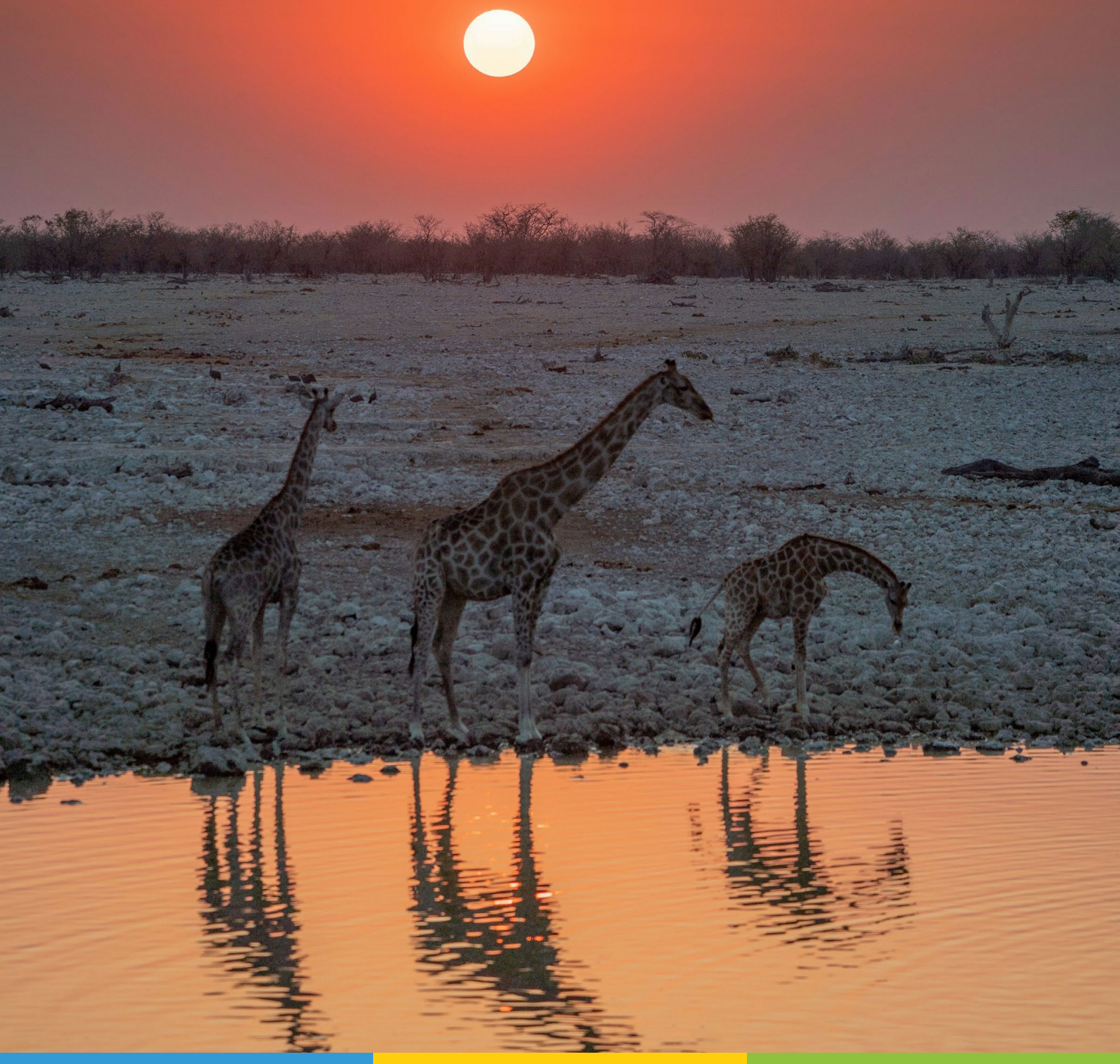




KEY BIODIVERSITY AREAS

KBA PROGRAMME ANNUAL REPORT 2025



FOREWORD

This report highlights some of the progress the KBA Partnership has made in implementing the KBA Programme and Strategic Plan in 2024. There have been notable achievements in countries completing comprehensive assessments of their KBA networks in Bolivia, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Gabon, Peru, South Africa, and Uganda. Seven of these were able to do so with support from the Bezos Earth Fund, while South Africa mostly used government funding with additional support from WWF, and Uganda was supported by USAID. We are grateful to all of the donors, who supported this work. As a result, more than 1400 sites were added or modified in the World database of KBAs.

Other countries have also begun to engage with re-assessing and updating their KBA networks and we ended 2024 with 37 countries having formed KBA National Coordination Groups and an additional 28 countries working to establish them. Engaging the relevant stakeholders in these groups has been shown to better catalyse engagement and data sharing as well as ensuring a more complete assessment of the KBA network is made. We would encourage other countries to follow their lead in establishing KBA National Coordination Groups.

The tools to support KBA identification and proposal submission have greatly advanced in 2024 and we now have an online proposal and

review process in the World Database of KBAs which is making KBA review and confirmation faster and more streamlined. Testing of a pilot KBA scoping tool also shows it to be very effective at identifying likely species that qualify a site as a KBA which can help proposers narrow down large species lists to a short list to focus on.

Private sector use of KBA data is growing exponentially which is exciting to see. KBAs are now being used to screen decisions on spending of millions of dollars to minimise impacts on biodiversity. Income for the KBA Programme that is generated by the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool (IBAT) is significant and is starting to provide funding to support governments to make KBA assessments. This will, in turn, benefit companies who pay to access KBA data through IBAT, as it will ensure that the KBA networks identified in countries are comprehensive and that they are not at risk of starting operations at a site only for it to be identified as a KBA at a later date.

We are seeing KBAs being used more widely by governments and donors to guide their expansion of protected and conserved areas to achieve 30% protection, as well as helping in identifying suitable sites as conserved areas (OECMs). This is important as we will more likely achieve the goals of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework if we target actions to conserve these globally significant sites.



**Naomi Kingston & Paul Matiku,
Co-Chairs KBA Committee**

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KBA PROGRAMME

The Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) Programme is an ambitious attempt to identify, map, monitor and conserve the critical sites for global biodiversity across the planet. Led by 13 international conservation organisations that form the [KBA Partnership](#), this programme aims to support each nation of the world to identify KBAs within their country and to support identification of KBAs on the High Seas. This is providing a blueprint of sites for conservation that contain globally important populations of species or globally significant areas of ecosystems, and sites of outstanding ecological integrity or irreplaceability. Knowing, with precision, the location of those places that contribute significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity is critical for a wide range of end users across society, from national decision makers to private companies, as well as by international conventions. Use of these data is enabling conservation actions to be directed to halt and reverse biodiversity declines and to address existing and emerging threats.

KBAs are being used to support the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) goals and targets by guiding spatial planning for biodiversity (Target 1), prioritising sites for restoration (Target 2), guiding 30 x 30 expansion of protected and conserved areas (Target 3), guiding identification of Other area-based Effective Conservation

Measures (OECMs), supporting targeted species conservation (Target 4), helping mainstream biodiversity conservation by mapping globally significant sites for conservation (Target 14), supporting the private sector to assess, report and minimise impacts on biodiversity (Target 15) and using biodiversity data to guide conservation policy (Target 21). Goal A of the KMGBF to reverse biodiversity loss and halt extinctions can only be achieved if we know where the globally significant populations of species and ecosystems occur and work to conserve them. KBAs criteria help identify these sites.

In 2024 the KBA Partnership completed its first seven-year strategic plan which established the structures and guidance to enable the identification and mapping of KBAs as well as the establishment of the World Database of KBAs. This period was also used to raise awareness of the importance of KBAs with governments, private sector and the donor community leading to their incorporation in several multilateral environment agreements and in private sector disclosure frameworks. During 2024 a new Strategic Plan was developed which now aligns the strategy more closely with the KMGBF and aims to support countries around the world to make comprehensive assessments of their KBAs, incorporate them in national policy and legislation, and support their monitoring and conservation.





**1,435 KBAS WERE MODIFIED
OR ADDED TO THE WDKBA
DURING THE YEAR**

A NEW STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2025-2030

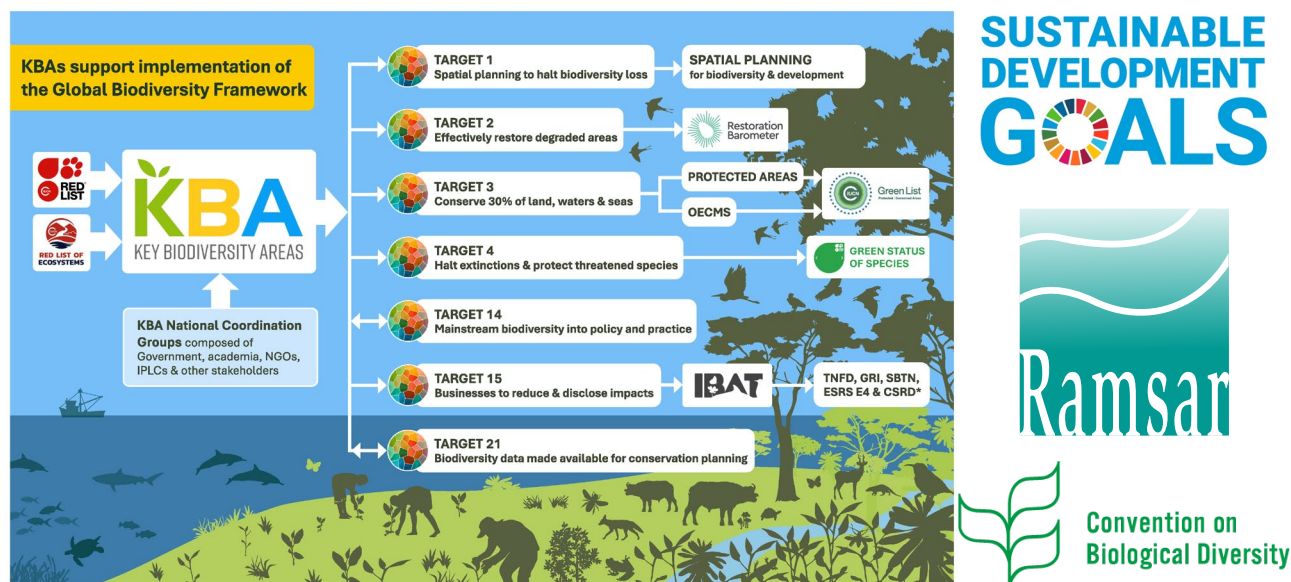


A [new Strategic Plan](#) for the KBA Programme was developed in 2024 as we came to the end of the first plan. Our first plan had focused on building the structures needed to have a functioning KBA Secretariat and KBA Programme. This included:

1. Establishing the KBA Secretariat and staff needed to run the programme (KBA regional focal points, KBA community representatives, Training officer, Communications officer, KBA scientific officer, KBA policy officer, and Head of the KBA Secretariat).
2. Developing training materials and programmes to support capacity building to be able to apply the KBA criteria.
3. Development of Guideline documents to give guidance on applying the KBA criteria, in proposing KBAs and in establishing KBA National Coordination Groups.
4. Building the World Database of KBAs, populating it with legacy sites, creating the ability to make proposals in the database and building the review process to facilitate faster reviews and confirmations of proposals.
5. Working to get KBAs recognised and used in multilateral environment agreements and private sector frameworks
6. Developing a KBA monitoring protocol and strategy.

Now we have these structures in place the new strategic plan is more focused on aligning the KBA programme to better support the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. In particular we aim to focus on support to the identification and re-assessment of KBAs through KBA National Coordination Groups as they are established in countries around the world. Other key objectives include working with governments, private sector and donors to help them to use KBAs to implement the KMGBF. We also aim to establish a monitoring platform that KBA proposers and NCGs can contribute monitoring data to at regular intervals. Lastly there is an objective to better communicate the importance of KBAs and how they can be used to achieve various multilateral environment agreements as well as national goals and objectives.

KBAS SUPPORTING MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENT AGREEMENTS



Following the ratification of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF) in December 2022, countries have started realigning their National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs) to the KMGBF. To date 50 NBSAPs have been submitted to the CBD and on average 33% of these are now referencing KBAs. Countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Gabon, Greece, Mozambique and the Philippines have all stated that they will use KBAs to guide their expansion of protected and conserved (OECM) areas to achieve the 30% coverage under Target 3 of the KMGBF.

Targets 1 and 3 of the KMGBF refer to ‘**areas of importance for biodiversity**’ but this term has not been defined by the CBD. A policy-relevant [paper](#) was published in One Earth in January 2024¹ that defined this phrase, suggesting that the overarching criteria used to identify KBAs together with areas important for connectivity be used as the definition. An ‘Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group’ established by the CBD to develop guidance on monitoring the KMGBF adopted

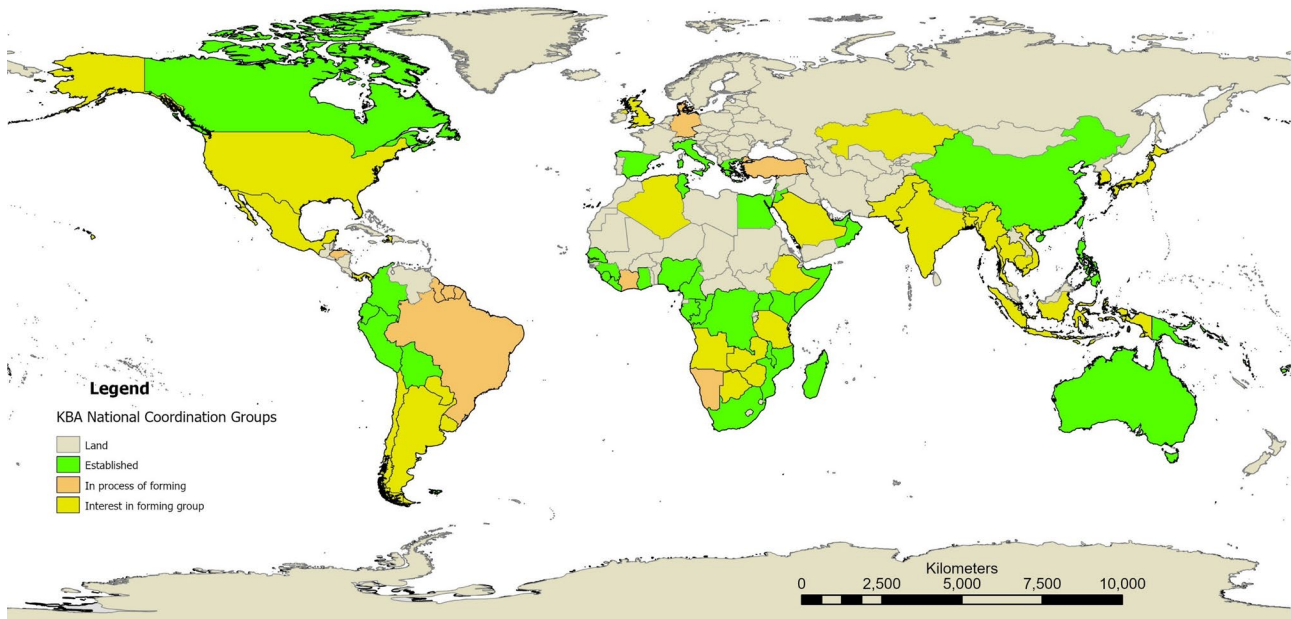
the definition proposed in this paper into their [guidance for Parties](#) to the convention. A [second paper](#) published in October 2024² showed how KBAs can help improve Systematic Conservation Planning processes to develop national spatial plans for biodiversity under Target 1. Incorporating these globally significant sites in the planning process gives greater certainty on species being present, identifies manageable areas for conservation and identifies sites with globally significant populations of a species, globally significant extents of ecosystems or outstanding examples of ecological integrity or irreplaceability.

KBAs are included as complementary indicators for Targets 1, 2 and 3 as well as a disaggregation of the headline indicator for target 3; protected and conserved area coverage of KBAs. This follows the use of the same indicator for the UN Sustainable Development Goals 14 and 15. KBAs are also being used to guide the identification of important sites under the RAMSAR convention on wetlands and also the Convention on Migratory Species.

1 Plumptre, A.J., et al. (2024) Targeting site conservation to increase the effectiveness of new global biodiversity targets, *One Earth*, 7, 11-17. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.oneear.2023.12.007>

2 Plumptre, A.J. et al. (2024) Strengths and complementarity of systematic conservation planning and Key Biodiversity Area approaches for spatial planning. *Conservation Biology*, 39, e14400. <https://doi.org/10.1111/cobi.14400>

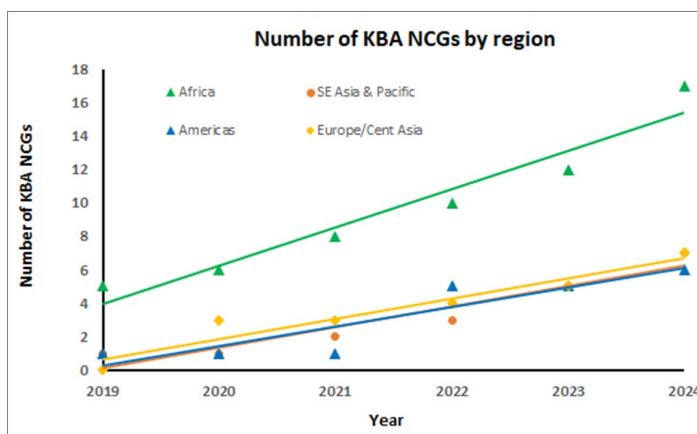
GROWTH IN USE OF KBAs BY COUNTRIES



New KBA National Coordination Groups (KBA NCGs) continue to be established in more countries to coordinate national assessments, monitoring and conservation of KBAs. These KBA NCGs typically include representatives of government institutions, national and international conservation NGOs and Universities, museums and herbaria. Representatives of IPLCs and the private sector are also members of KBA NCGs where appropriate and feasible. By the end of 2024, NCGs had been established in 37 countries, with resources being sought in 28 additional countries to establish NCGs. The

growth of KBA NCGs has been greatest in Africa while the rest of the world has shown a slower but consistent trend in establishing KBA NCGs.

New countries forming KBA NCGs included Bhutan, Egypt, Philippines, Sierra Leone, and Somaliland in 2024. Eleven countries have completed comprehensive assessments of their KBAs (see page 9) and several other countries with KBA NCGs have initiated comprehensive assessments of their KBAs with some close to completing, notably Canada and Philippines.



BEZOS EARTH FUND COUNTRY KBA ASSESSMENT RESULTS



We reported last year that in 2022 The Bezos Earth Fund generously supported the KBA Partnership with a grant of \$5 million USD through BirdLife International. This funded comprehensive assessments of KBAs in four Andean nations (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru) and three Congo-basin countries (Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, and Republic of Congo) as well as supporting the development of a proposal platform in the World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas (WDKBA).

During 2024, 722 sites that had been identified, modified or reassessed in 2023 across these seven countries were formally proposed, reviewed, nominated and confirmed in the newly built proposal platform of the World Database of KBAs. This enabled us to fully test and modify the platform to make it as user-friendly as possible. Measurements of review and validation times showed that the proposal platform drastically reduced the time needed for these reviews by the KBA Secretariat, dropping from approximately 1-2 hours per proposal to 35 minutes for review

and only 11 minutes for validation on average. It also reduced turn-around times following review from 2-3 months to about 2 weeks from first proposal to confirmation, (provided proposers responded quickly to the comments). As a result, the old method of proposing KBAs using an excel form has been phased out.

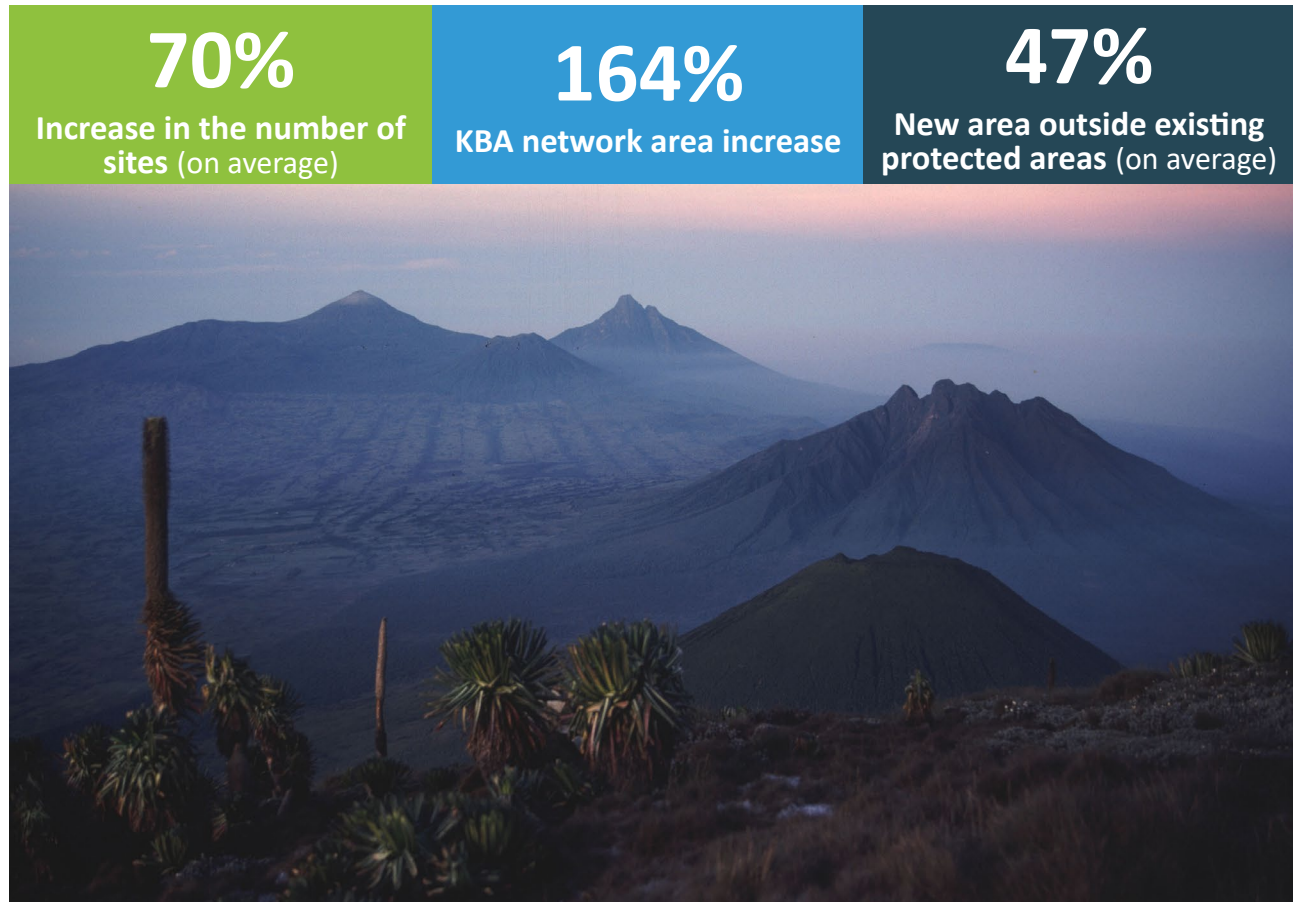
Of these 722 sites, 251 were new KBAs while the others were reassessed or modified KBAs. 3,060 qualifying species conferred KBA status to these sites from on average 24 taxonomic groups assessed per country.

The results generated by the project are already being used to inform the revision of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and to guide 30 x 30 plans for expansion of protected and conserved areas. Democratic Republic of Congo has incorporated specific targets for KBAs in their NBSAP to use them to guide expansion of protected and conserved areas to achieve 30 x 30.



**AS PART OF THE BEZOS KBA
PROJECT, 722 SITES WERE
CONFIRMED AS KBAs**

IMPACTS OF MAKING A COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OF KBAs



Eleven KBA NCGs have now made relatively comprehensive assessments of their KBA network, using the available data they have for species and ecosystems in their country. While no country has perfect knowledge of the distribution and numbers of all its species and ecosystems, and while new KBAs will be identified over time when new data are collected and/or published, we refer to ‘comprehensive assessments’ of KBAs in a country where a KBA NCG has assessed multiple taxonomic groups and applied multiple KBA criteria. These eleven countries include: Bolivia, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, Gabon, Mozambique, Peru, Republic of Congo, South Africa, Uganda, and United Arab Emirates.

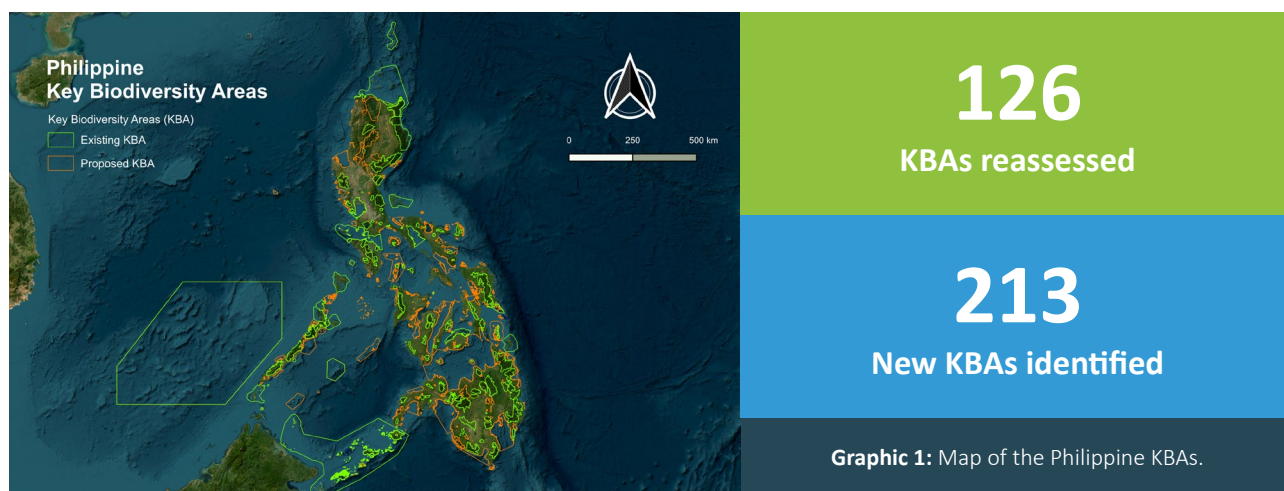
An analysis of the changes that result from making a comprehensive assessment of KBAs

in these 11 countries show that on average the number of sites increased by 70% in a country but that area of the KBA network increased by 164%. On average 47% of new area was outside existing protected areas and not recognised previously as important for conservation. As such, making a comprehensive assessment of KBAs in tropical countries has tended to identify significant numbers of new sites, including recognising many sites that were previously not understood to be important for conservation. These results show that it is important all countries make comprehensive inventories of their KBAs so that they know where most of their globally significant sites occur. As more biodiversity data are collected additional sites may well be added to national KBA networks but there is a value in identifying most of them with existing data.



**11 COUNTRIES HAVE
COMPLETED COMPREHENSIVE
ASSESSMENTS OF THEIR KBAS**

PHILIPPINES ASSESSMENT OF KBAs



The Philippines started a process to re-assess and update its KBA network in 2024. So far, 126 KBAs have been reassessed and information updated on the trigger species, threats, and management strategies in place. Additionally, 213 new KBAs have also been identified. Given how exceptionally rich Philippine biodiversity is, analysis of the potential triggers that number up to several thousand species for both terrestrial and marine flora and fauna, has not been an easy task. Using results from the KBA Secretariat's scoping tool helped facilitate the process of identifying trigger species per KBA which was then followed up by having their presence validated by the experts.

With the Philippines also currently developing its submission of National Targets to the Convention on Biological Diversity in relation to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), the updating and reassessment of Philippine KBAs has provided an opportunity to integrate efforts into these commitments. The KBAs form a vital component of the Philippine National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and are national priority conservation sites that will contribute to the country's commitments to fulfilling the KMGBF 30x30 target. Approximately 26 % of the country's terrestrial area and 20% of the marine area are covered by the updated and proposed KBAs.

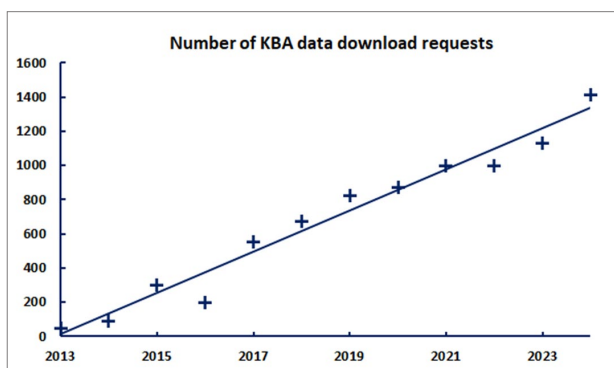
The BMB-DENR with support from the WCS and other partners, worked on establishing the

Philippines' KBA National Coordination Group (NCG). The KBA NCG's main responsibility is to facilitate and support the conservation, management, and protection of KBAs as well as facilitate the updating and re-evaluation of sites as needed.

The Philippine KBA updating and identification process was undertaken separately by two working groups for the terrestrial and marine areas. Working closely with the Biodiversity Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (BMB-DENR), the Marine Protected Areas Support Network-Marine Environment and Resources Foundation, Inc. (MSN-MERF) together with its consortium members focused on the updating and identification of marine KBAs. For the terrestrial KBAs, the Biodiversity Conservation Society of the Philippines (BCSP) partnered with the Haribon Foundation, the Institute of Biology Alumni Association, and the Biodiversity Research Laboratory of the University of the Philippines-Diliman. Other partners that have supported this initiative include Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Foundation for the Philippine Environment (FPE), Forest Foundation Philippines (FFP), WWF-Indonesia, German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), and Pacific Environment. The collaboration of multiple institutions and organizations, as well as the cooperation of multiple sectors including the government, civil society, and the academe, have been crucial in the success of this undertaking.

WORLD DATABASE OF KBAs

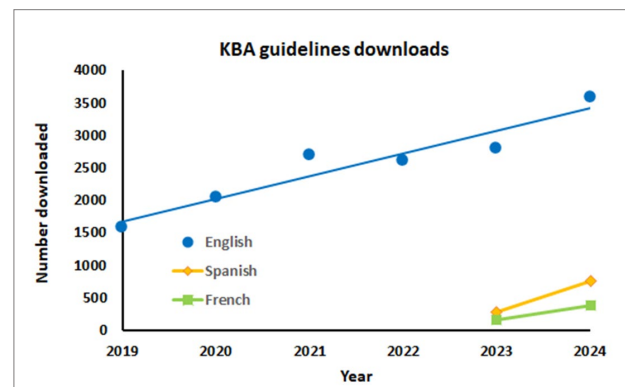
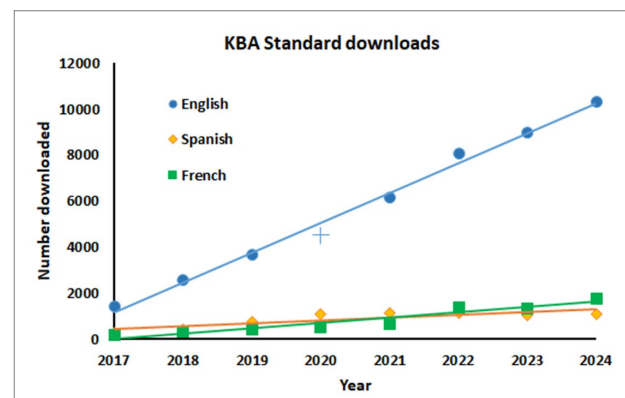
During 2024, 1,435 KBAs were modified or added to the World Database of KBAs. These included the 722 sites identified and re-assessed under the Bezos Earth Fund supported project (see [page 9](#)) as well as 263 sites in South Africa's comprehensive assessment of their KBAs. Individual KBAs were also identified or re-assessed in multiple other countries. Of these 658 sites were new, 360 re-assessed, 323 superseded and 94 delisted.



The KBA proposal platform was thoroughly tested and improved during the year including the addition of spatial mapping functionality so that shapefiles can be uploaded and compared with existing KBA and protected area boundaries. The requirements were scoped out for functionality to allow import of data (either from external databases for countries like Canada that have one, or from spreadsheets for assessors preferring to compile data on multiple sites prior to entering into the WDKBA). Work commenced on implementing these requirements, and will be completed and launched in the first quarter of 2025. Incorporation of functionality to

support KBA monitoring tool will be a focus of the WDKBA team in 2025. Some testing of an online tool in Jotform to capture monitoring data from sites was made and feedback used to revise plans for integrating this functionality in the WDKBA.

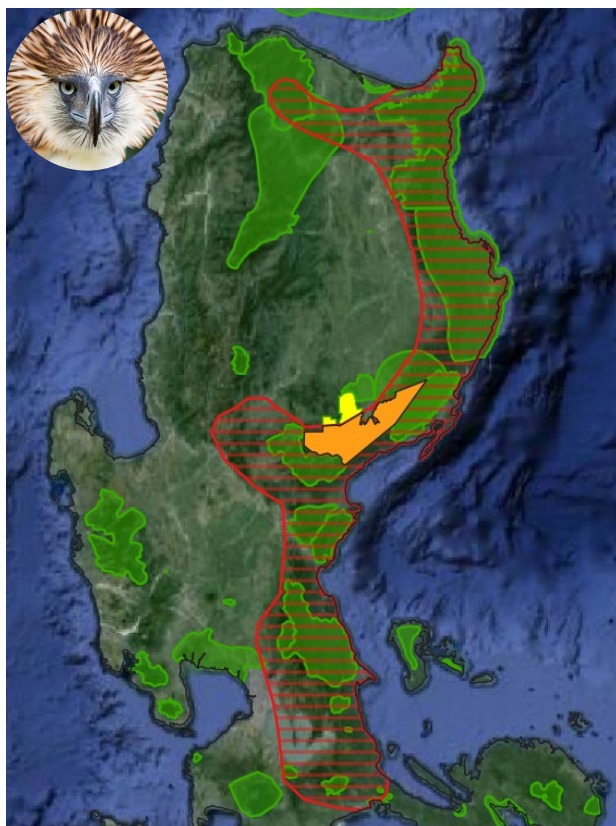
Use of KBA data continued to increase at a steady rate with 1,415 downloads of the spatial dataset in 2024. Downloads of the [KBA Standard](#) and [KBA Guidelines](#) in English, French and Spanish also increased steadily.



**37 COUNTRIES HAD ESTABLISHED
KBA NATIONAL COORDINATION
GROUPS BY END 2024**



KBA SCOPING TOOL



Graphic 2: Philippine eagle range (red hatch) overlaid on protected areas (green). The range intersects a protected area of interest (yellow/orange), and the area of overlap (orange) is calculated and compared with the total area of the range by the scoping tool.

Since 2019 the KBA Data Scientist, Daniele Baisero, has been developing a tool to help scope potential KBAs and identify potential species that qualify a site as a KBA. Using range data from the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, the tool calculates an Area of Habitat (AoH) map for each species and then applies KBA criteria for threatened species (A1a-e) and geographically restricted species (B1, B2 and B3a) to both the range and AoH maps for specific site boundary maps. This tool can be used to scope existing KBAs during re-assessments to identify if there may be other species that qualify a site as a KBA. It can also be used to scope other sites such as existing protected areas, or sites managed by local communities or indigenous peoples. The tool returns a CSV file of all species with ranges that overlap a site together with those that might

trigger KBA status. It also returns a geopackage that can be used to map additional fields such as the number of potential species that might qualify a KBA or the number of criteria that trigger a site. These can be used to rank sites with those with multiple species or criteria being more likely to be a KBA. In order to confirm KBA status a proposer of a scoped site needs to identify evidence that the species is present and with sufficient Reproductive Units.

The KBA scoping tool was tested in 2024 using the data from the Bezos Earth Fund Project. We compared the outputs of the scoping tool with the actual species that were confirmed in the KBA assessments. The scoping tool correctly identified 93% of the confirmed species qualifying a site as a KBA whatever assessment parameter was used (mature individuals, area of occurrence, extent of suitable habitat, range or localities), and 97% for species where the assessment parameter used was only the species range. Species that were not identified were either not assessed on the IUCN Red List or had a more recent assessment that had changed compared with the scoping tool. The scoping tool identified many more potential species as qualifying a site but 70% of these were not assessed by the KBA proposers and many of those that were assessed did not have recent data to be able to confirm presence at a site or reproductive unit numbers.

The KBA scoping tool was used to scope more than 3,700 sites in 85 countries during 2024 and we are looking to make the tool more widely available online through the World Database of KBAs if funding can be raised. Users are finding the tool is beneficial in rapidly honing down on which species can be focused on at a site to pull together the needed data confirming presence and reproductive units at a site. If you are interested in having a scoping analysis made please contact Daniele at dbaisero@keybiodiversityareas.org.

TRAINING IN APPLYING KBA CRITERIA AND UPDATES IN GUIDANCE

During 2024 fourteen training courses were held in eleven countries to train people in applying the KB criteria. These included China, Philippines, Madagascar, Somaliland, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Malawi, Guyana, Chile, Dominican Republic, and Spain. A total of 414 people were trained at these sessions.

A training of trainers course was also developed and a training held in 2024 of all KBA Regional Focal Points and Community Representatives, as well as KBA proposers who have been supporting others in identifying KBAs. A total of 14 KBA trainers have been trained following this course. We encourage others who want to run KBA training programmes to work with the KBA Training Officer, Samridhi Rijal, to take this course after taking the basic KBA training course (or



[online course](#)) and ensure they fully understand the application of the KBA Standard. She is always available to help support KBA training either in person or online. Please contact the KBA Secretariat if you want support.

The guidance on proposing KBAs was updated in 2024 and a version 1.2 published which has a new annex C on how to use the online proposal platform in the World Database of KBAs. Using images of the screen it guides the user through the process of registering in the database and making proposals, including giving guidance on how to write some of the free text fields that describe the site, the rationale for KBA status, its manageability and how it was delineated. It is now available on the [KBA website](#) in English, French or Spanish.

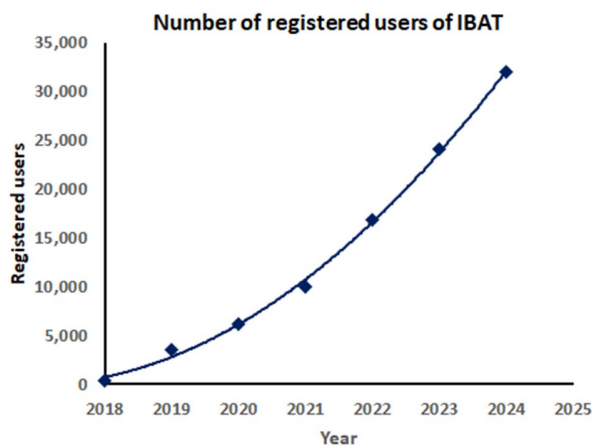




**414 PEOPLE WERE
TRAINED IN HOW TO
IDENTIFY KBAS IN 2024**

KBA USE BY THE PRIVATE SECTOR

KBAs are made available to the private sector through the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool (IBAT). By the end of 2024, more than 200 private sector organisations were using the IBAT platform with over 32,000 registered users in total, showing healthy use of IBAT's free access option in addition to paid subscriptions and Pay-as-You-Go services. The IBAT Alliance which licences private sector access to three of the world's most authoritative biodiversity data sets including KBAs, and generates revenue to support the maintenance and updating of the datasets, achieved a **record \$2.5m investment** back into those data sets – more than double the amount invested in 2023 – supporting critical maintenance and projects.

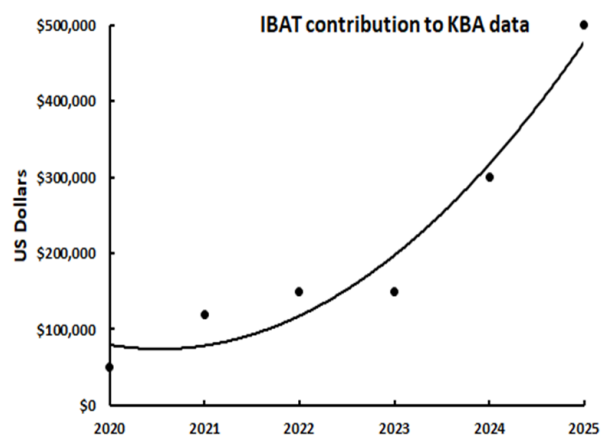


Following the ratification of the KMGBF in December 2022, several frameworks to support companies to measure and report their impacts on biodiversity were launched or further developed in 2023. These included the Task Force on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD), European Sustainability Reporting Standard (ESRS) and the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI). The KBA Partnership successfully worked with each of the frameworks as they were developed to ensure that KBAs were referenced appropriately within them as sites of particular importance for biodiversity. TNFD references KBAs in the Locate component of its L.E.A.P. approach (Locate, Evaluate, Assess and Prepare). SBTN guidance states that companies should

avoid negative impacts on KBAs, and GRI states that KBAs are areas scientifically recognised for their importance for biodiversity and companies should report on how they avoid impacts on KBAs. In 2024 IBAT worked with the Disclosure Reporting Frameworks such as TNFD, GRI or ESRS to develop a bespoke report, the IBAT Disclosure Preparation Report (DPR) that companies can use to analyse IBAT datasets, including KBA data, and deliver relevant results for reporting to these frameworks. The reports assess the sensitivities of concession areas to prepare for disclosures. In 2024, more than 400 DPRs were downloaded. Using the DPR, 34,665 different sites were assessed during that year.

The IBAT Alliance also supported the KBA partnership with business engagement, highlighting KBAs at key events such as COP16 to deliver KBA learning sessions and discussions, and featuring KBAs in communications campaigns.

Robust biodiversity data is essential for investors and businesses to understand and manage their nature-related risks and dependencies and through IBAT, KBAs continue to be used by businesses to guide their decision-making. A notable example of this was demonstrated by Norges Bank Investment Management (NBIM) in their Climate and Nature Disclosures Report 2024 where they used the KBA data base to assess the intersection of their portfolio of companies with KBAs.



KBA COMMUNICATIONS 2024

During 2024, different communications actions to promote KBAs were made, with overall positive results. These efforts were aimed at our key audiences: local partners, NGOs, governments, the scientific community and other relevant stakeholders. Our communications followed two main lines; an international one aimed at covering KBA-related news around the world and the Secretariat's work; and a second line focused on showcasing the results of the "Bezos KBA Project - Establishing the blueprint for 30x30" (2022-2024).

Bezos KBA Project Communications

The project's extensive social media presence across platforms, including Facebook, LinkedIn, and X (formerly Twitter), helped to increase visibility and engagement. The project's social media posts reached an average of 4,777 people, with an average of 14,652 impressions³.

Traditional media also played a key role, as it allowed sharing the project's outcomes with a wider audience. For example, in Ecuador, documents and radio ads were translated into seven ancestral languages to facilitate the promotion of KBAs to Indigenous groups.

Another powerful product was a book about [Gabon's KBAs](#), that compiles information about Gabon's sites identified under the Bezos Project.. Finally, a [seven-minute video](#) with the Bezos KBA Project's results served as a testimony of the work done in the seven countries. This video was



shared through social media and in international events like the COP 16 (Cali), and the Bezos Earth Fund Grantees meeting.

KBA International communications

All communication efforts at the international level were coordinated with the KBA Secretariat, the KBA Community, the Global Site Conservation Coordinator at BirdLife International, and the KBA Communications Working Group. To guarantee communications were relevant and served to amplify all relevant occurrences around KBAs, different channels, platforms, resources, and tailored messages were used:



Social media proved to be one of the key channels for international communications. KBA channels showed significant growth with 6,170 followers across Facebook, LinkedIn, and X, with the highest numbers on X (1,894 followers), and LinkedIn (4,052 followers), all gained organically.

Other relevant action was the design of 4 publications addressing Governments and the private sector:

- [The benefits from making comprehensive assessments of KBAs](#)
- [Protecting our Planet: The role of KBAs](#)
- [Conserving the Right Places to achieve the Biodiversity Plan](#)
- [The relevance of the Key Biodiversity Area Network for achievement of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#)

³ On social media, impressions are the number of times a content was seen, including multiple views from individual users.

KBA PROGRAMME PRIORITIES FOR 2025

With a greater focus on supporting KBA National Coordination Groups (NCGs) it was encouraging to receive additional funds (\$150,000) from IBAT in early 2025. These will be used to support existing KBA NCGs through a grant to two countries. We hope this will be the first of future opportunities to support KBA assessments directly from the KBA Secretariat. Countries that will be making fairly comprehensive assessments of their KBAs in 2025 include Honduras, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Oman, and Philippines, and we will be supporting them in the proposal process.

We aim to develop a monitoring platform in the World Database of KBAs in 2025 that will allow KBA proposers and users of KBA data to update data on the state of species and ecosystems that qualify a site as a KBA, pressures to these biodiversity elements or the site as a whole, and conservation actions being taken to tackle the pressures. This will be combined with remote sensing datasets that will be used to track changes happening at individual KBAs with the ability to analyse changes at a national, regional and global scale.

The KBA website will be updated and revised to better provide relevant information to various types of users of the site such as conservation practitioners, governments, donors and the private sector. With much of the guidance now developed there is less need to have this information on the website but to better provide links to the latest guidance. This will allow more targeted information for different user journeys through the website. For example, we aim to serve the relevant SDG and KMGBF indicators at a country level so that governments can easily find this information when making their reports to the UN or CBD.

A training course targeted at people in government will also be developed that will show how countries can best use KBA assessments to implement the KMGBF. This training will be made available by the UN Nature for Life Hub which has been developing training materials for government policy makers in other aspects of biodiversity conservation.



KBA PROGRAMME FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2024

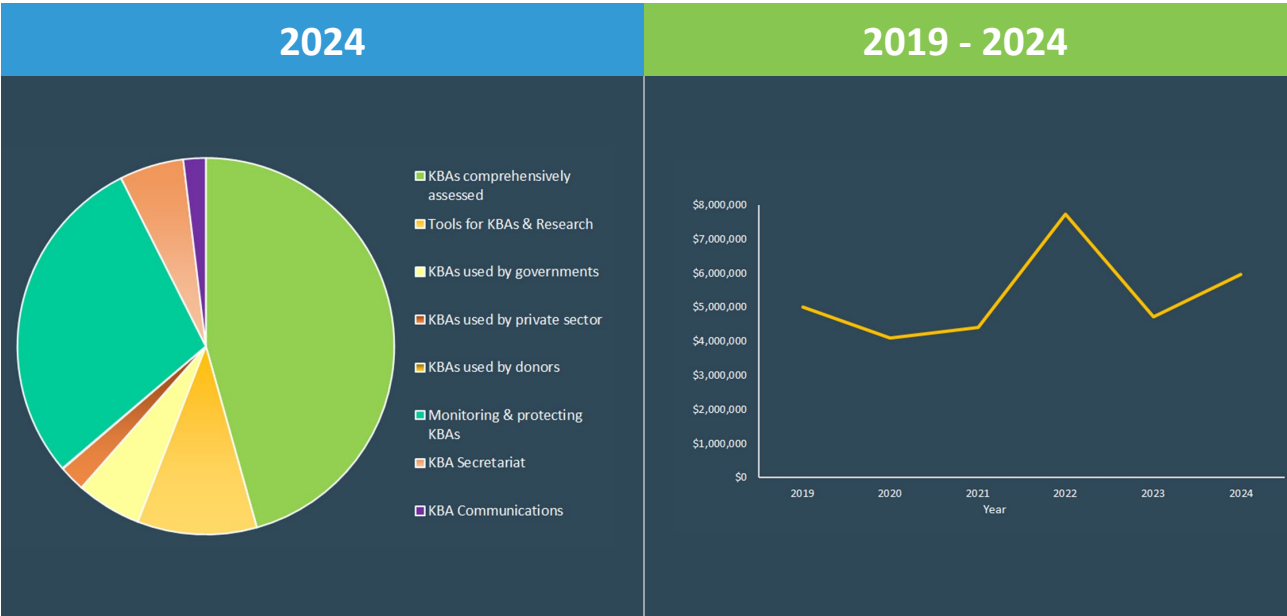
In 2024, the KBA Partners invested **USD \$5.96 million** in both direct financing and in-kind contributions for the KBA Programme. The pie chart below shows the relative investment in each of the main objectives in the new KBA Strategic Plan: 1. KBAs comprehensively assessed; 2. Tools for KBAs and research; 3. KBAs used by governments; 4. KBAs used by private sector; 5. KBAs used by donors; 6. Monitoring and acting to protect threatened KBAs; 7. KBA Secretariat support; and 8. KBA Communications and awareness raising. KBA Partner support to the conservation and management of KBAs around the world is not included, but would increase the total significantly.

The KBA Partners developed a basic operating budget including the costs needed to maintain the KBA programme, which averages c.\$1 million per year. This includes the core costs of the KBA Secretariat, review and validation of KBAs, supporting the establishment of new KBA NCGs,

provision of training in applying KBA criteria and supporting KBA proposal development, further development of the WDKBA, and supporting establishment of a KBA monitoring system. We are working on making this support sustainable through the contributions of the private sector to IBAT which currently funds about one-half of these costs. The budget does not include the costs of KBA identification processes within countries, which average about \$0.3-0.5 million USD per country, but vary according to the size of the country, its species richness and its cost of living.

We welcome additional organisations which are interested in joining the KBA Partnership and contributing to identifying, mapping, monitoring and conserving these sites of global importance for biodiversity. Please contact the Head of the KBA Secretariat for more information if interested in becoming a partner (aplumtre@keybiodiversityareas.org).

KBA PARTNER CONTRIBUTIONS TO PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES



SCIENCE AND RESEARCH

Research relevant to the KBA Programme is published by many of the KBA Partner scientists in both the peer-reviewed literature as well as in reports. The list of publications here provides examples of some of those published in 2024.

- Becker, S. L., Boyd, C., Handley, J. M., Raymond, B., Reisinger, R., Ropert-Coudert, Y., Apelgren, N., Davies, T., Lea, M.-A., Santos, M., Trathan, P. N., Van de Putte, A. P. V., Huckstadt, L. A., Charrassin, J.-B., & Brooks, C. M. (2025). Scaling up ocean conservation through recognition of key biodiversity areas in the Southern Ocean from multispecies tracking data. *Conservation Biology*, 39, e14345.
- Carneiro, A.P.B., Dias, M.P., Clark, B.L., Pearmain, E.J., Handly, J. et al. (2024). The BirdLife seabird tracking database: 20 years of collaboration for marine conservation. *Biological Conservation*, 299, 110813.
- Correa, R. J., Lindsey, P. A., Critchlow, R., Beale, C. M., Geldmann, J., & Plumptre, A. J. (2024). Performance of protected areas in conserving African elephants. *Conservation Letters*, 17, e13041.
- Grantham, H., Adams, V., and The IUCN WCPA Taskforce on Spatial Planning. (2024). *An overview of Participatory, Integrated, and Biodiversity-Inclusive Spatial Planning and Target 1 under the Convention on Biological Diversity Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework*. *IUCN WCPA Issues Paper Series No. 4*, Gland, Switzerland: IUCN.
- IUCN SSC (2024). *Approaches for identifying areas of particular importance for marine biodiversity*. IUCN WCPA Technical Note. [ISSN 2709-1376](#). Gland, Switzerland: IUCN
- Plumptre, A.J., Baisero, D., Brooks, T.M., Buchanan, G., Butchart, S.H.M, Bowser, A., Boyd, C., Carneiro, A.P.B., Davies, T., Elliot, W., Foster, M., Langhammer, P.F., Marnewick, D., Matiku, P., McCreless, E., Raudsepp-Hearne, C., Tordoff, A.W., Azpiroz, A.B., Trisurat, Y., & Upgren, A. (2024). Targeting site conservation to increase the effectiveness of new global biodiversity targets, *One Earth*, 7, 11-17.
- Plumptre, A.J., Hayes, J., Baisero, D., Rose, R., Holness, S., von Staden, L. & Smith, R.J. (2024). The strengths and complementarity of Systematic Conservation Planning and Key Biodiversity Area approaches for spatial planning. *Conservation Biology*, 39, e14400.
- SANBI & UNEP-WCMC (2024). *Mapping biodiversity priorities: A practical approach to spatial biodiversity assessment and prioritisation to inform national policy, planning, decisions and action. Second edition*. South African National Biodiversity Institute, Pretoria.
- Spiliopoulou, K., Rigal, F., Plumptre, A.J., Trigas, P., Paragamian, K., Hochkirch, A., Lymberakis, P., Portolou, D., Stoumboudi, M., & Triantis, K. (2024). KBAscope: Key Biodiversity Area identification in R. *Ecography*, e07061.
- WWF (2024). *Catalysing change: the urgent need for nature transition plans*. [WWF France](#).
- WWF (2024). *Banking on Nature Positive: How public development banks and commercial banks can collectively contribute towards a Nature-Positive agenda*. [WWF Germany](#).

KBA SECRETARIAT AND KBA COMMUNITY 2024



Andrew Plumptre is Head of the KBA Secretariat, has worked in Africa for more than 30 years and helped Uganda make an assessment of its KBAs. He believes that KBAs will be key in guiding the next 10 years to identify where to conserve 30% of land, freshwater and seas.



Adrián Azpiroz is the Chair of the KBA Community as well as Community representative for the Americas. Based in Uruguay at the Instituto de Investigaciones Biológicas Clemente Estable he has worked on the biogeography and conservation of birds in the region.



Daniel Marnewick represents the KBA community in Africa. He works for IUCN on the Green list of sites and OECMs.



Konstantina Spiliopoulou is the community representative for Europe and Central Asia. She is based in Greece and leads the GaP project to scope KBAs across Europe.



Professor Yongyut Trisurat, professor at Kasetsart University in Bangkok is the KBA Community Representative for Asia. He has been involved in many projects to improve spatial knowledge and planning for biodiversity in Thailand.



Daniele Baisero, Data Analyst for the KBA Secretariat, has extensive experience with spatial biodiversity analyses at a global scale. He is currently developing innovative tools to assist in identifying KBAs for all biodiversity across the world. He believes in visionary approaches.



Samridhi Rijal is the KBA Training Officer and responsible for supporting countries to run training courses on the application of the KBA criteria. Originally from Nepal she has worked in Canada and is now based in the UK.



Jeannot Kivono, was Regional Focal Point for Francophone Africa, is based in Goma, Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo where he has been engaged in many biodiversity surveys with Wildlife Conservation Society.



Cecilia Tobar Suárez is the Regional focal point for South and Central America and Caribbean region. She has been working closely with the country coordinators working to identify KBAs in the Andes.



Marcelo Tognelli, is Regional Focal Point for North America. He is the International Conservation Project Officer for American Bird Conservancy, and works to conserve wild birds and their habitats in the region, supporting ABC's KBA work.



Catherine Numa, is Regional Focal Point for the Mediterranean, North Africa, and Middle East, and working for IUCN's office in Spain she has been working to help establish the KBA NCG in Spain.



Mark O'Brien, Regional Focal Point for Australasia and Pacific islands, enjoys working with experts across a range of taxa and believe that KBAs provide great opportunities for focussing conservation efforts and controlling developments here in the Pacific.

Technical Working Group



Penny Langhammer, Co-Chair of the Technical Working Group and Executive Vice President of Science and Strategy at GWC, has been one of the key drivers in establishing the KBA criteria and Global Standard.



Olivia Crowe, Co-Chair of the Technical Working Group and Global Science Coordinator (IBAs & KBAs) for BirdLife International, co-leads the technical working group to provide guidance on the technical methods for applying the KBA criteria.

KBA Consultative Forum



Martin Sneary, head of IUCN's Enterprise and Investment Team in 2023.

Standards and Appeals Committee



Diego Juffe Bignoli and **John Lamoreux** are the co-chairs of the KBA Standards and Appeals committee. Diego is an independent consultant and John works for the US National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

KBA Committee Members in 2024:

Chair KBA Committee: Naomi Kingston and Paul Matiku

Chairs Technical Working Group: Penny Langhammer & Olivia Crowe

Chair Standards and Appeals Committee: Diego Juffe Bignoli & John Lamoreux

American Bird Conservancy: Mike Parr & Amy Upgren

Amphibian Survival Alliance: Gina Della Togna & Penny Langhammer

BirdLife International: Stu Butchart, Olivia Crowe & Zoltan Waliczky

Conservation International: Neil Cox

Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund: Olivier Langrand & Jack Tordoff

Global Environment Facility: Mark Zimsky & Jurgis Sapijanskas

IUCN: Tom Brooks & Thom Starnes

NatureServe: Anne Bowser

Rainforest Trust: James Lewis and Erin McCreless

Re:wild: Wes Sechrest, Penny Langhammer & Matt Foster

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds: Jo Gilbert

Wildlife Conservation Society: Justina Ray & Rachel Neugarten

World Wide Fund for Nature: Wendy Elliot

WCPA (Stephen Woodley & Madhu Rao) and **SSC** (Jon Paul Rodriguez) both have observer status on the KBA Committee and support the Chair of the SAC.

KBA PARTNERS:



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