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Science-based Guidance for Reporting Aichi Target 11 Protected Areas and “Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures”

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CANADIAN COUNCIL ON ECOLOGICAL AREAS
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Background

- 1992 - United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) objectives:
 - The conservation of biological diversity
 - The sustainable use of its components; and
 - The fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.



Background

- UNCBD Article 8 – The in-situ conservation of biological diversity, i.e.,:
 - *“the conservation of ecosystems and natural habitats and the maintenance and recovery of viable populations of species in their natural surroundings and, in the case of domesticated or cultivated species, in the surroundings where they have developed their distinctive properties.”*



Background

- UNCBD Article 8(a):
 - *“each contracting party shall, as far as possible and as appropriate: (a) establish a system of protected areas or areas where special measures need to be taken to conserve biological diversity ...”*.



Background

- 2011 - Nagoya, Japan – 10th Conference of the Parties
- Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020
 - Goal C: Improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity.
 - Target 11: *“By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas, and 10 per cent 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 landscapes and seascapes.”*



Who is CCEA?

A non-governmental, charitable organization with a mission to:

“facilitate and assist Canadians with the establishment and management of a comprehensive network of protected areas representative of Canada's terrestrial and aquatic ecological natural diversity.”

Est. 1982



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Who is CCEA?

- Primarily composed of protected area practitioners working in protected areas agencies and organizations.
- CCEA does not represent the views of any one jurisdiction.
- It attempts to develop sound, objective, science-based, consensus-based advice/ guidance/ recommendations by harnessing the considerable collective scientific expertise and experience of its members.
- Participants are asked to leave their organizational hats at the door and give their best, science-based advice.



CARTS

- Conservation Areas Reporting and Tracking System
- Led by CCEA and Environment Canada, but a partnership with all jurisdictions
- Reports on areas that are primarily dedicated to and effective in conserving biodiversity.
- Uses a standardized approach to reporting (for PAs – IUCN) so that progress can be compared fairly among jurisdictions/organizations and across countries - apples to apples and oranges to oranges.



CARTS

- CCEA is developing science-based guidance for a standardized approach for reporting of “other effective area-based conservation measures” which would allow Canada to report progress on Aichi Target 11.



“Protected Areas” vs. “Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures”

- Are Target 11 OEABCMs the same as, similar to, or a much broader set of areas than protected areas?
- IUCN and others at the negotiations:
 - “...areas that do not, and will never qualify as protected areas, should not be included”.
- Some others at the negotiations:
 - “... it was made clear during negotiations that “other measures” are meant to be broader and more inclusive than the IUCN definition and that is why Canada was able to agree to the target.”



“Protected Areas” vs. “Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures”

- CCEA cannot resolve these differing viewpoints.
- CCEA can provide science-based advice on what traits Aichi Target 11 areas need in order to be effective at achieving the objectives laid out under UNCBD Article 8 and Strategic Plan for Biodiversity Goal C (the context of Aichi Target 11), and Aichi Target 11 itself.



Strategic Considerations

- There is ever-present and intense political pressure to report as “protected” and “conserved” as much area of land and water as possible in jurisdictions, and Canada as a whole.
- Political-social climates with respect to biodiversity conservation vary across jurisdictions and across time, and could lead to the adoption of many different standards (or no standards) across the country for reporting against Aichi Target 11.



Strategic Considerations

- Concerns with adopting low standards of effectiveness for Target 11 areas:
 - It will make it much harder to establish new, well-conserved areas, or keep existing well-conserved areas protected from industrial and other conflicting uses;
 - The remainder of Target 11 is more likely to be filled with areas of limited conservation effectiveness, some of which already exist, doing little to address the loss of biodiversity;
 - Target 11 could be nominally achieved while making little progress on Canada's commitments to establish representative networks of protected areas;
 - We cloud the message that well-conserved areas often demonstrate greater conservation benefits than less-well-conserved areas.
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Strategic Considerations

- Concerns with adopting high standards of effectiveness for Target 11 areas:
 - Some agencies/organizations may have little progress to report – less than what they are currently reporting in some cases;
 - Agencies/organizations with areas that don't meet those high standards may have difficulty obtaining political support to establish new areas or maintain existing areas;
 - For some agencies/organizations, there's currently no political appetite to establish areas that would satisfy high standards; therefore, progress would stop;
 - Being able to establish areas with some conservation benefit by having lower-standard areas recognized is better than not establishing areas at all.



Principles for the Development of Guidance for Reporting on Aichi Target 11

- Decisions on how much area Canada ultimately chooses to dedicate to the effective, in-situ conservation of biodiversity are largely political and social.
- The question of how much *has been* effectively conserved is not a political question.
- It can be addressed and interpreted by objective, science-based analysis, evidence, and expert knowledge.
- CCEA's goal is to provide guidance on how these questions can be answered objectively, on the basis of science, irrespective of political pressures to steer the answers in one direction or another.

Principles for the Development of Guidance for Reporting on Aichi Target 11

- This approach is not intended to diminish or discount the significance of other kinds of measures, spatial or otherwise, which have either intended or incidental conservation value.
- All are important.
- However, for the purpose of CBD reporting and cross-jurisdictional comparisons, it is CCEA's view that a standardized approach is essential, that it should be science-based, and that it should use conservation effectiveness as the primary metric.

Progress to date - Consensus Statements Regarding Aichi Target 11 Areas - Feb. 2013

1. Purpose of area-based measure / intention

“Areas included under Target 11 as OEABCMs must have an expressed purpose to conserve nature (biodiversity). We understand that this purpose might be achieved as a co-benefit of other management purposes or activities.”

2. Long term

“Areas included under Target 11 as OEABCMs must be managed for the long term to be effective. We accept a working definition of long term to mean there is an expectation that conservation will continue indefinitely.”

3. Importance of nature conservation objectives

“In areas included under Target 11 as OEABCMs, in cases of conflict with other objectives, nature conservation objectives shall not be compromised.”

Progress to date - Consensus Statements Regarding Aichi Target 11 Areas - Feb. 2013

4. Nature conservation outcomes

“Areas included under Target 11 as OEABCMs should result in effective and significant nature (biodiversity) conservation outcomes. When there are existing measures/areas that are to be considered as OEABCMs, evidence of conservation outcomes should be used as part of the screening process.”

5. Strength of conservation measures

“Areas included under Target 11 as OEABCMs should have a management regime that, through one or more measures that are effective alone or in combination, can reasonably be expected to be strong enough to ensure effective conservation, and if there are gaps, these will be addressed over time.”

Progress to date - Consensus Statements Regarding Aichi Target 11 Areas - Feb. 2014

Minimum Standards of Effectiveness

- “Consistent with the objectives of the UNCBD, the Program of Work on Protected Areas, and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, all Aichi Target 11 areas should be managed to achieve *the conservation of ecosystems and natural habitats and the maintenance and recovery of viable populations of species in their natural surroundings.*
- “We believe this requires, at a minimum, the prohibition of industrial or other uses that are likely to significantly impact biodiversity.
- “Notwithstanding the foregoing, management activities such as those described in Principles and Guidelines for Ecological Restoration in Canada's Protected Natural Areas, may be appropriate in Aichi Target 11 areas if undertaken for the purpose of biodiversity conservation (as determined through a science-based, peer-reviewed decision-making process).”

Progress to date - Consensus Statements Regarding Aichi Target 11 Areas - Feb. 2014

Sustainable and Customary Uses in Aichi Target 11 Areas

- “Where sustainable or customary use is an objective for Aichi Target 11 areas (e.g., in category VI or V protected areas), it should be undertaken in a way that is integrated with and beneficial to biodiversity conservation and at a rate that does not produce significant impacts on biodiversity.
- “Large-scale industrial uses are not appropriate in any Aichi Target 11 areas.”

Screening Tool and Process

| | Criteria and Thresholds of Effectiveness | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Level of Agreement Regarding Potential Effectiveness | GREEN = agreement on criteria that help define a Protected Area or Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measure. | | | |
| | RED = agreement on criteria that define a measure not sufficiently effective to be a Protected Area or Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measure. | | | |
| | YELLOW = disagreement or hesitation on whether criteria define a measure sufficiently effective to be a Protected Area or Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measure. | | | |
| | Primary measuring stick for assessing effectiveness: The long-term conservation of biodiversity | | | |
| | Left side - greater potential effectiveness | | Right side - less potential effectiveness | |
| Geographical Space | The geographical space is clearly defined. | The geographical space is intended to be clearly defined but | The geographical space is not clearly defined. | |
| Scope of Conservation Objectives | The objectives are for conservation of biodiversity as a whole, including ecosystems, species, and genetic diversity. | The objectives are for conservation of a subset of biodiversity or indigenous cultural values accomplished through the conservation of biodiversity as a whole. | The objectives are for conservation of a subset of biodiversity, such as particular species or habitats, but not for biodiversity as a whole. | The objectives are not for the conservation of any elements of biodiversity. |
| Primacy of Nature Conservation Objective(s) | Conservation of biodiversity is explicitly stated as the primary overriding objective. | Based on allowable and prohibited activities and evident intent, conservation of biodiversity is the primary overriding objective. | Based on allowable and prohibited activities and evident intent, conservation of biodiversity is an objective, and in cases of conflict among objectives, is given priority over other objectives. | Conservation of biodiversity is either not an objective or, where it is an objective, is not necessarily given priority in cases of conflict among objectives. |
| Governance | All relevant governing authorities acknowledge and abide by the conservation objectives of the area. | Most key, but not all, relevant governing authorities acknowledge and abide by the conservation objectives of the area. | Few or no relevant governing authorities acknowledge and abide by the conservation objectives of the area. | |
| Effective means -1 | The mechanism(s) has the power and breadth to exclude, control, and manage all activities within the area that are likely to have impacts on biodiversity. | The mechanism(s) has the power and breadth to exclude, control, and manage most activities within the area that are likely to have impacts on biodiversity. | The mechanism(s) does not have the power and breadth to exclude, control, and manage activities within the area that are likely to have impacts on biodiversity. | |
| Effective means -2 | The mechanism(s) compels the prohibition of activities that are incompatible with the conservation of biodiversity. | The mechanism(s) does not compel prohibition of activities incompatible with the conservation of biodiversity but the authority is excluding those activities. | The mechanism(s) does not compel prohibition of activities incompatible with the conservation of biodiversity and incompatible activities are being allowed. | |
| Long term | The mechanism is intended to be in effect in perpetuity. | The mechanism is intended or expected to be in effect indefinitely. | The mechanism is not intended or expected to be in effect for the long term. | |
| Dedicated | The mechanism can be reversed only with great difficulty. | The mechanism can be reversed with moderate difficulty. | The mechanism can be reversed without much difficulty. | |
| Timing | The mechanism is in effect year-round. | The mechanism is not in effect year-round. | | |



Screening Process Highlights – Science-based Guidance

- If the area satisfies all criteria (green in all respects), it is a Target 11 area.
- The jurisdiction decides whether it is a protected area or other EABCM.



Screening Process Highlights

- To be 'green':
 - The geographical space must be clearly defined.
 - The objectives must be for conservation of:
 - biodiversity as a whole, including ecosystems, species, and genetic diversity; or
 - a subset of biodiversity or indigenous cultural values accomplished through the conservation of biodiversity as a whole.

Screening Process Highlights

- To be 'green':
 - Conservation of biodiversity must be explicitly stated as the primary overriding objective.
 - All relevant governing authorities must acknowledge and abide by the conservation objectives of the area.
 - The mechanism(s) must have the power and breadth to exclude, control, and manage all activities within the area that are likely to have impacts on biodiversity.

Screening Process Highlights

- To be 'green':
 - The mechanism(s) must compel the prohibition of activities that are incompatible with the conservation of biodiversity.
 - The mechanism must be intended to be in effect in perpetuity.
 - The mechanism must be very difficult to reverse.
 - The mechanism must be in effect year-round.

Screening Process Highlights - Science-based Guidance

- Must be green in every respect to be an Aichi Target 11 area
- If it's yellow, it's actually green or red
 - If the apparent gap in effectiveness suggested by a yellow rating can be demonstrated not to be a real gap, it's green.
 - If the gap in effectiveness is real, but the organization is committed to addressing it within a reasonable timeframe, the area can be recognized as an 'Interim' or 'Projected' EABCM.
 - If the gap is real and the organization is not committed to addressing it within a reasonable timeframe, it's red.

Next Steps

- Workshop report – Spring 2014
- Finalize *Guidebook for the Application and Reporting of IUCN Protected Area Categories and Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures*
- Peer-to-peer learning/review process for CARTS
- Foster progress toward achieving Target 11

