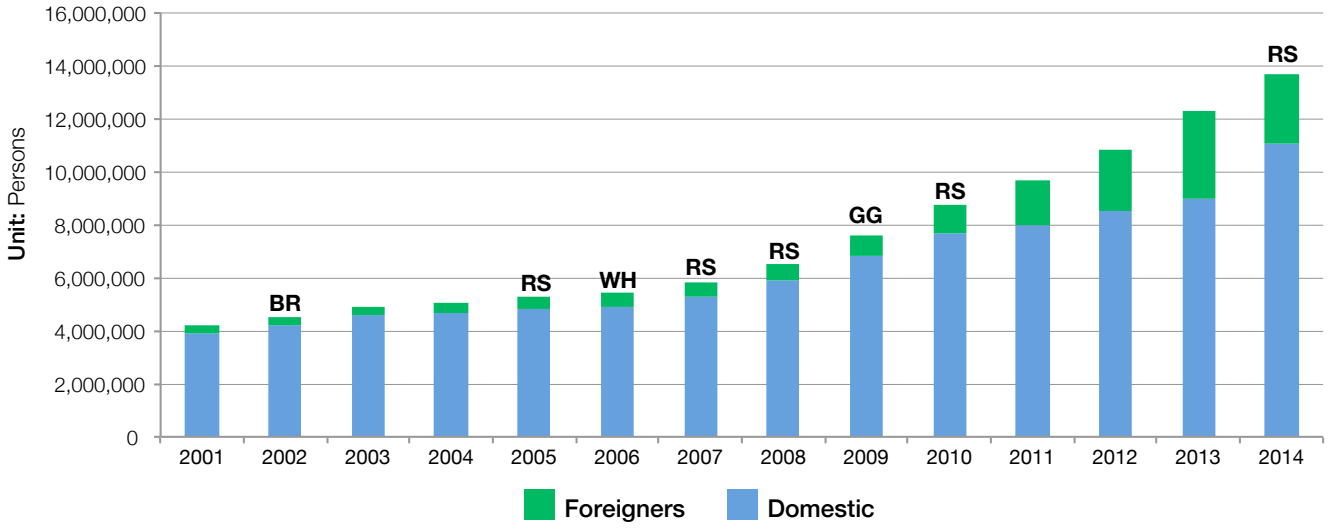
One of the biggest benefits of Jeju Island being a MIDA with four overlapping international designations is the level of the local communities' awareness of conservation and sustainability. Over the last ten years, successful campaigns for environmental conservation against development pressure have been launched and sustainable nature-based industries have been promoted. A strong driving force for sustainability in daily life and economic activities gained momentum when both islanders and visitors agreed on the importance of nature conservation for Jeju.

The seed sprouted from the first international recognition of Jeju Island as a Biosphere Reserve. Now, the origin of agricultural goods produced in the Biosphere Reserve is effectively advertised, clearly branding them as produced in the designated area. The residents living near the district of Seonheul-ri and Geomun Oreum (part of the World Heritage site) and Dongbaekdongsan (Ramsar Site) voluntarily conserve these natural areas and realise that sustainable enterprises can maximise their gains by valuing the environment. These enterprises cover a wide range of activities such as those connected to sustainable tourism, environmental education, food and health services, etc. With support from the Jeju Tourism Organization, the residents living near geosites identified by the UNESCO Global Geopark also organise popular geological tourism activities, which include various special events, commercial products and services. These are created based on the communities' distinctive cultural and geological profiles, and use a new brand – GEO – as a promotional tool.

Promotional material using the GEO brand, items and activities © Jeju Tourism Organization

Local communities, authorities and enterprises believe that the recognition of IDAs is not the end of the nature protection journey, but the start of cherishing their island and its environmental values. Although having multiple designations may present some challenges, in Jeju it is believed that the benefits outweigh the challenges. Among the benefits are national and international media exposure, provision of national and local financial support, the convergence effect of participation and contribution from diverse scientific experts, local communities' awareness of conservation and sustainability, and an increasing number of visitors to Jeju.

Figure 4. Visitor numbers to Jeju Island over time, during successive recognition by international designating instruments



Legend: **BR** - Biosphere Reserve; **RS** - Ramsar site; **WH** - World Heritage site; **GG** - UNESCO Global Geopark

© Jeju Special Self-Governing Province

Jeju voices

Several leading experts from Jeju comment on the island's four international designations:

Ms KO Jeryang, who promotes sustainable tourism in Dongbaekdongsan (Ramsar Site) together with local residents, is convinced that well-conserved nature should be used as a brand to help improve the residents' quality of life. She argues that a good relationship between people and nature can be maintained when locals take care of the environment by exercising their responsibility for nature conservation. Moreover, she emphasises that environmental education and sustainable tourism are very useful tools to put this into practice.

Former community chairperson Mr KIM Sangsoo, a leading example on how to expertly utilise natural World Heritage as a brand, further states that nature cannot be conserved without the residents' participation, but the reality is that this participation is not easy without measures to boost the residents' income.

Mr KIM Yangbo, Director-General of the Environmental Conservation Bureau of Jeju Province, maintains that in order for MIDAs in each region of the world to work, it is essential to establish a consultative governance body. Its mandate would be to ensure progress towards achieving harmony among local communities, scientific experts, local and national authorities, and international organisations.

Dr LEE Soojae, senior researcher at the Korea Environment Institute and main researcher of the project Establishment of an Integrated Management System for UNESCO Protected Areas advises that it is necessary to establish an integrated management system for all designations of a site in a common framework. This is essential as MIDAs are often faced with challenges caused by being managed by different authorities and management bodies.

An additional benefit is that the four designations can provide a unified key concept regarding MIDAs. Most Jeju government officials working with protected areas have now become experts in all four designations, irrespective of their academic or career backgrounds. They coined a simple conceptual term "**COGEST = WU**" for easier comprehension. This term was created by extracting and combining the core value of each international designation. **CO** stands for **CO**nservation of World Heritage sites, **GE** for **G**reen **E**conomy of Biosphere Reserves, and **ST** for **S**ustainable **T**ourism of UNESCO Global Geoparks. As the key message of Ramsar Sites is the "**W**ise **U**se" of wetlands and as wise use is also an objective of the UNESCO designated sites, one could say that "COGEST **is** Wise Use" which is expressed as "COGEST = WU".

5.5 Reflections on institutional aspects to improve the joint management of MIDAs

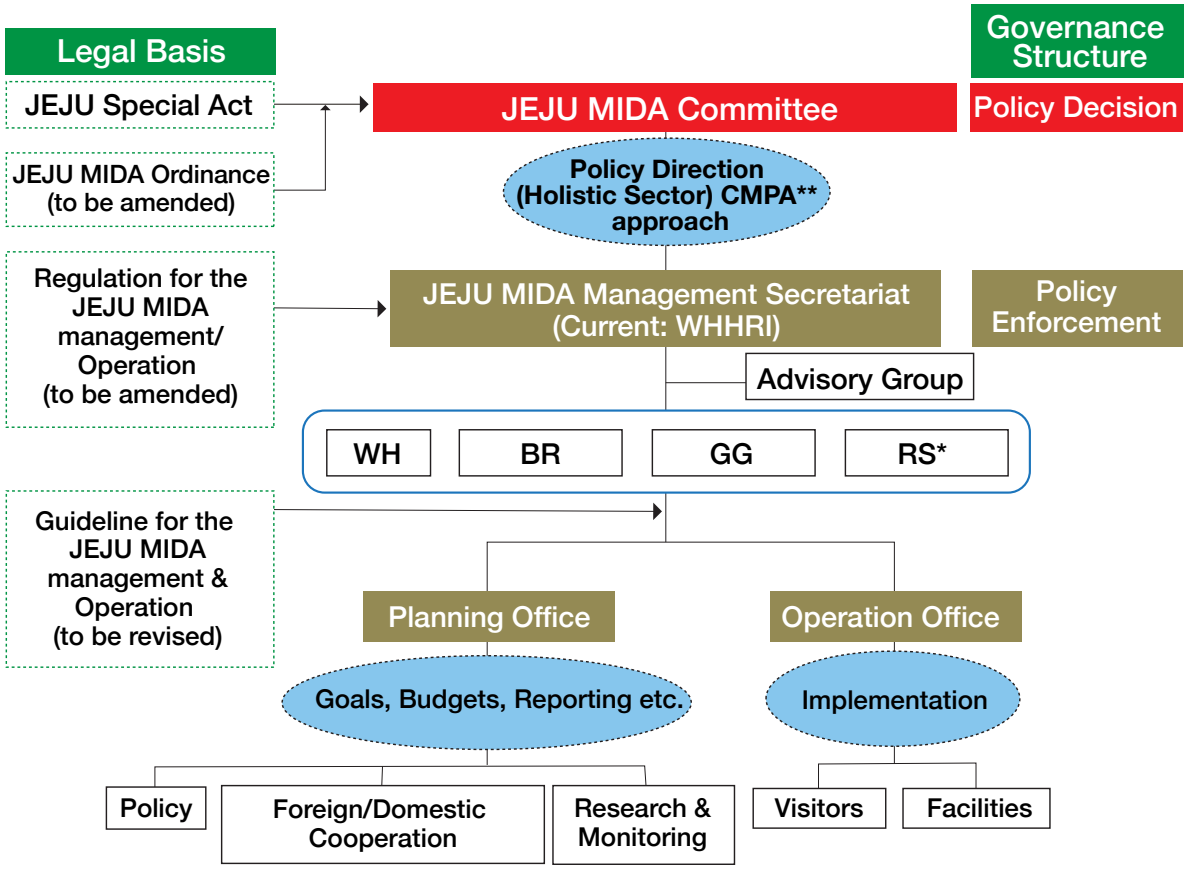
The Jeju government is very interested in improving the management and operations of MIDAs as the island is a pioneer in this field. Several scientists are working on this matter by designing proposals to streamline and harmonise the joint management of MIDAs at the local level. Even if not all suggestions below become a reality in the future, their thinking may give good indications on the way forward.

Currently, all local UNESCO designated sites are managed under the World Heritage and Hallasan Research Institute (WHHRI). One suggestion is that the Ramsar Sites could also be managed by the same institute.

One of the most noticeable actions of the Jeju authorities has been their effort to establish a legal framework for MIDAs. When sites present multiple international designations, they are usually managed by diverse administrative branches or bodies according to their respective legal mandates. The situation is even further complicated when taking into account relations between government hierarchies, such as the central government of the Republic of Korea and the local government of the Jeju Special Self-Governing Province.

The implementation of comprehensive and integrated management strategies for MIDAs is sometimes not possible and this may bring challenges to the management of such sites. So far, Jeju is not exempt from institutional complexities in this regard, but it is considering ways towards a more integrated MIDA management system.

Figure 5. Governing structure model proposed for the Jeju Island MIDA



*currently central government manages RS

****CMPA:** Collaboratively managed protected area

© Jeju Special Self-Governing Province

Firstly, in 2010, Jeju transferred the responsibility of the management of the UNESCO designated sites from the Bureau of Culture, Tourism and Sports to a single institution, the World Heritage and Hallasan Research Institute (WHHRI) to enhance the scientific values of these areas. Before 2010, the World Heritage property and the UNESCO Global Geopark were managed under the Division of Culture and Tourism Policy, while the Biosphere Reserve was serviced under another branch of the Bureau.

As Ordinance No. 1262 authorises the WHHRI to have an autonomous budget and policy, this institute can establish a unified management framework for the UNESCO designated sites. Today, academic issues and sustainability measures are mainstreamed in relevant management

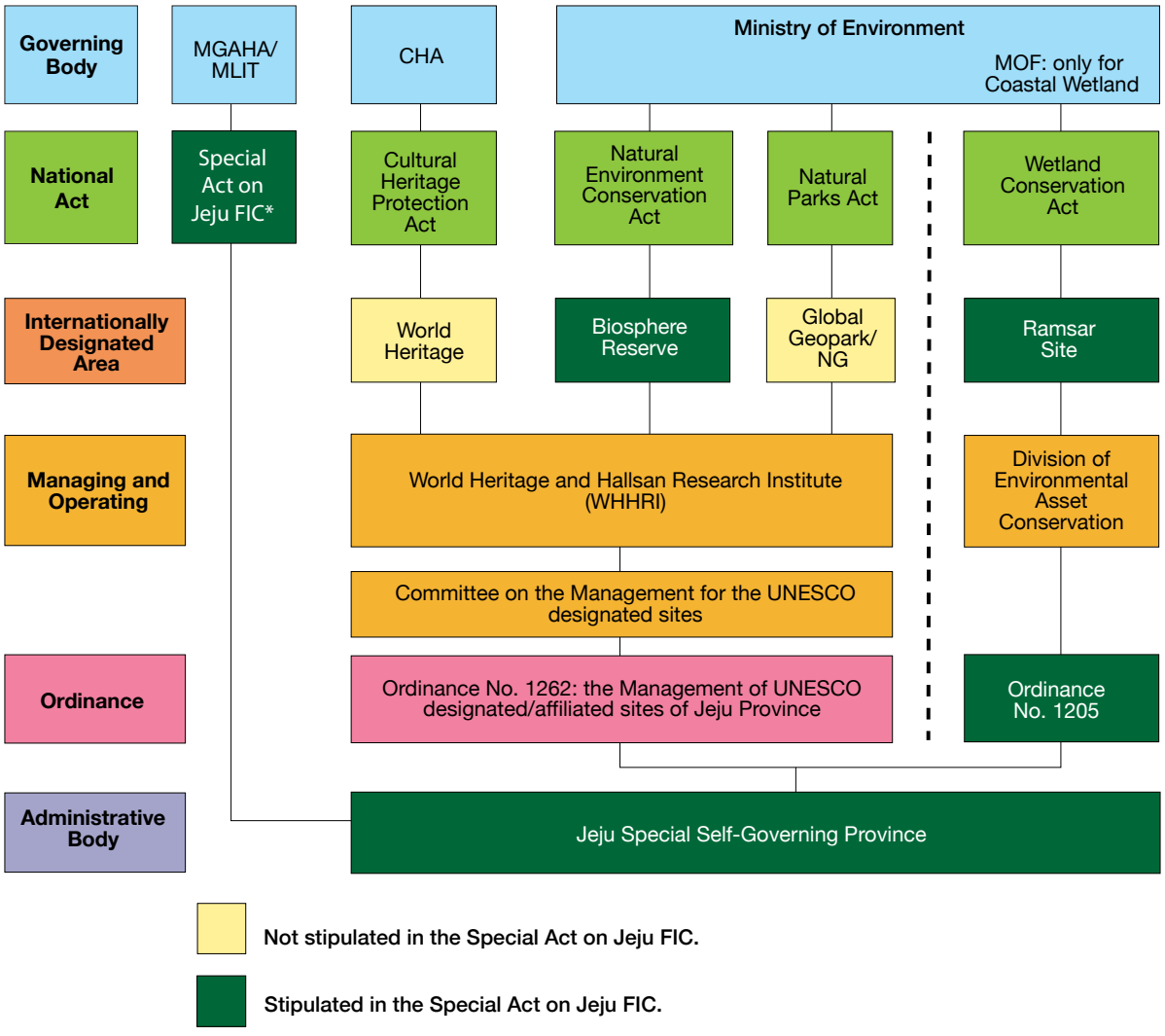
practices thanks to the Institute's independence. The WHHRI consults with the Committee on the Management for the UNESCO Designated Sites established by Ordinance No. 1262 on key issues regarding management and operations.

Secondly, the WHHRI is now consulting with the Ministry of Environment of the central government of the Republic of Korea to include Ramsar Sites in an overall unified management plan and strategy for all Jeju IDAs. As all Ramsar Sites in Korea are directly managed by the Ministry of Environment, these sites in Jeju are sometimes not in perfect management coherence with the other IDAs.

Thirdly, Jeju triggered a process of reflection on the necessity for integrated regulations among the diverse types of designated areas at the international, national and local levels. In response to this, several studies on national policy are now underway. As the types of designated areas are very diverse and scattered all over different administrative entities, the first step will be to design a framework act for all designated areas. Among the issues to be addressed are the following: definition and purpose of the sites, governance structure, type and class of zoning, criteria and areas of each zone, national management strategy and master plan, financial support and international cooperation.

The possibility exists of a national legal basis for the unified management of all IDAs in Jeju Province - the special national law promulgated in 2006 entitled Special Act on the Establishment of Jeju Special Self-Governing Province and the Development of Free International City, which invests Jeju with authority over everything except national defence and foreign affairs.

Figure 6. Governing structure of IDAs in Jeju Island



Legend: CHA - Cultural Heritage Administration; **FIC** - Free International City. IDA; **MGAHA** - Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs; **MLIT** - Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport; **MOF** - Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries; **NG** - National Geopark; **Ordinance No. 1205** - Management of Natural Environment of the Jeju Special Self-Governing Province; **Formal name of the Special Act on Jeju FIC** - Special Act on the Establishment of Jeju Special Self-Governing Province and the Development of Free International City

5.6 Jeju's vision based on the Sustainable Development Goals

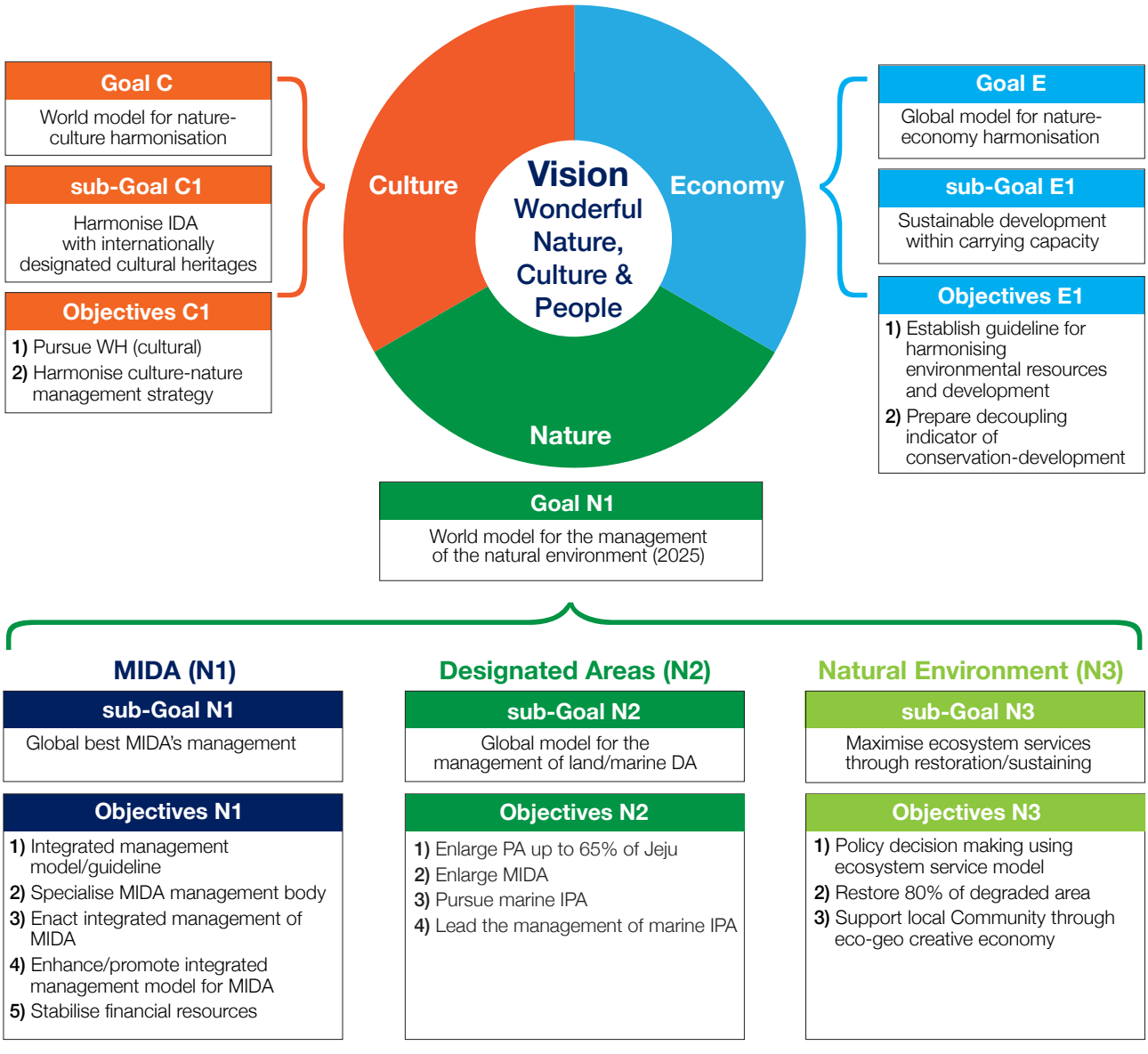
We are currently living in the Anthropocene period in which people have become the main drivers for global and environmental change. In order to achieve the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Jeju is aligning its provincial plan with objectives based on a balanced approach of the three pillars of sustainability (economic, social/cultural, and environmental aspects) and in line with the CBD's Aichi Target No. 11.

The figure below is an attempt to illustrate Jeju's possible vision for a harmonious co-existence of nature, culture and people within the context of MIDAs.

In order to put this vision into practice, a harmonised governance structure or at least an integrated framework for the management of MIDAs should be worked out at different levels. At least eight key elements should be harmonised: establishment of a legal system, formulation of common goals and objectives, setting up of a management body, creation of a governance structure, identification of management criteria, preparation of a financial plan, gauging assessments/feedbacks, and putting into effect implementation at every level.

Jeju is spearheading this way of thinking which could also be of relevance at the national level for the Republic of Korea. The figure below could serve as an example of an integrated management framework for MIDAs.

Figure 7. Jeju's vision and objectives for the MIDA



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5.7 Jeju's proposals for international site designation and management

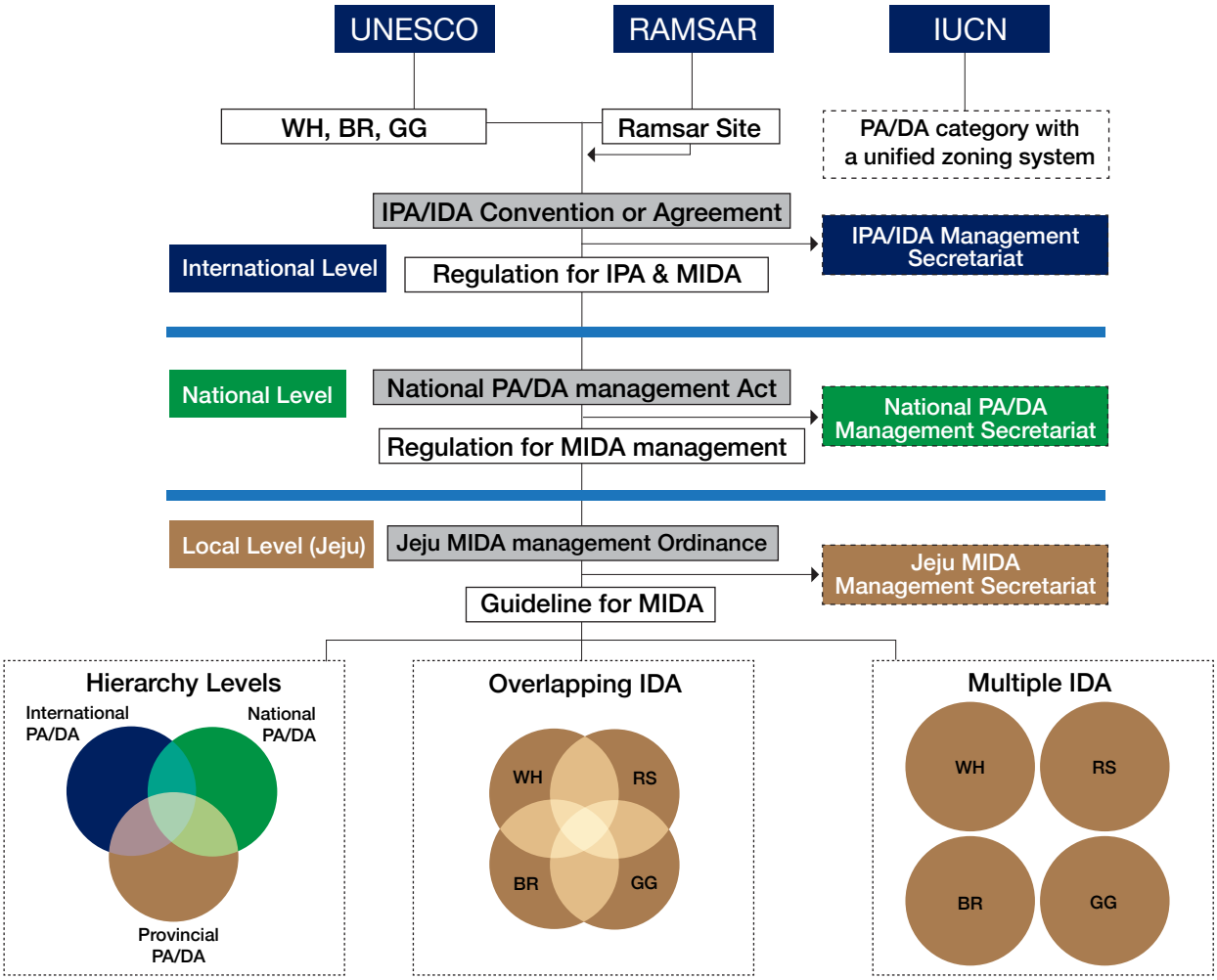
The aim of international site designation is to preserve natural assets and to conserve them for future generations. Local communities, NGOs and local and national governments should cooperate in managing MIDAs, and efforts to establish appropriate harmonised management models should continue.

Along with these efforts, the highest decision makers of the relevant international organisations, including UNESCO, Ramsar and IUCN, should regularly meet to realise the common goal of IDA management under international agreements. In other words, it is important to recognise and manage MIDAs but there is also a need for sharing the know-how obtained from managing these sites.

As of 31 October 2015, there are 263 MIDAs worldwide, counting sites with at least two international designations. There will be as many excellent management practices and valuable experiences. It would be useful to exchange and share this valuable information to enhance the effective and sustainable management of MIDAs all over the world, for example through the creation of a network among these sites.

Finally, a training institute tentatively named Education and Training Centre for Internationally Designated Areas could be established. Here, the managers of MIDAS could share and discuss challenges and best practices for improving site management capacity. A forum for these types of areas can play a role in fostering useful partnerships, common projects and actions on-the-ground. Committees to support these activities should be created in the international organisations that operate direct or indirect programmes for IDAs. For that purpose, Jeju Special Self-Governing Province makes a commitment - "We are willing to support and to do our best to establish the Education and Training Center for Internationally Designated Areas and to organise the World Conservation Forum for Protected Areas/Designated Areas."

Figure 8. Example of an integrated and unified management framework for MIDAs



Legend: WH - World Heritage site; **BR** - Biosphere Reserve; **GG** - UNESCO Global Geopark; **RS** - Ramsar Site; **PA/DA** - protected/designated area; **IPA/IDA** - internationally protected/designated area

Part VI: Useful reference websites

(1) Ramsar Convention

- Home page: http://www.ramsar.org/
- Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Convention text): http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/scan_certified_e.pdf
- The Ramsar Sites Criteria: http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/ramsarsites_criteria_eng.pdf
- The List of Wetlands of International Importance: http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/sitelist_0.pdf
- Ramsar Sites Information Service: https://rsis.ramsar.org/
- Ramsar handbooks and manuals: http://www.ramsar.org/resources/ramsar-handbooks-and-manual
- The Ramsar Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness (CEPA) Programme: http://www.ramsar.org/activity/the-ramsar-cepa-programme
- Other important documents and publications related to Ramsar Sites: http://www.ramsar.org/library

Contact address:
Ramsar Convention Secretariat
Rue Mauverney 28
CH-1196 Gland
Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 999 0170
Fax: +41 22 999 0169
E-mail: ramsar@ramsar.org
Website: www.ramsar.org

(2) World Heritage Convention

- Home page: http://whc.unesco.org/
- Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (Convention text): http://whc.unesco.org/en/conventiontext/
- The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention: http://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines/
- World Heritage List: http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/
- World Heritage State of Conservation (SOC) Information System: http://whc.unesco.org/en/soc
- World Heritage Periodic Reporting: http://whc.unesco.org/en/periodicreporting/
- World Heritage Fund: http://whc.unesco.org/en/world-heritage-fund/
- International Assistance: http://whc.unesco.org/en/intassistance/
- UNESCO World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme: http://whc.unesco.org/en/tourism/
- Other important documents and publications related to World Heritage sites: http://whc.unesco.org/en/publications/

Contact address:
World Heritage Centre
UNESCO
7, place de Fontenoy
F-75352 Paris 07 SP
France
Tel: +33 1 45 68 24 96
Fax: +33 1 45 68 55 70
E-mail: wh-info@unesco.org
Website: www.whc.unesco.org

(3) UNESCO Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme

- Home page:
  http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/man-and-biosphere-programme/
- The Seville Strategy for Biosphere Reserves and Statutory Framework of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves:
  http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0010/001038/103849Eb.pdf
- Directory of the World Network of Biosphere Reserves (WNBR):
  http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/biosphere-reserves/world-network-wnbr/wnbr/
- MAB Capacity-building and Partnerships:
  http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/capacity-building-and-partnerships/
- MAB publications: http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/related-info/publications/
- MAB education materials:
  http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/capacity-building-and-partnerships/educational-materials/
- Periodic Review Form:
  http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/biosphere-reserves/periodic-review-process/
- Biosphere Smart portal: http://www.biospheresmart.org/
- Other important documents and publications related to Biosphere Reserves and the MAB Programme:
  http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/related-info/publications/mab-official-documents/

Contact address:
Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme Secretariat
Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences
UNESCO
7, place de Fontenoy
F-75352 Paris 07 SP
France
Tel: +33 1 45 68 40 67
E-mail: mab@unesco.org
Website: http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/man-and-biosphere-programme/

(4) UNESCO Global Geoparks

- Home page:
  http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/earth-sciences/global-geoparks/
- Evaluation documents A and B:
  http://www.globalgeopark.org/aboutGGN/Documents/9995.htm
- Guidelines and Criteria for National Geoparks seeking UNESCO's assistance to join the Global Geoparks Network (GGN):
  http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/SC/pdf/Geoparks_Guidelines_Jan2014.pdf
- Statutes of the International Geoscience and Geoparks Programme and UNESCO Global Geoparks:
  http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/SC/pdf/IGGP_EN_Statutes-and-the-Guidelines.pdf
- List of UNESCO Global Geoparks:
  http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/earth-sciences/unesco-global-geoparks/list-of-unesco-global-geoparks/
- Global Network of National Geoparks:
  www.globalgeopark.org/

Contact address:
Section for Earth Sciences and Geo-hazards Risk Reduction
Division of Ecological and Earth Sciences
UNESCO
7, place de Fontenoy
F-75352 Paris 07 SP
France
Tel: +33 1 45 68 41 17
E-mail: pj.mckeever@unesco.org
Website: http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/earth-sciences/

(5) Other relevant websites

- ASEAN Heritage Parks:
  http://chm.aseanbiodiversity.org/index.php?option=com_wrapper&view=wrapper&Itemid=110/
- Bern Convention:
  http://www.coe.int/de/web/bern-convention/presentation
- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD):
  https://www.cbd.int/
- CBD Aichi Targets:
  https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/
- European Diploma for Protected Areas:
  http://www.coe.int/en/web/bern-convention/european-diploma-for-protected-areas
- Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems:
  http://www.fao.org/giahs/en/
- GLOCHAMORE project:
  http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/specific-ecosystems/mountains/glochamore/
- GLOCHAMOST project:
  http://www.unesco.org/new/en/natural-sciences/environment/ecological-sciences/specific-ecosystems/mountains/glochamost/
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN):
  http://www.iucn.org/
- IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas:
  http://www.iucn.org/theme/protected-areas/our-work/green-list
- IUCN Library System:
  https://portals.iucn.org/library/dir/publications-list
- IUCN publications linked to advice on nominations for World Heritage sites:
  http://www.iucn.org/theme/world-heritage/our-work/advisory-role/nominations
- IUCN World Heritage Outlook:
  http://www.iucn.org/theme/world-heritage/our-work/iucn-world-heritage-outlook
- Natura 2000:
  http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/index_en.htm/
- United Nations Information Portal on Multilateral Environmental Agreements (InforMEA):
  http://www.informea.org/
- UN Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform:
  https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/
- World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) – Protected Planet:
  http://www.protectedplanet.net/

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Annexes

Annex 1. Resolution WCC-2012-Res-052-EN adopted at the 2012 IUCN World Conservation Congress

Establishment of an integrated management system for UNESCO protected areas

RECOGNIZING that Jeju Island, a world renowned environmental conservation area protected by a number of internationally recognized designations covering most of its 1,847 kilometres, has been managed systematically by linking environmental information on ecosystems, underground water, scenic views, fauna and flora reserves and soil and geological features, to establish an integrated management system for conservation of nature and sustainable living in the region, based on the Geographical Information System (GIS) in accordance with the Special Act on the Establishment of Jeju Self-Governing Province and the traditional methods of practicing nature conservation;

CONCERNED that Jeju Island, being a popular international tourist destination visited by more than 10,000,000 people annually, is badly exposed to the possibilities that the protected areas around the entire island could be impacted negatively and its diverse flora and fauna could be under serious threat;

EQUALLY CONCERNED that different management guidelines, time cycles and periods provided and monitored by different authorities for the regular evaluation of Jeju protected areas, for example every 10 years by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) International Co-ordinating Council (ICC) of the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) for the Biosphere Reserve, every six years by the World Heritage Committee for the Natural World Heritage site, and every four years by the Global Geoparks Network (GGN) for the Global Geopark, impedes the establishment of a comprehensive management regime;

RECALLING Resolution 19.38 *Targets for Protected Areas Systems* adopted by the 19th IUCN General Assembly, Recommendation 16 of the 4th International Conference on Geoparks (Langkawi, 2010) on protecting 10% of the biosphere in protected areas, and Resolution 2.2 *Integrating ecosystem management in IUCN's Programme* adopted by the 2nd IUCN World Conservation Congress (Amman, 2000);

EMPHASIZING that integrated management is an important part of IUCN's mission, and that the objective of the World Heritage Convention is to conserve, while the objectives of MAB and GGN are education and eco-tourism through conservation, an integrated management system of the natural resources of Jeju is necessary and should be established;

FURTHER RECALLING Resolution 4.094 *Impetus and support for local and regional biodiversity conservation policies* adopted by the 4th IUCN World Conservation Congress (Barcelona, 2008), which seeks actions from local and regional governments to articulate policies for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, and requests the IUCN constituency to undertake a specific work programme with local and regional authorities for the development of local biodiversity and sustainable development policies and for the management of species with natural values;

CONVINCED that an integrated management system of UNESCO international protected areas is the most assured method for conservation of wild fauna and flora, and that this approach to management complies with the fundamental concept of IUCN and contributes to the sustainable use of ecosystems; and

FURTHER CONVINCED that the protected areas in Jeju have been well managed, assuring sustainable conservation through the long practice of integrated management in harmony with the history and culture of the people of Jeju;

The World Conservation Congress, at its session in Jeju, Republic of Korea, 6–15 September 2012:

1. REQUESTS the Director General, based on the learnings of the Jeju experience and in cooperation with all relevant stakeholders, to develop an integrated conservation management manual that includes guidelines and other prescriptions for the systematic conservation and sustainable use of ecosystems, to develop and standardize a management system for protected areas including the integration of the different cycles for re-evaluation of designations, and to distribute it as a model for IUCN Members;

2. URGES IUCN Members to take action to establish cooperative programmes through which international institutions collaborate on the conservation of the natural environment by establishing integrated management systems for protected areas across the world; and

3. REQUESTS that support is sought from the United Nations organizations, States and nations to legislate integrated management laws at national or State level for appropriate conservation, systematic integration and management of natural resources to bring about the integration of protected areas such as Biosphere Reserves, Natural World Heritage Sites and Global Geoparks.

State and agency Members of the United States abstained during the vote on this Motion for reasons given in the US General Statement on the IUCN Resolutions Process.

Annex 2. List of Multi-Internationally Designated Areas (MIDAs)

Country	**Ramsar site** (year / hectares / coordinates)	**World Heritage site** (year / hectares / coordinates)	**Biosphere Reserve** (year / hectares / coordinates)	**UNESCO Global Geopark** (year / hectares / coordinates)	**Comments** (**RS**=Ramsar Site; **WH**=World Heritage site; **BR**=Biosphere Reserve; **GG**=UNESCO Global Geopark)
Albania	Albanian Prespa Lakes (2013 / 15,119 / 40°51′23″N; 20°56′43″E)		Ohrid-Prespa Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (2014 / 446,244.52 / 40°59′36″N; 20°51'43″E)		BR is a transboundary site with FYR of Macedonia. Area and coordinates refer to the entire TBR.
Algeria	La Vallée d'Iherir (2001 / 6,500 / 25°24′N; 8°25′E)	Tassili n'Ajjer (1982 / 7,200,000 / 25°30′0″N; 9°0′0″E)	Tassili n'Ajjer (1986 / 7,200,000 / 25°30′0″N; 9°0′0″E)		WH property is a mixed site.
Algeria	Réserve Intégrale du Lac El Mellah (2004 / 2,257 / 36°53′N; 8°20′E) Réserve Intégrale du Lac Oubeïra (1983 / 3,160 / 36°50′N; 8°23′E) Réserve Intégrale du Lac Tonga (1983 / 2,700 / 36°53′N; 8°31′E)		El Kala (1990 / 76,438 / 36º54′N; 8º27′E)		
Andorra	Vall de Madriu-Perafita-Claror (2013 / 4,247 / 42°29′1″N; 1°36′22″E)	Madriu-Perafita-Claror Valley (2004 / 4,247 / 42°29′41″N; 1°35′44″E)			WH property is a cultural landscape.
Argentina	Humedales de Península Valdés (2012 / 42,695 / 42°30′0″S; 64°20′0″W)	Península Valdés (1999 / 360,000 / 42°30′0″S; 64°0′0″W)	Valdés (2014 / 2,015,011 / 42°34′27.17″S; 64°19′36.66″W)		
Argentina	Bahía de Samborombón (1997 / 243,965 36°15′S; 57°15′W)		Costero del Sur (1984 / 30,000 / 36°00′S; 57°30′W)		
Argentina	Lagunas Altoandinas y Puneñas de Catamarca (2009 / 1,228,175 / 26°52′S; 67°56′W)		Laguna Blanca (1982 / 973,270 / 25°30′ to 27°0′S; 66°24′ to 67°20′W)		
Argentina	Laguna de los Pozuelos (1992 / 16,224 / 22°20′S; 66°0′W)		Laguna de Pozuelos (1990 / 380,000 / 23°22′S; 66°0′W)		
Australia	Great Sandy Strait (1999 / 93,160 / 25°28′S; 152°54′E)	Fraser Island (1992 / 184,000 / 25°13′0″S; 153°7′60″E)	Great Sandy (2009 / 1,242,216 / 25°22′58.656″S; 152°49′39.828″E)		

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Australia	Bowling Green Bay (1993 / 35,500 / 19°27′S; 147°15′E)	Great Barrier Reef (1981 / 34,870,000 / 18°17′10″S; 147°41′60″E)			
	Shoalwater and Corio Bays (1996 / 239,100 / 22°40′S; 150°17′E)				
Australia	Kakadu National Park (1980 / 1,979,766 / 13°1′S; 132°26′E)	Kakadu National Park (1981 / 1,980,995 / 12°49′60″S; 132°49′60″E)			WH property is a mixed site.
Australia	Banrock Station Wetland Complex (2002 / 1,375 / 34°11′S; 140°20′E)		Riverland (1977 / 900,003 / 33°11′24″S - 140°30′E)		
	Riverland (1987 / 30,640 / 34°02′S; 140°51′E)				
Australia	Blue Lake (1996 / 338 / 36°24′S; 148°19′E)		Kosciuszko (1977 / 690,000 / 36°6′S; 148°16′48″E)		
Australia	Hattah-Kulkyne Lakes (1982 / 955 / 34°41′S; 142°26′E)		Hattah-Kulkyne and Murray-Kulkyne (1981 / 51,500 / 34°21′5.2″S; 142°19′48″E)		
Australia	Western Port (1982 / 59,297 / 38°22′S; 145°17′E)		Mornington Peninsula and Western Port (2002 / 215,105 / 38°20′0″S; 145°20′0″E)		
Australia		Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park (1987 / 132,566 / 25°19′60″S; 131°0′0″E)	Uluru (Ayers Rock-Mount Olga) (1977 / 132,550 / 24°15′S; 130°48′E)		WH property is a mixed site.
Austria	Neusiedlersee, Seewinkel & Hanság (1982 / 44,229 / 47°49′N; 16°53′E)	Fertö/Neusiedlersee Cultural Landscape (2001 / 68,369 / 47°43′9.4″N; 16°43′21.8″E)	Neusiedler See (1977 / 32,100 / 47°40′ to 47°56′N; 16°40′ to 16°52′E)		RS is a transboundary site with RS Lake Fertö and Nyrkai-Hani from Hungary. WH property is a cultural landscape and also a transboundary site with Hungary. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site. For BR designation, the Hungarian Lake Fertö BR is a separate site.
Austria	Untere Lobau (1982 / 915 / 48°10′N; 16°30′E)		Lobau (1977 / 1,037 / 48°10′N; 16°32′E)		
Bangladesh	Sundarbans Reserved Forest (1992 / 601,700 / 22°2′N; 89°31′E)	The Sundarbans (1997 / 139,500 / 21°56′60″N; 89°10′59.988″E)			
Belarus	Berezinsky Biosphere Reserve (2010 / 85,149 / 54°38′N; 28°30′E)		Berezinskiy (1978 / 117,900 / 54°28′ to 54°50′ N; 28°3′ to 28°29′ E)		

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Belarus		Białowieża Forest (1979 / 141,885 / 52°43′39″N; 23°58′52″E)	Belovezhskaya Pushcha (1993 / 201,529 / 52°30 to 52°59′N; 23°35′ to 24°20′E)		WH property is a transboundary site with Poland. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site.
Benin	Site Ramsar du Complex W (2007 / 895,480 / 11°50′N; 2°30′E)		"W" Region (2002 / 2,048,313 / 11°58′40″N; 2°29′53″E)		BR is a transboundary site with Burkina Faso and Niger. Area refers to Benin only, coordinates refer to entire TBR.
Benin	Zone humide de la Rivière Pendjari (2007 / 144,774 / 11°37′N; 1°40′E)		Pendjari (1986 / 476,596 / 11°15′N; 1°31′E)		
Bolivia	Río Matos (2013 / 1,729,788 / 14°48′54″S; 66°12′0″W)		Beni (1986 / 135,000 / 14°38′0″S to 66°18′0″W)		
Botswana	Okavango Delta System (1996 / 5,537,400 / 19°17′S; 22°54′E)	Okavango Delta (2014 / 2,023,590 / 19°16′60″S; 22°53′60″E)			
Brazil	Abrolhos Marine National Park (2010 / 91,300 / 17°49′S; 38°49′W)		Mata Atlântica (including São Paulo City Green Belt) (1993 / 78,500,000 / 2°50′ to 33°45′S; 34°45′ to 55°15′W)		
	Rio Doce State Park (2010 / 35,973 / 19°38′S; 42°32′W)				
		Atlantic Forest South-East Reserves (1999 / 468,193 / 24°10′0.012″S; 48°0′0″W)			
		Discovery Coast Atlantic Forest Reserves (1999 / 111,930 / 16°30′0″S; 39°15′0″W)			

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Brazil	Ilha do Bananal (1993 / 562,312 / 10°31′S; 50°12′W)		Cerrado (1993 / 26,600,800 / Phase I: 15°25′S; 48°12′W Phase II: 13°50′S; 47°05′W Phase III: Araguaia NP: 10°31′S; 50°10′W Nascentes do Parnaíba NP: 10°15′S; 46°20′W Uruçuí-Una Ecological Station: 08°51′S; 45°14′W Cantão State Park: 09°30′S; 50°05′W Jalapão State Park: 10°25′S; 46°15′W Mirador State Park: 06°35′S; 45°20′W Fazenda Boqueirão Private Natural Heritage Reserve: 07°35′S; 43°50′W)		
		Cerrado Protected Areas: Chapada dos Veadeiros and Emas National Parks (2001 / 367,356 / 14°0′20.5″S; 47°41′4.6″W)			
Brazil	Mamirauá (1993 / 1,124,000 / 2°18′S; 66°2′W)	Central Amazon Conservation Complex (2000 / 5,323,018 / 2°19′60″S; 62°0′30″W)	Central Amazon (2001 / 20,859,987 / 3°12′S; 63°12′W)		
Brazil	Pantanal Matogrossense (1993 / 135,000 / 17°39′S; 57°25′W)	Pantanal Conservation Area (2000 / 187,818 / 17°43′0.012″S; 57°22′59.988″W)	Pantanal (2000 /25,156,905 / 17°50′S; 56°40′W)		
	Reserva Particular del Patrimonio Natural “Fazenda Rio Negro” (2009 / 7,000 / 19°33′0″S; 56°13′0″W)				
Bulgaria	Srébarna (1975 / 1,464 / 44°6′46″N; 27°6′41″E)	Srebarna Nature Reserve (1983 / 638 / 44°6′51.984″N; 27°4′41.016″E)	Srébarna (1977 / 600 / 44°5′N; 27°7′E)		RS is a transboundary site with Romania.
		Pirin National Park (1983 / 38,350 / 41°44′33.8″N; 23°25′49.7″E)	Doupki-Djindjiritza (1977 / 2,873 / 41°48′N; 23°25′E)		
Burkina Faso	La Mare aux hippopotames (1990 / 19,200 / 11°37′N; 4°8′W)		Mare aux hippopotames (1986 / 19,200 / 11°37′N; 4°8′W)		
Burkina Faso	Parc national du W (1990 / 235,000 / 12°0′N; 2°30′E)		“W” Region (2002 / 728,335 / 11°58′40″N; 2°29′53″E)		BR is a transboundary site with Benin and Niger. Area refers to Burkina Faso only, coordinates refer to entire TBR.

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Cambodia	Boeng Chhmar and Associated River System and Floodplain (1999 / 28,000 / 12°48′20″N; 104°16′55″E)		Tonle Sap (1997 / 1,481,257 / 12°25′ to 13°25′N; 103°25′ to 104°40′E)		
	Prek Toal Ramsar Site (2015 / 21,342 / 13°9′N; 103°38′E)				
Cameroon	Partie Camerounaise du fleuve Sangha (2008 / 6,200 / 1°50′N; 16°2′E)	Sangha Trinational (2012 / 746,309 / 2°36′34″N; 16°33′15″E)			WH property is a transboundary site with the Central African Republic and Congo. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site.
Cameroon	The Waza Logone Floodplain (2006 / 600,000 / 11°38′N; 14°37′E)		Waza (1979 / 300,000 / 11°16′0″N; 14°25′0″E)		
Cameroon		Dja Faunal Reserve (1987 / 526,000 / 3°0′0″N; 13°0′0″E)	Dja (1981 / 800,000 / 3°0′N; 13°0′E)		
Canada	Mary's Point (1982 / 1,200 / 45°44′N; 64°45′W)		Fundy (2007 / 432,308 / 45°30′N; 65°0′W)		
	Shepody Bay (1987 / 12,200 / 45°47′N; 64°35′W)				
				Stonehammer Geopark (2010 / 250,000 / 45°34′46″N; 65°32′40″W)	
Canada	Peace-Athabasca Delta (1982 / 312,300 / 58°42′N; 111°8′W)	Wood Buffalo National Park (1983 / 4,480,000 / 59°21′30″N; 112°17′36″W)			
	Whooping Crane Summer Range (1982 / 1,689,500 / 60°15′N; 113°15′W)				
Canada	Lac Saint-Pierre (1998 / 11,952 / 46°8′N; 72°39′W)		Lac Saint-Pierre (2000 / 48,000 / 46°8′N; 72°39′W)		
Canada	Long Point (1982 / 13,730 / 42°35′N; 80°15′W)		Long Point (1986 / 40,600 / 43°35′N; 80°20′W)		
Canada		Waterton Glacier International Peace Park (1995 / 457,614 / 48°59′45.8″N; 113°54′15″W)	Waterton (1979 / 52,597 / 49°0′ to 49°12′N; 113°40′ to 114°10′W)		WH property is a transboundary site with the US. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site. Glacier BR is designated as a separate BR in the US.

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Central African Republic	Rivière Sangha située en République Centrafricaine (2009 / 275,000 / 2°40′N; 16°15′E)	Sangha Trinational (2012 / 746,309 / 2°36′34″N; 16°33′15″E)			WH property is a transboundary site with Cameroon and Congo. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site.
China	Hubei Dajiu Lake Wetland (2013 / 9,320 /31°28′14″N; 110°02′51″E)		Shennongjia (1990 / 70,467 / 31°21′ to 31°36′ N; 110°3′ to 110°34′E)	Shennongjia Geopark (2013 / 102,272 / N31°21′56″ to 31°43′13″N; 109°56′2″ to 110°36′55″E)	
China		South China Karst (2007 / 49,537 / 24°55′24″N; 110°21′16″E)		Shilin (Stone Forest) Geopark (2004 / 35,000 / 24°47′30″N; 103°16′30″E)	
			Maolan (1996 / 21,330 / 25°9′ to 25°20′N; 107°52′ to 108°5′E)		
China	Dafeng (*Elaphurus davidianus*) National Nature Reserve (2002 / 78,000 / 33°5′N; 120°49′E)		Yancheng (1992 / 247,260 / 33°39′N; 120°35′E)		
	Yancheng National Nature Reserve (2002 / 453,000 / 33°31′N; 120°22′E)				
China	Dalai Lake National Nature Reserve, Inner Mongolia (2002 / 740,000 / 48°33′N; 117°30′E)		Dalai Lake (2002 / 740,000 / 47°45′50″ to 49°20′20″N; 116°50′10″ to 118°10′10″E)		
China	Shankou Mangrove Nature Reserve (2002 / 4,000 / 21°28′N; 109°43′E)		Shankou Mangrove (2000 / 8,000 / 21°28′ to 21°37′N; 109°37′ to 109°47′E)		
China	Xingkai Lake National Nature Reserve (2002 / 222,488 / 45°17′N; 132°32′E)		Xingkai Lake (2007 / 336,341 / 45°1′0″N; 131°58′30″E)		
China		Huanglong Scenic and Historic Interest Area (1992 / 60,000 / 32°45′15.012″N; 103°49′19.992′E)	Huanglong (2000 / 138,000 / 32°30′ to 32°54′N; 103°26′ to 104°8′E)		
China		Jiuzhaigou Valley Scenic and Historic Interest Area (1992 / 72,000 / 33°4′59.988″N; 103°55′0.012″E)	Jiuzhaigou Valley (1997 / 64,297 / 32°54′ to 33°19′N; 103°46′ to 104°4′E)		

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China		Mount Wuyi (1999 / 99,975 / 27°43′0.012″N; 117°40′59.988″E)	Wuyishan (1987 / 56,527 / 27°33′ to 27°54′N; 117°27′ to 117°51′E)		WH property is a mixed site.
China		Sichuan Giant Panda Sanctuaries - Wolong, Mt Siguniang and Jiajin Mountains (2006 / 924,500 / 30°49′60″N; 103°0′0″E)	Wolong (1979 / 200,000 / 30°51′5.19″N; 102°53′24″E)		
China		China Danxia (2010 / 82,151 / 28°25′19″N; 106°2′33″E)		Danxiashan Geopark (2004 / 29,000 / 24°51′48″ to 25°4′12″N; 113°36′25″ to 113°47′53″E) Longhushan Geopark (2008 / 99,700 / 27°59′30″; 116°53′0″E) Taining Geopark (2005 / 49,200 / 26°89′85″N; 117°17′66″E)	
China		Lushan National Park (1996 / 30,200 / 29°25′60″; 115°52′0″E)		Lushan Geopark (2004 / 50,000 / 29°21′ to 29°45′N; 115°50′ to 116°10′E)	WH property is a cultural landscape.
China		Mount Huangshan (1990 / 16,060 / 30°10′0.012″N; 118°10′59.988″E)		Huangshan Geopark (2004 / 16,060 / 30°11N; 118°10′E)	WH property is a mixed site.
China		Mount Sanqingshan National Park (2008 / 22,950 / 28°54′57″N; 118°3′52″E)		Sanqinshan Geopark (2012 / 229,500 / 28°48′22″ to 29°0′42″N; 117°58′20″ to 118°8′28″E)	
China		Mount Taishan (1987 / 25,000 / 36°16′0.012″N; 117°5′60″E)		Taishan Geopark (2006 / 15,900 / 43°58′23″N; 117°4′16″E)	WH property is a mixed site.
China		Wulingyuan Scenic and Historic Interest Area (1992 / 26,400 / 29°19′59.988″N; 110°30′0″E)		Zhangjiajie Geopark (2004 / 39,800 / 29°13′18″ to 29°27′27″N; 110°18′0″ to 110°41′15″E)	
China			Wudalianchi (2003 / 106,000 / 126°0′ to 126°26′E; 48°34′ to 48°48′N)	Wudalianchi Geopark (2004 /106,000 / 126°31′0″N; 125°57′0″E)	

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Colombia	Sistema Delta Estuarino del Río Magdalena, Ciénaga Grande de Santa Marta (1998 / 400,000 / 10°45′N; 74°29′W)		Ciénaga Grande de Santa Marta (2000 / 512,566 / 10°44′N; 74°30′W)		
Congo	Sangha-Nouabalé-Ndoki (2009 / 1,525,000 / 1°41′N; 16°26′E)	Sangha Trinational (2012 / 746,309 / 2°36′34″N; 16°33′15″E)			WH property is a transboundary site with Cameroon and Central African Republic. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site.
Costa Rica	Turberas de Talamanca (2003 / 192,520 / 9°30′N; 83°42′W)	Talamanca Range-La Amistad Reserves/ La Amistad National Park (1983 / 570,045 / 9°24′25.5″N; 82°56′19.7″W)	La Amistad (1982 / 782,687.08 / 8°41′ to 10°4′N; 82°42′ to 83°56′W)		WH property is a transboundary site with Panama. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site.La Amistad BR in Panama is listed as a separate site.
Costa Rica	Isla del Coco (1998 / 99,623 / 5°32′N; 86°59′W)	Cocos Island National Park (1997 / 199,790 / 5°31′60″N; 87°4′0″W)			
Costa Rica	Caño Negro (1991 / 9,969 / 10°52′N; 84°45′W)		Aqua y Paz (2007 / 916,120 / 10°36′48.29″N; 84°35′54.55″W)		
Côte d'Ivoire		Comoé National Park (1983 / 1,150,000 / 9°0′0″N; 4°0′0″W)	Comoé (1983 / 1,155,330 / 8°35′N; 3°32′ W)		
Côte d'Ivoire		Taï National Park (1982 / 330,000 / 5°45′0″N; 7°40′0.012″W)	Taï (1977 / 554,000 / 8°15′N; 7°20′W)		
Cuba	Buenavista (2002 / 313,500 / 22°27′N; 78°49′W)		Buenavista (2000 / 313,500 / 22°8′ to 22°46′N; 78°46′ to 79°25′W)		
Cuba	Ciénaga de Zapata (2001 / 452,000 / 22°20′N; 81°22′W)		Ciénaga de Zapata (2000 / 728,039 / 22°1′ to 22°40′N; 80°35′ to 82°9′W)		
Cuba		Alejandro de Humboldt National Park (2001 / 71,140 / 20°26′60″N; 75°0′0″W)	Cuchillas del Toa (1987 / 208,305 / 20°16′ to 20°35′N; 74°30′ to 75°8′W)		

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Czech Republic	Lednické rybníky (Lednice fishponds) (1990 / 650 / 48°46′N; 16°46′E)	Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape (1996 / 14,320 / 48°46′32.988″N; 16°46′30″E)	Lower Morava (1986 / 35,400 / 48°37′ to 48°53′N; 16°36′ to 17°5′E)		Mokrădy dolního Podyjí RS is a transboundary site, part of the Trilateral Ramsar Site Floodplains of the Morava-Dyje-Danube Confluence. WH property is a cultural landscape.
	Mokrădy dolního Podyjí (Floodplain of Lower Dyje River) (1993 / 11,525 / 48°50′N; 16°45′E)				
Czech Republic	Krkonošská rašeliniště (Krkonose mountain mires) (1993 / 230 / 50°46′N; 15°38′E)		Krkonose/ Karkonosze (1992 / 71,454 / 50°35′ to 50°49′ N; 15°23′ to 15°53′E)		RS is a transboundary site with Polish Subalpine peatbogs in Karkonosze Mountains RS. BR is a transboundary site with Polish Karkonosze BR. Areas and coordinates for BR refer to Czech part only.
Czech Republic	Šumavská rašeliniště (Sumava peatlands) (1990 / 6,371 / 49°5′N; 13°25′E)		Šumava (1990 / 167,000 / 49°1′N; 13°34′E)		
Czech Republic	Třeboňská rašeliniště (Trebon mires) (1993 / 1,100 / 48°32′N; 14°49′E)		Trebon Basin (1977 / 70,000 / 49°0′N; 14°50′E)		
	Třeboňské rybníky (Trebon fishponds) (1990 / 10,165 / 48°38′N; 14°49′E)				
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Parc national des Virunga (1996 / 800,000 / 1°15′S; 29°30′E)	Virunga National Park (1979 / 800,000 / 0°55′0″N; 29°10′0″E)			
Denmark	Hochstetter Forland (1988 / 184,820 / 75°28′N; 19°52′W)		North-East Greenland (1977 / 70,000,000 / 71°0′ to 83°0′N; 11°39′ to 63°0′W)		
	Kilen (1988 / 51,280 / 81°10′N; 13°24′W)				
Dominican Republic	Lago Enriquillo (2002 / 20,000 / 18°28′N; 71°39′W)		Jaragua-Bahoruco-Enriquillo (2002 / 476,700 / 18°1′18.8′N; 71°34′34.2′W)		

Country	**Ramsar site** (year / hectares / coordinates)	**World Heritage site** (year / hectares / coordinates)	**Biosphere Reserve** (year / hectares / coordinates)	**UNESCO Global Geopark** (year / hectares / coordinates)	**Comments** (**RS**=Ramsar Site; **WH**=World Heritage site; **BR**=Biosphere Reserve; **GG**=UNESCO Global Geopark)
Ecuador	Humedales del Sur de Isabela (2002 / 872 / 0°57′S; 90°58′W)	Galápagos Islands (1978 / 14,066,514 / 0°49′0.012″N; 91°0′0″W)	Archipielágo de Colon (Galápagos) (1984 / 14,761,844 / North: Darwin Island: 1°39′N; 92°0′W South: Floreana Island: 1°17′S; 90°26′W East: San Cristóbal Island: 0°48′S; 89°25′W West: Fernandina Island: 0°22′S; 91°31′W)		
Ecuador	Sistema Lacustre Lagunas del Compadre (2012 / 23,952 / 4°12′26″S; 79°6′10″W) Sistema Lacustre Yacuri (2012 / 27,762 / 4°38′27″S; 79°21′12″W)		Podocarpus-El Cóndor (2007 / 1,140,080 / 4°11′16″S; 79°0′32″W)		
Egypt	Wadi El Rayan Protected Area (2012 / 175,790 / 29°12′N; 30°18′E)	Wadi Al-Hitan (Whale Valley) (2005 / 20,015 / 29°19′59.988″N; 30°10′59.988″E)			
El Salvador	Complejo Bahía de Jiquilisco (2005 / 63,500 / 13°13′N; 88°32′W) Complejo Jaltepeque (2011 / 49,454 / 13°22′N; 89°3′W)		Xiriualtique Jiquilisco (2007 / 101,607 / 13°15′ to 13°18′N; 88°48′ to 88°15′W)		
El Salvador	Complejo Güija (2010 / 10,180 / 14°17′N; 89°29′W)		Trifinio Fraternidad (2011 / 158,541.92 / 14°19′N; 89°22′W)		BR is a transboundary site with Guatemala and Honduras. Area and coordinates refer to El Salvador part only.
Estonia	Hiiumaa Isles and Käina Bay (1997 /17,700 / 58°48′N; 22°58′E) Laidevahe Nature Reserve (2003 / 2,424 / 58°18′N; 22°49′E)		West Estonian Archipelago (1990 / 395,500 / 58°30′N; 22°50′E)		
Finland	Quark Archipelago (1974 / 63,699 / 63°26′N; 21°25′E)	High Coast / Kvarken Archipelago (2000 / 336,900 / 63°17′60″N; 21°18′0″E)			WH property is a transboundary site with Sweden. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site.

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France	Camargue (1986 / 85,000 / 43°30′N; 4°30′E)		Camargue (Delta du Rhône) (1977 / 193,000 / 44°33′N; 6°4′33″E)		
France	Grand Cul-de-Sac Marin de la Guadaloupe (1993 / 29,500 / 16°19′26″N; 61°35′28″W)		Archipel de la Guadeloupe (1992 / 118,954 / 16°8′24″N; 61°22′48″E)		
France	Le marais audomarois (2008 / 3,726 / 50°46″N; 2°16′E)		Marais Audomarois (2013 / 22,300 /50°44′46″N; 2°15′42″E)		
France	Impluvium d'Evian (2008 / 3,275 / 46°22′N; 6°36′E)			Chablais Geopark (2012 / 87200 / 46°22′25″N; 6°28′39″W)	
	Rives du Lac Léman (1991 / 1,915 / 46°21′N; 6°23′E)				
France		The Causses and the Cévennes, Mediterranean agro-pastoral cultural landscape (2011 / 302,319 / 44°13′13″N; 3°28′23″E)	Cévennes (1984 / 305,000 / 44°15′44″N; 3°44′35″E)		WH property is a cultural landscape.
France			Luberon-Lure (1997 / 244,645 / 43°49′N; 5°26′E)	Parc Naturel Régional du Luberon (2005 / 195,300 / 43°51′3″ N; 5°29′7″ E)	
Germany	Elbaue zwischen Schnackenburg und Lauenburg (1976 / 7,560 / 53°08′N; 11°05′E)		Flusslandschaft Elbe (1979 / 342,847 / 51°42′ to 53°24′N; 10°26′ to 12°43′E)		
	Aland-Elbe-Niederung und Elbaue Jerichow (2003 / 8,605 / 52°45′N; 11°49′E)				
	Niederung der Unterevel/Gülper See, Schollener See (1978 / 8,920 /52°45′N; 12°13′E)				
		Garden Kingdom of Dessau-Wörlitz (2000 / 14,500 / 51°50′33″N; 12°25′14.988″E)			WH property is a cultural landscape.

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Germany	Hamburgisches Wattenmeer (1990 / 11,700 / 53°53′N; 08°17′E)	Wadden Sea (2009 / 1,143,403 / 53°31′43″N; 8°33′22″E)	Wadden Sea of Hamburg (1992 / 11,700 / 53°50′ to 53°58′N; 8°17′ to 8°34′E)		WH property is a transboundary site with Denmark and the Netherlands. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site.
	Schleswig-Holstein Wadden Sea and adjacent areas (1991 / 454,988 / 54°30′N; 8°40′E)		Wadden Sea and Hallig Islands of Schleswig-Holstein (1990 / 443,100 / 53°59′56″N; 8°16′2″E)		
	Wattenmeer, Elbe-Weser-Dreieck (1976 /38,460 / 53°50′N; 8°24′E)		Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony (1992 / 240,000 / 53°37′ to 53°55′N; 6°35′ to 8°41′E)		
	Wattenmeer, Jadebusen & westliche Wesermündung (1976 / 49,490 / 53°40′N; 8°19′E)				
	Wattenmeer, Ostfriesisches Wattenmeer & Dollart (1976 / 121,620 / 53°42′N; 7°21′E)				
	Niederelbe, Barnkrug-Otterndorf (1976 / 11,760 / 53°47′N; 9°07′E)				
Germany		Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and the Ancient Beech Forests of Germany (2007 / 33,670 / 49°5′10″N; 22°32′10″E)	Schorfheide-Chorin (1990 / 129,161 / 53°0′N; 13°40′E)		WH property is a transboundary site with Slovakia and Ukraine. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site.
Germany		Messel Pit Fossil Site (1995 / 42 / 49°55′0.012″N; 8°45′14.004″E)		Geopark Bergstrasse-Odenwald (2004 / 350,000 / 49°19′12″N; 8°21′19″E)	
Germany			Schwäbische Alb / Swabian Alb (2009 / 84,525 / 48°26′4.5428″N; 9°28′43.5642″E)	Geopark Swabian Albs (2004 / 925,000 / 48°41′38″N; 9°53′49″E)	
Ghana	Songor Lagoon (1992 / 28,740 / 5°45′N; 0°30′E)		Songor (2011 / 51,113.3 /5°45′30″ to 6°0′25″N; 0°19′ to 0°41′40″E)		

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Guatemala	Parque Nacional Yaxhá-Nakum-Naranjo (2006 / 37,160 / 17°9′N; 89°25′W)	Tikal National Park (1979 / 57,600 / 17°13′0″N; 89°37′0″W)	Maya (1990 / 2,112,940 / 16°48′ to 17°49′N; 89°9′ to 91°26′W)		WH property is a mixed site.
	Parque Nacional Laguna del Tigre (1990 / 335,080 / 17°27′N; 90°52′W)				
Guinea	Gambie-Koulountou (2005 / 281,400 / 12°1′N; 13°34′W)		Badiar (2002 / 284,300 / 12°30′ to 12°42′N; 13°12 to 13°30W)		
Guinea		Mount Nimba Strict Nature Reserve (1981 / 18,000 / 07°36′11.448″N; 08°23′27.492″W)	Mont Nimba (1980 / 145,200 / 7°23′ to 9°0′N; 9°0′ to 10°0′W)		WH property is a transboundary site with Côte d'Ivoire. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site.
Guinea-Bissau	Archipel Bolama-Bijagós (2014 / 1,046,950 / 11°14′0″N; 16°2′0″W)		Bolama Bijagós (1996 / 101,230 / 10°43′0″ to 11°40′0″N; 15°20′0″ to 17°0′0″W)		
Honduras		Río Plátano Biosphere Reserve (1982 / 350,000 / 15°44′40″N; 84°40′30″W)	Río Plátano (1980 / 250,000 / 15°0′ to 15°50′N; 84°15′ to 85°30′W)		
Hungary	Baradla Cave System and related wetlands (2001 / 2,075 / 48°28′N; 20°30′E)	Caves of Aggtelek Karst and Slovak Karst (1995 / 56,651 / 48°28′32.628″N; 20°29′12.732″E)	Aggtelek (1979 / 45,311 / 48°30′N; 20°36′E)		RS is a transboundary site with Domica RS from Slovakia. WH property is also a transboundary site with Slovakia. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site.
Hungary	Hortobágy (1979 / 32,037 / 47°34′N; 20°55′E)	Hortobágy National Park - the Puszta (1999 / 74,820 / 47°35′40.488″N; 21°9′24.408″E)	Hortobágy (1979 / 154,591 / 47°25′ to 47°15′N; 20°54′ to 21°21′E)		WH property is a cultural landscape.
Hungary	Lake Fertö (1989 / 8,432 / 47°45′N; 16°45′E)	Fertö / Neusiedlersee Cultural Landscape (2001 / 68,369 / 47°43′9.4″N; 16°43′21.8″E)	Lake Fertö (1979 / 23,102 / 47°0′N; 16°43′E)		RS are part of a transboundary site with Neusiedlersee, Seewinkel & Hanság RS from Austria. WH property is a cultural landscape and also a transboundary site with Austria. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site. For BR designation, the Austrian Neusiedler See BR is a separate site.
	Nyirkai-Hany (2006 / 460 / 47°42′N; 17°11′E)				

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Hungary	Lake Kolon at Izsák (1997 / 2,962 / 46°45′N; 19°21′E)		Kiskunság (1979 / 22,095 / 47°12′ to 46°36′N; 19°4′ to 19°39′E)		
	Upper Kiskunság alkaline lakes (1979 / 6,637 / 46°49′N; 19°11′E)				
	Upper Kiskunság alkaline steppes (2006 / 13,632 / 47°4′N; 19°10′E)				
India	Keoladeo National Park (1981 / 2,873 / 27°13′N; 77°32′E)	Keoladeo National Park (1985 / 2,873 / 27°09′32″N; 77°30′31″E)			
India		Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks (1988 / 71,783 / 30°43′0.012″N; 79°40′0.012″E)	Nanda Devi (2004 / 640,703 / 30°5′ to 31°2′N; 79°12′ to 80°19′E)		
India		Sundarbans National Park (1987 / 133,010 / 21°56′42″N; 88°53′45″E)	Sundarbans (2001 / 963,000 / 21°30′ to 22°15′N; 88°10′ to 89°10′E)		
Indonesia		Komodo National Park (1991 / 219,322 / 8°32′35.988″S; 119°29′21.984″E)	Komodo (1977 / 1,118,003 / 8°37′30″S; 119°35′27″E)		
Indonesia		Tropical Rainforest Heritage of Sumatra (2004 / 2,595,124 / 2°30′0″S; 101°30′0″E)	Gunung Leuser (1981 / 5,294,761 / 2°55′ to 4°5′N; 96°55′ to 98°30′E)		
Iran, Islamic Republic of	Choghakhor Wetland (2010 / 1,687 / 31°55′0″N; 50°54′0″E)		Tang-e-Sayad & Sabzkuh (2015 / 532,878 / 31°54′24″N; 50°50′20″E)		
Iran, Islamic Republic of	Khuran Straits (1975 / 100,000 / 26°45′N; 55°40′E)		Hara (1976 / 206,243 / 26°45′ to 26°58′N; 55°30′ to 55°50′E)		
Iran, Islamic Republic of	Lake Parishan and Dasht-e-Arjan (1975 / 6,200 / 29°30′N; 52°00′E)		Arjan (1976 / 91,860 / 29°28′ to 29°43′N; 51°55′ to 52°5′E)		
Iran, Islamic Republic of	Lake Urmia (or Orumiyeh) (1975 / 483,000 / 37°30′N; 45°30′E)		Lake Oromeeh (1976 / 1,142,506 / 37°0′ to 38°12′N; 44°40′ to 45°50′E)		

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Iran, Islamic Republic of	Miankaleh Peninsula, Gorgan Bay & Lapoo-Zaghmarz Ab-Bandan (1975 / 100,000 / 36°50′N; 53°17′E)		Miankaleh (1976 / 96,678 / 36°45′ to 36°55′N; 53°25′ to 54°5′E)		
Ireland	North Bull Island (1988 / 1,436 / 53°22′N; 6°8′W)		Dublin Bay (1981 / 30,536 / 53°17′N; 6°5′W)		
Italy		Cilento and Vallo di Diano National Park with the Archeological Sites of Paestum and Velia and the Certosa di Padula (1998 / 159,110 / 40°16′60″N; 15°16′0″E)	Cilento and Vallo di Diano (1997 / 395,503 / 40°20′N; 15°20′E)	Cilento and Vallo di Diano Geopark (2010 / 184,100 / 40°13′49″N; 15°15′58″ E)	WH property is a cultural landscape.
Italy		The Dolomites (2009 / 141,903 / 46°36′47″; 12°9′47″E)	Ledro Alps and Judicaria (2015 / 47,427 / 45°58′44.9652″ N; 10°47′26.732″ E)	Adamello-Brenta Geopark (2008 / 114,600 / 46°7′9″; 10°45′8″E)	
Italy	Valle Bertuzzi (1981 / 3,100 / 44°47′0″N; 12°14′0″E) Valle di Gorino (1981 / 1,330 / 44°48′0″N; 12°21′0″E) Valli residue del comprensorio di Comacchio (1981 / 13,500 / 44°37′0″N; 12°11′0″E)		Po Delta (2015 / 139,398 / 44°51′16″N; 12°13′0″E)		
Japan	Yakushima Nagata-hama (2005 / 10 / 30°24′N; 130°25′E)	Yakushima (1993 / 10,747 / 30°19′60″N; 130°31′60″E)	Yakushima Island (1980 / 18,958 / 30°20′N; 130°30′E)		
Japan	Yoshigadaira Wetlands (2015 / 887 / 36°38′59″N; 138°34′9″E)		Shiga Highland (1980 / 30,281 / 36°43′0″N; 138°30′0″E)		
Kazakhstan	Tengiz-Korgalzhyn Lake System (designated by USSR) (1976 / 353,341 / 50°25′N; 69°15′E) Naurzum Lake System (2009 / 139,714 / 51°32′N; 64°26′E)	Saryarka - Steppe and Lakes of Northern Kazakhstan (2008 / 450,344 / 50°25′60″N; 69°11′20″E)	Korgalzhyn (2012 / 1,603,171 / 50°5′41″N; 69°12′9″E)		

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Kazakhstan	Alakol-Sasykkol Lakes System (2009 / 914,663 / 46°16′N; 81°32′E)		Alakol (2013 / 557,679 / 46°11′N; 81°46′E)		
Kazakhstan	Ural River Delta and adjacent Caspian Sea Coast (2009 / 111,500 / 46°58′N; 51°45′E)		Ak-Zhayik (2014 / 340,846 / 46°55′06″N; 51°37′40″E)		
Kenya	Lake Bogoria (2001 / 10,700 / 0°15′N; 36°5′E) Lake Elmenteita (2005 / 10,880 / 0°46′S; 36°23′E) Lake Nakuru (1990 / 18,800 / 0°24′S; 36°5′E)	Kenya Lake System in the Great Rift Valley (2011 / 32,034 / 0°26′33″N; 36°14′24″E)			
Kenya		Mount Kenya National Park/ Natural Forest (1997 / 202,334 / 0°9′18″N; 37°18′56″E)	Mount Kenya (1978 / 71,759 / 0°10′S; 37°20′E)		
Kyrgyzstan	Issyk-Kul State Reserve with the Issyk-Kul Lake (designated by URSS) (1976 / 626,439 / 42°25′0″N; 77°15′0″E)		Issyk-Kul (2001 / 4,311,588 / 41°50′24″N; 77°46′48″E)		
Latvia	Northern Bogs (Ziemelu purvi) (2002 / 5,318 / 57°58′N; 24°50′E)		Northern Vidzeme (1997 / 493,320 / 57°20′ to 58°10′N; 24°20′ to 26°0′E)		RS is part of North Livonian TRS with Sookuninga Nature Reserve and Nigula Nature Reserve RS in Estonia.
Lithuania	Žuvintas (1993 / 7,500 / 54°28′N; 23°35′E)		Žuvintas (2011 / 60,190 / 54°28′32″N; 23°32′49″E)		
Macedonia, Former Yugoslav Republic of	Lake Prespa (1995 / 18,920 / 40°56′N; 21°01′E)		Ohrid-Prespa Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (2014 / 446,244.52 / 40°59'36″N; 20°51'43″E)		BR is a transboundary site with Albania. Area and coordinates refer to the entire TBR.
Malawi	Lake Chilwa (1996 / 224,800 / 15°15′S; 35°45′E)		Lake Chilwa Wetland (2006 / 614,181.75 / 15°30′S; 35°30′E)		
Mauritania	Banc d'Arguin (1982 / 1,200,000 / 20°50′N; 16°45′W)	Banc d'Arguin National Park (1989 / 1,200,000 / 20°14′4.992″N; 16°6′32.004″W)			

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Mexico	Agua Dulce (2008 / 39 / 31°55′N; 113°1′W)	El Pinacate and Gran Desierto de Altar Biosphere Reserve (2013 / 714,566 / 32°0′0″N; 113°55′0″W)	Alto Golfo de California (1993 / 2,934,447 / 31°0′ to 32°10′N; 113°30′ to 115°15′W)		
	Humedales de Bahía Adair (2009 / 42,430 / 31°35′N; 113°53′W)	Islands and Protected Areas of the Gulf of California (2005 / 688,558 / 27°37′36.012″; 112°32′44.988″W)			
	Humedales del Delta del Río Colorado (1996 / 250,000 / 31°50′N; 114°59′W)				
	Canal del Infiernillo y esteros del territorio Comcaac (Xepe Coosot) (2009 / 29,700 / 29°10′N; 112°14′W)		Islas de Golfo de California (1995 / 665,474 / 23°0′ to 32°0′N; 106°0′ to 115°0′W)		
	Isla San Pedro Mártir (2004 / 30,165 / 28°23′N; 112°19′W)				
	Lagunas de Santa María-Topolobampo-Ohuira (2009 / 22,500 / 25°36′33″N; 109°6′23″W)				
	Parque Nacional Bahía de Loreto (2004 / 206,581 / 25°49′N; 111°8′W)				
	Estero El Soldado (2011 / 350 / 27°57′48″N; 110°58′33″W)				
	Marismas Nacionales (1995 / 200,000 / 22°08′N; 105°32′W)				
	Parque Nacional Cabo Pulmo (2008 / 7,100 / 23°27′N; 109°25′W)				
	Sistema Lagunar San Ignacio – Navachiste – Macapule (2008 / 79,873 / 25°26′0″N; 108°49′0″W)				
			El Vizcaino (1993 / 2,546,790 / 26°22′20″ to 28°0′0″N; 112°14′33″ to 115°16′32″W)		
	Laguna Ojo de Liebre (2004 /36,600 / 27°45′N; 114°5′W)	Whale Sanctuary of El Vizcaino (1993 / 369,631 / 27°47′31.992″N; 114°13′40.008″W)			
	Laguna San Ignacio (2004 / 17,500 / 26°45′N; 113°7′W)				

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Mexico	Sian Ka'an (2003 / 652,193 / 19°30′N; 87°37′W)	Sian Ka'an (1987 / 528,000 / 19°22′59.988″; 87°47′30.012″W)	Sian Ka'an (1986 / 984,614 / 19°22′59.988″; 87°47′30.012″W)		
Mexico	Área de Protección de Flora y Fauna Cuatrociénegas (1995 / 84,347 / 26°51′N; 102°8′W)		Cuatrociénegas (2006 / 413,458 / 26°31′0″ to 27°25′24″N; 101°46′4″ to 102°33′47″W)		
Mexico	Áreas de Protección de Flora y Fauna Nahá y Metzabok (2004 / 7,216 / 17°3′N; 91°36′W)		Nahá-Metzabok (2010 / 43,362 / 16°56′41″ to 17°8′36″N; 91°32′52″ to 91°37′43″W)		
Mexico	Cuencas y corales de la zona costera de Huatulco (2003 / 44,400 / 15°47′N; 96°12′W)		Huatulco (2006 / 23,781 / 15°39′12″ to 15°47′10″N; 96°6′30″ to 96°15′0″W)		
Mexico	Ecosistema Arroyo Verde APFF Sierra de Álamos Río Cuchujaqui (2010 / 174 / 27°1′N; 108°45′W)		Sierra de Álamos-Río Cuchujaqui (2007 / 135,872 / 27°12′30″ to 26°53′9″N; 108°29′32″ to 109°3′0″W)		
Mexico	Humedales de Importancia Especialmente para la Conservación de Aves Acuáticas Reserva Ría Lagartos (1986 / 60,348 / 21°30′0″N; 88°0′0″W)		Ría Lagartos (2004 / 60,348 / 21°23′96″ to 21°37′29.64″N; 87°30′50.76″ to 88°14′33.36″W)		
Mexico	Islas Marietas (2004 / 1,357 / 20°42′N; 105°34′W)		Islas Marietas (2008 / 15,507 / 20°41′11″ to 20°42′47″N; 105°33′18″ to 105°36′0″W)		
Mexico	Laguna Madre (2004 / 307,894 / 24°44′N; 97°35′W)		Laguna Madre y Delta de Río Bravo (2006 / 806,968 / 23°48′ to 25°27′N; 90°23′ to 97°52′W)		
Mexico	Laguna de Metztitlán (2004 / 2,937 / 20°41′N; 98°52′W)		Barranca de Metztitlán (2006 / 368,962 / 20°14′15″ to 20°45′26″N; 98°23′0″ to 98°57′8″W)		

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Mexico	Manglares y humedales de la Laguna de Sontecomapan (2004 / 8,921 / 18°32′N; 95°2′W)		Los Tuxtlas (2006 / 334,000 / 18°5′ to 18°45′N; 94°35′ to 95°30′W)		
Mexico	Parque Nacional Lagunas de Montebello (2003 / 6,022 / 16°6′N; 91°43′W)		Lagunas de Montebello (2009 / 13,671 / 16°4′ to 16°10′N; 91°37′ to 91°47′W)		
Mexico	Parque Nacional Sistema Arrecifal Veracruzano (2004 / 52,238 / 19°8′N; 96°0′W)		Sistema Arrecifal Veracruzano (2006 / 80,945 / 19°2′16″ to 19°15′32″N; 95°46′55″ to 96°11′45″W)		
Mexico	Presa Jalpan (2004 / 68 / 21°12′N; 99°28′W)		Sierra Gorda (2001 / 378,227 / 23°50′N; 45°0′W)		
Mexico	Reserva de la Biosfera Banco Chinchorro (2004 / 144,360 / 18°35′N; 87°20′W)		Banco Chinchorro (2003 / 144,866 / 18°21′37″ to 18°48′46″N; 87°11′59″ to 87°28′28″W)		
Mexico	Reserva de la Biosfera Chamela-Cuixmala (2004 / 13,142 / 19°29′N; 104°59′W)		Chamela-Cuixmala (2006 / 63,950 / 19°30′0″N; 105°0′0″W)		
Mexico	Reserva de la Biosfera La Encrucijada (1996 / 144,868 / 15°11′N; 92°53′W)		La Encrucijada (2006 / 359,000 / 14°43′ to 15°43′N; 92°26′ to 93°20′W)		
Mexico	Reserva de la Biosfera Pantanos de Centla (1995 / 302,706 / 18°18′N; 92°27′W)		Pantanos de Centla (2006 / 302,706 / 17°57′53″ to 18°39′3″N; 92°6′39″ to 92°47′58″W)		
Mexico	Reserva de la Biosferea Ría Celestún (2004 / 81,482 / 20°45′N; 90°22′W)		Ría Celestún (2004 / 181,482.33 / 20°59′33.72″ to 20°31′37.74″N; 90°14′23.10″ to 90°31′13.14″W)		
Mexico		Ancient Maya City and Protected Tropical Forests of Calakmul, Campeche (2002 / 331,397 / 18°3′10.9″N; 89°44′14.22″W)	Región de Calakmul (2006 / 1,371,766 / 17°48′46″ to 19°41′57″N; 88°39′22″ to 90°7′45″W)		WH property is a mixed site.
Mexico		Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve (2008 / 13,552 / 19°36′23″N; 100°14′30″W)	Mariposa Monarca (2006 / 1,011,252 / 19°39′N; 100°8′W)		

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Mongolia	Lake Uvs and its surrounding wetlands (2004 / 585,000 / 50°20′N; 92°45′E)	Uvs Nuur Basin (2003 / 898,064 / 50°16′30″N; 92°43′11″E)	Uvs Nuur Basin (1997 / 771,700 / 52°31′ to 52°43′N, 92°28′ to 92°48′E (Uvs Nuur unit) 49°39′ to 49°51′N, 91°19′ to 91°39′E (Turgen Uul unit) 49°45′ to 50°29′N, 94°23′ to 95°35′E (Altan Els unit) 50°12′ to 50°23′N, 90°24′ to 91°20′E (Tsaagan Shovod unit)		WH property is a transboundary site with the Russian Federation. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site.
Mongolia	Mongol Daguur (Mongolian Dauria) (1997 / 210,000 / 49°42′N; 115°6′E)		Mongol Daguur (2007 / 732,000 / 46°6′ to 46°52′N; 116°11′ to 118°27′E)		
Montenegro		Durmitor National Park (1980 / 32,100 / 43°7′58.8″N; 19°0′59.76″E)	Tara River Basin (1976 / 182,889 / 42°32N; 18°50′ to 19°45′E)		
Morocco	Archipel et dunes d'Essawira (2005 / 4,000 / 31°30′N; 9°48′W)		Arganeraie (1998 / 2,568,780 / 29°15′ to 31°20′N; 8°10′ to 10°25′W)		
Morocco	Oasis du Tafilalet (2005 / 65,000 / 31°17′N; 4°15′W)		Oasis du sud marocain (2000 / 7,185,371 / 29°28′ to 32°9′N; 3°34′ to 7°45′W)		
Namibia	Sandwich Harbour (1995 / 16,500 / 23°23′S; 14°29′E)	Namib Sand Sea (2013 / 3,077,700 / 24°53′7″S; 15°24′28″E)			
Nepal	Beeshazar and Associated Lakes (2003 / 3,200 / 27°37′N; 84°26′E)	Chitwan National Park (1984 / 93,200 / 27°30′0″N; 84°19′59.988″E)			
Nepal	Gokyo and Associated Lakes (2007 / 7,770 / 27°52′N; 80°42′E)	Sagarmatha National Park (1979 / 124,400 / 27°57′55.008″N; 86°54′47.016″E)			
Netherlands	Waddenzee (Wadden Sea) (1984 / 249,998 / 53°14′N; 5°14′E)	Wadden Sea (2009 / 1,143,403 / 53°31′43″N; 8°33′22″E)	Waddensea Area (1986 / 260,000 / 52°52′ to 53°33′N; 4°45′ to 7°13′E)		WH property is a transboundary site with Germany and Denmark. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site.

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Nicaragua	Los Guatuzos (1997 / 43,750 / 11°0′N; 84°52′W)		Río San Juan (2003 / 1,392,900 / 11°29′0″N; 84°21′55″W)		
	Refugio de Vida Silvestre Río San Juan (2001 / 43,000 / 10°56′N; 83°40′W)				
	Sistema de Humedales de la Bahía de Bluefields (2001 / 86,501 / 11°55′N; 83°45′W)				
	Sistema de Humedales de San Miguelito (2001 / 43,475 / 11°25′N; 84°51′W)				
Niger	Gueltas et Oasis de l'Air (2005 / 2,413,237 / 18°18′N; 9°30′E)	Aïr and Ténéré Natural Reserves (1991 / 7,736,000 / 18°0′0″N; 9°0′0″E)	Aïr et Ténéré (1997 / 24,400,070 / 19°30′N; 8°30′E)		
Niger	Parc national du "W" (1987 /220,000 / 12°15′N; 2°25′E)	W National Park of Niger (1996 / 220,000 / 12°20′60″N; 02°21′0″E)	"W" Region (2002 / 728,000 / 11°58′40″N; 2°29′53″E)		BR is a transboundary site with Benin and Burkina Faso. Area refers to Niger only, coordinates refer to entire TBR.
	Dallol Bosso (2004 / 376,162 / 13°57′0″N; 2°98′0″E)				
Panama	San San-Pond Sak (1993 / 16,414 / 9°30′N; 82°30′W)	Talamanca Range-La Amistad Reserves / La Amistad National Park (1983 / 570,045 / 9°24′25.5″N; 82°56′19.7″W)	La Amistad (2000 / 655,558 / 9°5′N; 82°40′W)		WH property is a transboundary site with Costa Rica. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site. La Amistad BR in Costa Rica is listed as a separate site.
Panama		Darien National Park (1981 / 579,000 / 7°44′10″N; 77°32′50″W)	Darién (1983 / 859,333 / 7°10′ to 8°30′N; 77°20′ to 78°20′W)		
Peru		Huascarán National Park (1985 / 340,000 / 9°19′59.988″S; 77°24′0″W)	Huascarán (1977 / 1,155,800 / 8°50 to 10°40′S; 77°7′ to 77°49′W)		
Peru		Manú National Park (1987 / 1,716,295 / 12°15′0″S; 71°45′0″W)	Manú (1977 / 2,292,806 / 11°17′ to 13°11′S; 71°10′ to 72°22′W)		

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Philippines	Puerto Princesa Subterranean River National Park (2012 / 22,202 / 10°10′0″N; 118°55′0″E)	Puerto-Princesa Subterranean River National Park (1999 / 22,202 / 10°10′0″N; 118°55′0″E)	Palawan (1990 / 1,489,600 / 8°0′ to 11°30′N; 117°30′ to 121°45′E)		
	Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park (1999 / 96,828 / 8°57′N; 119°52′E)	Tubbataha Reefs Natural Park (1993 / 130,028 / 8°57′12″N; 119°52′3″E)			
Poland	Luknajno Lake Nature Reserve (1977 / 1,189 / 53°49′N; 21°38′E)		Luknajno Lake (1976 / 1,410 / 53°49′N; 21°38′E)		
Poland	Poleski National Park (2002 / 9,762 / 51°17′N; 23°27′E)		West Polesie (2012 / 263,016 / 51°30′28″N; 23°37′9″E)		BR is a transboundary site with Belarus and Ukraine. Area refers to Polish part only, coordinates refer to the entire TBR.
Poland	Slowinski National Park (Slowinski Park Narodowy) (1995 / 32,744 / 54°43′N; 17°18′E)		Slowinski (1976 / 62,964 / 54°39′ to 54°46′N; 17°3′ to 17°33′E)		
Poland	Subalpine peatbogs in Karkonosze Mountains (2002 / 40 / 50°45′N; 15°36′E)		Krkonose/ Karkonosze (1992 / 9,433 / 50°45′ to 50°55′N; 15°25′ to 15°50′E)		RS is a transboundary site with Czech Krkonose mountain mires RS. BR is a transboundary site with Czech Krkonose BR. Areas and coordinates for BR refer to Polish part only.
Poland		Białowieża Forest (1979 / 141,885 / 52°43′39″N; 23°58′52″E)	Bialowieza (1976 / 92,399 / 52°42′ to 52°59′N; 23°43′ to 23°56′E)		WH property is a transboundary site with Belarus. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site.

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Portugal	Caldeira da Graciosa (Furna do Enxofre) (2008 / 120 / 39°1′N; 27°58′W)		Graciosa Island (2007 / 10,784 / 39°3′N; 28°0′W)	Azores Geopark (2013 / 1,288,400 / 36° to 41°N; 24° to 33°W)	WH property is a cultural landscape.
	Caldeirão do Corvo (2008 / 316 / 39°42′N; 31°6′W)		Corvo Island (2007 / 25,853 / 39°42′N; 31°6′W)		
	Planalto Central das Flores (Morro Alto) (2008 / 2,572 / 39°26′N; 31°12′W)		Flores Island (2009 / 58,619 / 39°24′N; 31°11′W)		
	Caldeira do Faial (2008 / 312 / 38°35′N; 28°42′W)				
	Complexo Vulcânico das Furnas (2008 / 2,855 / 37°45′N; 25°19′W)				
	Complexo Vulcânico das Sete Cidades (2008 / 2,171 / 37°51′N; 25°46′W)				
	Complexo Vulcânico do Fogo (2008 / 2,182 / 37°45′N; 25°28′W)				
	'Fajãs' of Caldeira and Cubres Lagoons (2005 / 87 / 38°38′N; 27°57′W)				
	Ilhéus das Formigas e Recife Dollabarat (2008 / 7 / 37°16′0″N; 24°46′0″W)				
	Paúl da Praia da Vitória (Praia da Vitória Marsh) (2012 / 16 / 38°44′N; 27°4′W)				
	Planalto Central da Terceira (Furnas do Enxofre e Algar do Carvão) (2008 / 1,283 / 38°44′N; 27°12′W)				
	Planalto Central de São Jorge (Pico da Esperança) (2008 / 231 / 38°39′N; 28°4′W)				
	Planalto Central do Pico (Achada) (2008 / 748 / 38°26′N; 28°13′W)				
		Landscape of the Pico Island Vineyard Culture (2004 / 987 / 38°30′48.4″N; 28°32′28.2″W)			

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Portugal	Paúl do Boquilobo (1996 / 529 / 39°23′N; 8°32′W)		Paúl do Boquilobo (1981 / 554 / 39°23′N; 8°32′W)		
Portugal		Laurisilva of Madeira (1999 / 15,000 / 32°46′0″N; 17°0′0″W)	Santana Madeira (2011 / 15,218.04 / 32°46′N; 16°54′W)		
Republic of Korea	1100 Altitude Wetland (2009 / 13 / 33°21′N; 126°28′E)	Jeju Volcanic Island and Lava Tubes (2007 / 9,475 / 33°28′8″N; 126°43′13″E)	Jeju Island (2002 / 83,094 / 33°21′29″N; 126°31′53″E)	Jeju Island Geopark (2010 / 181,400 / 33°11′27″ to 33°33′50″N; 126°8′43″ to 126°58′20″E)	
	Muljangori-oreum wetland (2008 / 63 / 33°24′N; 126°36′E)				
	Sumeunmul-baengdui Ramsar Site (2015 / 117.5 / 33°21′55″N; 126°26′59″E)				
	Dongbaekdongsan (2011 / 59 / 33°31′N; 126° 43′E)				
	Mulyeongari-oreum wetland (2006 / 31 / 33°22′N; 126° 42′E)				
Republic of Korea	Gochang and Buan Tidal Flats (2010 / 4,550 / 35°33′ N; 126° 35′E)		Gochang (2013 / 67,152 / 35°18′ to 35°34′N; 126°26′ to 126°46′E)		
Republic of Korea	Jangdo Island High Moor (2005 / 9 / 34°41′N; 125°23′E)		Shinan Dadohae (2009 / 75,749 / 34°4′15″ to 35°12′30″N; 125°5′0″ to 126°23′0″E)		
Republic of Korea	Jeungdo Tidal Flat (2011 / 3,130 / 34°58′30″N; 126°10′16″E)				
Romania	Danube Delta (1991 / 647,000 / 45°10′N; 29°15′E)	Danube Delta (1991 / 312,440 / 45°4°59.988″N; 29°30′0″E)	Danube Delta (1998 / 580,000 / 44°20′ to 45°24;N; 28°10′ to 29°42′E)		BR is a transboundary site with Ukraine. Area refers to entire TBR.

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Russian Federation	Selenga Delta (1994 / 12,100 / 52°17′N; 106°22′E)	Lake Baikal (1996 / 8,800,000 / 53°10′25″N; 107°39′45″E)			
			Baikalskyi (1986 / 453,864 / 51°0′N; 105°5′E)		
			Barguzinskyi (1986 / 5,374,322 / 54°0′N; 109°5′E)		
Russian Federation	Kama-Bakaldino mires (1994 / 226,500 / 56°24′N; 45°20′E)		Nijegorodskoe Zavolje (2002 / 131,910 / 56°30′N; 45°0′E)		
Russian Federation	Lake Khanka (1976 / 310,000 / 44°53′N; 132°30′E)		Khankaiskiy (2005 / 299,896 / 44°34′ to 45°14′N; 132°7′E to 133°14′E)		
Russian Federation	Lake Manych-Gudilo (1994 / 112,600 / 44°36′N; 42°50′E)		Chernyje Zemli (1993 / 121,900 / 46°5′N; 42°20′E)		
			Rostovsky (2008 / 183,815 / 46°16′ to 46°57′N; 42°42′ to 43°50′E)		
Russian Federation	Oka and Pra River Floodplains (1994 / 161,542 / 55°1′N; 40°23′E)		Okskiy (1978 / 77,193 / 54°40′ to 55°0′N; 40°35′ to 41°1′E)		
Russian Federation	Torey Lakes (1994 / 172,500 / 50°5′N; 115°32′E)		Daursky (1997 / 227,700 / 49°55′ to 50°14′N; 115°5′ to 115°98′E)		
Russian Federation	Volga Delta (1976 / 800,000 / 45°54′N; 48°47′E)		Astrakhanskiy (1984 / 111,129 / 45°28′ to 46°22′N; 47°49′ to 49°7′E)		
Russian Federation		Central Sikhote-Alin (2001 / 406,177 / 45°19′60″N; 136°10′0″E)	Sikhote Alin (1978 / 4,469,088 / 44°49′ to 45°41′N; 135°45′ to 136°35′E)		

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Russian Federation		Golden Mountains of Altai (1998 / 1,611,457 / 50°28′0″N; 86°0′0″E)	Altaisky (2009 / 2,953,325 / 50°16′14″ to 51°59′0″N; 86°59′56″ to 89°51′47″E)		
			Katunsky (2000 / 695,262 / 49°28′ to 49°56′N; 85°37′ to 86°34′E)		
Russian Federation		Uvs Nuur Basin (2003 / 898,064 / 50°16′30″N; 92°43′11″E)	Ubsunorskaya Kotlovina (1997 / 904,465 / 48°20′N to 51°10; 91°19′ to 95°35′E)		WH property is a transboundary site with Mongolia. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site.
Russian Federation		Virgin Komi Forests (1995 / 3,280,000 / 65°04′0.012″N; 60°8′60″E)	Pechoro-Ilychsky (1984 / 1,253,753 / Mountain unit: 61°58′ to 63°16′N; 57°47′ to 59°39′E. Plain unit: 61°43′ to 61°53′N; 56°52′ to 57°7′E)		
Russian Federation		Volcanoes of Kamtchatka (1996 / 3,830,200 / 56°19′60″N; 158°30′0″E)	Kronotskiy (1984 / 331,747 / 54°58′N; 160°72′E)		
Russian Federation		Western Caucasus (1999 / 298,903 / 44°0′0″N; 40°0′0″E)	Kavkazskiy (1978 / 321,635 / 43°30′ to 44°5′N; 39°40′ to 40°50′E)		
Senegal	Delta du Saloum (1984 / 73,000 / 13°37′N; 16°42′W)	Saloum Delta (2011 / 145,811 / 13°50′7″N; 16°29′55″W)	Delta du Saloum (1980 / 76,000 / 13°35′ to 13°55′N; 16°28′ to 16°48′W)		RS is a transboundary site with Gambia. WH property is a cultural landscape.
Senegal	Djoudj (1977 / 16,000 / 16°20′N; 16°12′W)	Djoudj National Bird Sanctuary (1981 / 16,000 / 16°30′0″N; 16°10′0.012″W)			
Senegal		Niokolo-Koba National Park (1981 / 913,000 / 13°4′0.012″N; 12°43′0.012″W)	Niokolo-Koba (1981 / 913,000 / 12°30′ to 13°20′N; 12°20′ to 13°35′W)		
Seychelles	Aldabra Atoll (2010 / 43,900 / 9°24′S; 46°20′E)	Aldabra Atoll (1982 / 35,000 / 9°25′0″S; 46°25′0″W)			

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Slovakia	Domica (2001 / 622 / 48°29′N; 20°28′E)	Caves of Aggtelek and Slovak Karst (1995 / 56,651 / 48°28′32.628″N; 20°29′12.732″E)	Slovensky Kras (1977 / 20,360 / 48°35′N; 20°40′E)		RS is a transboundary site with Baradla Cave System and related wetlands RS from Hungary. WH property is also a transboundary site with Hungary. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site.
Slovakia		Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and the Ancient Beech Forests of Germany (2007 / 33,670 / 49°5′10″N; 22°32′10″E)	East Carpathians (1998 / 40,778 / 48°56′ to 49°11′N; 22°9′ to 22°34′E)		WH property is a transboundary site with Germany and Ukraine. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site. BR is a transboundary site with Poland and Ukraine. Area and coordinates refer to Slovak part of BR only.
Slovenia	Škocjanske Jame (Škocjan Caves) (1999 / 305 / 45°40′N; 14°0′E)	Škocjan Caves (1986 / 413 / 45°40′0.012″N; 14°0′0″E)	The Karst (2004 / 60,193 / 45°24′0″; 13°47′24″E)		
South Africa	De Hoop Vlei (1975 / 750 / 34°27′S; 20°20′E)	Cape Floral Region Protected Areas (2004 / 1,094,741 / 34°10′0″S; 18°22′30″E)			
			Cape Winelands (2007 / 322,030 / 33°18′0.19″ to 34° 9′2.12″S; 18°42′29.93″ to 19°29′5.99″E)		
			Gouritz Cluster (2015 / 3,187,893 / 33°52′5″S; 21°40′31″E)		
			Kogelberg (1998 / 103,629 / 34°4′0″ to 34°24′0″S; 18°48′0″ to 19°12′0″E)		
South Africa	Makuleke Wetlands (2007 / 7,757 / 22°23′S; 31°13′E)		Vhembe (2009 / 30,701 / 22°47′S; 30°E)		WH property is a cultural landscape.
		Mapungubwe Cultural Landscape (2003 / 28,169 / 22°11′33″S; 29°14′20.004″E)			
South Africa	Kosi Bay (1991 / 10,982 / 27°1′S; 32°48′E)	iSimangaliso Wetland Park (1999 / 239,566 / 27°50′20″S; 32°32′60″E)			
	Lake Sibaya (1991 / 7,750 / 27°20′S; 32°38′E)				
	St. Lucia System (1986 / 155,500 / 28°4′S; 32°28′E)				
	Turtle Beaches/Coral Reefs of Tongaland (1986 / 39,500 / 27°30′S; 32°40′E)				

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South Africa	Natal Drakensberg Park (1997 / 242,813 / 29°30′S; 29°45′E)	Maloti-Drakensberg Park (2000 / 249,313 / 29°45′55″S; 29°7′23″E)			WH property is a mixed site and transboundary site with Lesotho. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site.
South Africa	Langebaan (1988 / 6,000 / 33°6′S; 18°1′E)		Cape West Coast (2000 / 378,240 / 33°0′ to 34°0′S; 18°0′ to 18°30′E)		
Spain	Doñana (1982 / 111,646 / 37°1′N; 6°25′W)	Doñana National Park (1994 / 54,252 / 36°56′51.72″N; 6°21′31.9″W)	Doñana (1980 / 268,473.6 / 36°56′51.72″N; 6°21′31.9″W)		
Spain	Salinas del Cabo de Gata (1989 / 300 / 36°44′N; 2°12′W)		Cabo de Gata-Nijar (1997 / 46,000 / 36°47′22″N; 2°14′14″W)	Cabo de Gata-Nijar Geopark (2006 / 49,500 / 36°47′22″N; 2°14′14″W)	
Spain		Pyrénées - Mont Perdu (1997 / 30,639 / 42°41′7.512″N; 0°0′1.8″E)	Ordesa-Viñamala (1977 / 117,364.05 / 42°30 to 42°43′N; 0°7′ to 0°12′E)	Sobrarbe (2006 / 220200 / 42°14′01″ N; 0°13′58″W)	WH property is a mixed site and transboundary site with France. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site. BR refers only to Spanish part.
Spain	Salinas de Ibiza y Formentera (1993 / 1,640 / 38°46′N; 1°26′E)	Ibiza, Biodiversity and Culture (1999 / 11,231 / 38°54′40.1″N; 1°26′6.7″E)			WH property is a mixed site.
Spain	Laguna de El Hito (2002 / 573 / 39°52′0″N; 2°41′0″W) Lagunas de Ruidera (2011 / 6,639 / 38°56′23″N; 2°51′35″W) Las Tablas de Daimiel (1982 / 1,928 / 39°9′N; 3°40′W)		Mancha Húmeda (1980 / 418,087 / 39°16′N; 3°24′W)		
Spain	Marismas del Odiel (1989 / 7,185 / 37°17′N; 6°55′W)		Marismas del Odiel (1983 / 14,020 / 37°13′48″N; 6°59′24″W)		
Spain	Ría de Mundaka-Guernika (1993 / 945 / 43°22′N; 2°40′W)		Urdaibai (1984 / 21,991.27 / 43°40′N; 2°20′W)		
Spain	Ría del Eo (1994 / 1,740 / 43°30′N; 7°1′W)		Rio Eo, Oscos, y Terras de Buron (2007 / 159,588.9 / 43°15′18.48″N; 7°2′50.42″W)		

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Spain	Saladar de Jandía (2002 / 127 / 28°3′N; 14°20′W)		Fuerteventura (2009 / 354,288 / 28°24′0″N; 14°0′0″W)		
Spain		Garajonay National Park (1986 / 3,984 / 28°7′34.5″N; 17°14′14″W)	La Gomera (2012 / 84,522 / 28°7′2.55″N to 17°13′57.17″W)		
Spain			Isla de El Hierro (2000 / 42,299 / 27°38′ to 27°51′N; 17°53′ to 18°9′W)	El Hierro (2014 / 59,500 /27°38′ to 27°51′N; 17°53′ to 18°9′W)	
Spain			Lanzarote (1993 / 129,310; 29°2′48″ N; 13°35′23″ W)	Lanzarote and Chinijo Islands (2015 / 250,000 / 29°3′0″N; 13°36′0″W)	
Spain			Las Dehesas de Sierra Morena (2002 / 424,400 / 37°42′56.7″ to 38°12′53.8′N; 04°58′34″ to 06°55′12.5′W)	Sierra Norte de Sevilla (2011 / 17,700 / 37°42′44″N; 5°38′4.42″ W)	
Sri Lanka	Bundala (1990 / 6,210 / 6°10′N; 81°12′E)		Bundala (2005 / 24,837 / 6°12′50″N; 81°13′30″E)		
Sri Lanka		Sinharaja Forest Reserve (1988 / 8,864 / 6°25′0″N; 80°30′0″E)	Sinharaja (1978 / 11,187 / 6°21′ to 6°26′N; 80°21′ to 80°34′E)		
Sudan	Dinder National Park (2005 / 1,084,600 / 12°19′N; 34°47′E)		Dinder (1979 / 1,000,000 / 12°0′N; 35°14′E)		
Sweden	Laidaure (1974 / 4,319 / 67°8′N; 18°17′E) Sjaunja (1974 /188,600 / 67°17′N; 19°49′E)	Laponian Area (1996 / 940,000 / 67°19′59.988″N; 17°34′59.988″E)			WH property is a mixed site.
Sweden	Öland, eastern coastal areas (1974 / 8,460 / 56°27′0″N; 16°36′0″E)	Agricultural Landscape of Southern Öland (2000 / 56,323 / 56°19′30″ N; 16°28′59.988″E)			WH property is a cultural landscape.

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Sweden	Blekinge archipelago (2001 / 12,500 / 56°7′N; 15°21′E)		Blekinge Archipelago (2011 / 212,797 / 55°49′ to 56°19′N; 14°39′ to 16°13′E)		
	Mörrumsån-Pukavik Bay (2001 / 2,740 / 56°9′N; 14°45′E)				
Sweden	Dalälven-Färnebofjärden (2001 / 17,300 / 60°13′N; 16°47′E)		Nedre Dalälven River Landscape (2011 / 308,000 / 60°17′0″N; 16°53′0″E)		
	Hovran area (1989 / 4,860 / 60°20′N; 16°3′E)				
Sweden	Dättern (1989 / 4,010 / 58°23′N; 12°37′E)		Lake Vännern Archipelago (2010 / 278,600 / 58°43′44″N; 13°19′16″E)		
Switzerland	Laubersmad-Salwidili (2005 / 1,376 / 46°58′N; 7°59′E)		Entlebuch (2001 / 39,659 / 46°47′ to 47°2′N; 7°51′ to 8°10′E)		
Tanzania, United Republic of	Kilombero Valley Floodplain (2002 / 796,735 / 8°40′S; 36°10′E)	Selous Game Reserve (1982 / 5,120,000 / 9°0′0″S; 37°23′60″E)			
Tanzania, United Republic of		Ngorongoro Conservation Area (1979 / 809,440 / 3°11′13.992″S; 35°32′26.988″E)	Serengeti-Ngorongoro (1981 / 2,305,100 / 1°30′ to 3°20′S; 34°0′ to 35°15′E)		Ngorongoro WH property is a mixed site.
		Serengeti National Park (1981 / 1,476,300 / 2°19′59.988″S; 34°34′0.012″E)			
Thailand	Kaper Estuary - Laemson Marine National Park - Kraburi Estuary (2002 / 122,046 / 9°36′N; 98°39′E)		Ranong (1997 / 18,672 / 9°43′ to 9°57′N; 98°29′ to 98°39′E)		
Togo	Bassin versant Oti-Mandouri (2008 / 425,000 / 10°37′N; 0°38′E)		Oti-Kéran/Otil-Mandouri (2011 / 179,000 / 9°55′ to 11°0′N; 0°24′ to 1°0′E)		
	Parc national de la Keran (1995 / 163,400 / 10°15′N; 1°0′E)				

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Tunisia	Ichkeul (1980 / 12,600 / 37°10′N; 09°40′E)	Ichkeul National Park (1980 / 12,600 / 37°9′48.996″N; 9°40′28.992″E)	Ichkeul (1977 / 14,100 / 37°10′N; 9°40′E)		
Uganda	Rwenzori Mountains Ramsar Site (2009 / 99,500 / 0°25′0″N; 30°0′0″E)	Rwenzori Mountains National Park (1994 / 99,600/ 0°13′25″N; 29°55′27″E)			
	Lake George (1988 / 15,000 / 0°7′N; 30°2′E)		Queen Elizabeth (1979 / 479,045 / 0°30′S to 0°5′N; 29°45′ to 30°15′E)		
Ukraine	Big Chapelsk Depression (2004 / 2,359 / 46°29′N; 33°51′E)		Askaniya-Nova (1985 / 33,307 / 46°27′N; 33°53′E)		
Ukraine	Karkinitska and Dzharylgatska Bays (1995 / 87,000 / 46°0′N; 33°5′E)		Chernomorskiy (1984 / 109,254 / 46°20′ to 47°0′N; 32°30′ to 33°0′E)		
	Tendrivska Bay (1995 / 38,000 / 46°14′N; 31°56′E)				
	Yagorlytska Bay (1995 / 34,000 / 46°24′N; 31°53′E)				
Ukraine	Kyliiske Mouth (1995 / 32,800 / 45°23′0″N; 29°36′0″E)		Danube Delta (1998 / 626,403 / 44°20′ to 45°24;N; 28°10′ to 29°42′E)		BR is a transboundary site with Romania. Area refers to the entire TBR.
Ukraine	Shatsk Lakes (1995 / 32,850 / 51°31′N; 23°50′E)		West Polesie (2012 / 75,075 / 51°30′28″N; 23°37′9″E)		BR is a transboundary site with Belarus and Poland. Area refers to Ukrainian part only, coordinates refer to the entire TBR.
Ukraine		Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and the Ancient Beech Forests of Germany (2007 / 33,670 / 49°5′10″N; 22°32′10″E)	Carpathian (1992 / 53,6306 / 48°08′30″; 23°39′07″)		WH property is a transboundary site with Germany and Slovakia. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site. BR is a transboundary site with Poland and Slovakia. Area and coordinates refer to Ukrainian part of BR only.
			East Carpathians (1998 / 58,587 / 48°53′ to 49°15′N; 22°27′ to 23°00′E)		

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United Kingdom	Chesil Beach & The Fleet (1985 / 748 / 50°37′N; 2°31′W)	Dorset and East Devon Coast (2001 / 2,550 / 50°42′20″N; 2°59′23.6″W)			
United Kingdom	Gough Island (2008 / 229,811 / 40°19′S; 9°56′W) Inaccessible Island (2008 / 126,524 / 37°18′S; 12°41′W)	Gough and Inaccessible Islands (1995 / 7,900 / 40°19′29″S; 9°55′43″W)			
United Kingdom	Cors Fochno & Dyfi (1976 / 2,508 / 52°32′N; 4°0′W)		Biosffer Dyfi (1976 / 81,882 / 52°32′N; 4°0′W)		
United Kingdom	Loch Maree (1994 / 3,174 / 57°41′N; 5°28′W)		Beinn Eighe (1976 / 4,800 / 57°33′ to 57°40′ N; 05°18′ to 05°30′ W)		
United Kingdom	Silver Flowe (1981 / 620 / 55°7′N; 4°24′W)		Galloway and southern Ayrshire (2012 / 526,888 / 55°10′45″N; 4°15′19″W)		
United States of America	Everglades National Park (1987 / 610,497 / 25°33′N; 80°55′W)	Everglades National Park (1979 / 567,017 / 25°33′16″N; 80°59′47″W)	Everglades & Dry Tortugas (1976 / 585,882 / 24°50′ to 25°55′N; 80°20′ to 81°30′W)		
United States of America	San Francisco Bay/ Estuary (2013 / 158,711 / 37°52′N; 122°23′W)		Golden Gate (1988 / 212,022ha / 37° to 38°N; 122°W)		
United States of America		Great Smoky Mountains National Park (1983 / 209,000 / 35°35′35″N; 83°26′8″W)	Southern Appalachian (1988 / 15,195,341 / 35° to 36°N; 83° to 84°W)		
United States of America		Hawaii Volcanoes National Park (1987 / 87,940 / 19°24′3″N; 155°7′25″W)	Hawaiian Islands (1980 / 99,545 / 19°11′ to 20°47′N; 155°1′ to 156°16′W)		
United States of America		Kluane / Wrangell-St. Elias / Glacier Bay / Tatshenshini-Alsek (1979 / 9,839,121 / 61°11′51.3″N; 140°59′31.1″W)	Glacier Bay - Admiralty Island (1986 / 1,515,015 / 57°2′ to 59°15′N; 132°25′ to 138°40′W)		WH property is a transboundary site with Canada. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site.

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United States of America		Mammoth Cave National Park (1981 / 21,191 / 37°11′14″N; 86°6′11″W)	Mammoth Cave Area (1990 / 367,979 / 37°7′ to 37°17′N; 86°0′ to 86°17′W)		
United States of America		Olympic National Park (1981 / 369,660 / 47°44′54″N; 123°26′56″W)	Olympic (1976 / 373,396 / 47°29′ to 48°11′N; 123°7′ to 124°42′W)		
United States of America		Redwood National and State Parks (1980 / 56,883 / 41°22′26″N; 123°59′53″W)	California Coast Ranges (1983 / 62,098 / 36°N to 41°30′N; 121°31′ to 124°0′W)		
United States of America		Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park (1995 / 457,614 / 48°59′45.8″N; 113°54′15″W)	Glacier (1976 / 410,056 / 48°15′ to 49°0′N; 113°15′ to 114°30′W)		WH property is a transboundary site with Canada. Area and coordinates refer to the entire WH site. Waterton BR is designated as a separate BR in Canada.
United States of America		Yellowstone National Park (1978 / 898,349 / 44°27′38.016″N; 110°49′40.008″W)	Yellowstone (1976 / 898,349 / 44°8′ to 45°7′N; 109°10′ to 111°10′W)		
Uruguay	Bañados del Este y Franja Costera (1984 / 407,408 / 33°48′S; 53°50′W) Laguna de Rocha (2015 / 10,933 / 34°38′S 54°17′W		Bañados del Este (1976 / 158,711 / 32° to 35°S; 53° to 55°W)		
Viet Nam	Mui Ca Mau National Park (2012 / 41,862 / 8°41′0″N; 104°47′32″E)		Mui Ca Mau (2009 / 624,776 / 8°25′45.3″ to 9°26′1.7″N; 104°32′18.7″ to 105°5′9.5″E)		
Viet Nam	U Minh Thuong National Park (2015 / 8,038 / 9°35′39′N; 105°5′42′E)		Kien Giang (2006 / 1,188,104 / 9°24′0.75″ to 10°31′45.54″N; 103°44′23.64″ to 105°19′48.28″W)		
Viet Nam		Phong Nha – Ke Bang National Park (2003 / 123,326 / 17°32′14″N; 106°9′4.5″E)	Cu Lao Cham - Hoi An (2009 / 60,102 / 15°15′20″ to 15°15′15″N; 108°23′10″E)		

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Yemen	Detwah Lagoon (Ditwah Protected Area) (2007 / 580 / 12°42′20″N; 53°30′24″E)	Socotra Archipelago (2008 / 410,460 / 12°30′0″N; 53°49′60″E)	Socotra Archipelago (2003 / 2,196,100 / 12°0′ to 12°42′N; 52°3′ to 54°30′E)		
Zimbabwe	Victoria Falls National Park (2013 / 1,750 / 17°59′S 25°52′E)	Mosi-oa-Tunya / Victoria Falls (1989 / 6,860 / 17°55′28.308″S; 25°51′19.404″E)			WH property is a transboundary site with Zambia.
Zimbabwe		Mana Pools National Park, Sapi and Chewore Safari Areas (1984 / 676,600 / 15°49′10″S; 29°24′29″E)	Middle Zambezi (2010 / 2,879,300 / 16°9′S; 29°20′E)		

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