

DCD/DAC(98)6/ADD

Biodiversity: Land Area Protected

DEFINITION

Goal addressed: *sustainable environment*

This indicator addresses the goal of the reversal of the current trends in the loss of environmental resources at both global and national levels by 2015.

Quantitative goal:

There is no quantitative goals for this indicator. However, an informal target of protection of 10% for each major *ecological region* was put forward in the 1991 *Caring for the Earth: A Strategy for Sustainable Living*. This target reflects recognition that representation of ecosystem diversity is more meaningful than a flat percentage of the country's area.

Dimension captured: *protected areas*

Protected areas are an essential tool for ecosystem conservation, with functions going well beyond the conservation of biological diversity. As such they are one of the building blocks of sustainable development.

Definition

This indicator represents the extent to which areas important for conserving biodiversity, cultural heritage, recreation, natural resource maintenance, and other values, are protected from incompatible uses.

Numerator: Surface of totally protected or protected areas expressed in km².

Denominator: Total surface of the country in km²

Totally protected areas are areas maintained in a natural state and are closed to extractive uses. They comprise National Nature Reserves, National Parks, National Monuments.

Partially protected areas are managed for specific uses such as recreation, or to provide optimum conditions for certain species or ecological communities. They are also necessary to protect valued expressions of human relationships with nature in terms of landscape.

Unit of measurement: percentage of land area

BASELINE & GOAL

Protected Area as a Percent of Total Area

	Baseline (1990)	Goal (2015)
East Asia and the Pacific	7%	
Europe & Central Asia	4%	
Latin America & Caribbean	8%	
Mideast, N. Africa & Europe	2%	
South Asia	4%	
Sub-Saharan Africa	6%	
World	5.6%	n.a.

Source: WRI

COVERAGE

Protected Area as a Percent of Total Area, 1990

	Countries with data	Population represented
East Asia and the Pacific	27	100%
Europe & Central Asia	12	100%
Latin America & Caribbean	23	99%
Mideast, N. Africa & Europe	13	100%
South Asia	5	98%
Sub-Saharan Africa	39	98%
World	146	100%

Source: WRI

SOURCES

Lead agency :	IUCN (World Conservation Union)
National data provider:	Relevant agencies
Availability time lag:	to be advised
Gender disaggregated:	Not applicable
Data set used:	WRI, WDI

METHODS

Internationally agreed methodology:	Yes
Method of collection:	to be advised
Indicator limitations:	No internationally agreed target See comments

COMMENTS

Indicator limitations

The effectiveness of this indicator is limited by two problems. First, it represents *de jure* not *de facto* protection. It does not indicate quality of management or whether the areas are in fact protected from incompatible uses. Second, the indicator does not show how representative the protected areas are of the country's ecological diversity. This is a significant deficiency, since a large proportion of the same ecosystems may be protected to the neglect of others.

Biodiversity is a global issue. It is intended to improve the indicator to score the importance of the areas protected and level of protection in force.