

# Proteus 2016: Highlights



## Summary of highlights

**This report summarizes key activities completed under the 2016 workplan, the first year of the fourth phase of the Proteus Partnership (2016-2020). The activities described in this report include both those funded by Proteus and those delivered with leveraged funding that UNEP-WCMC is able to secure thanks to the significant financial contribution of Partner companies.**

- **Improving protected areas data** - A total of 90 countries underwent complete updates in the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) over the course of the year. The database saw a net change of over 14,000 additional records. The WDPA now holds over 220,000 records.
- **New marine and coastal data** - In 2016, our efforts in the marine and coastal realm focused on three areas of development: Improving existing datasets, negotiating access to new data sources, and identifying potential new data sources.
- **Screening for Critical Habitat** - An updated version of the marine Critical Habitat layer was developed in 2016. The updated version creates alignment with the terrestrial Critical Habitat layer, building the groundwork for a release of a global Critical Habitat screening layer in 2017. Recognizing Partner needs for higher resolution data, the availability of regional and national level datasets relevant to Critical Habitat was assessed.
- **Taking the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool (IBAT) forward** - All three core datasets within IBAT were updated over the course of 2016. A new data factsheet was released as part of the IUCN Red List data update, providing information on taxonomic coverage within the database. Additionally, 2016 marked the launch of the IBAT business plan review, setting off with a survey of IBAT users.
- **New biodiversity resources** - We were pleased to use the Global Biodiversity Agenda webinar series in 2016 to provide Partners with a high-level overview of developments in the conservation landscape, such as the Sustainable Development Goals. We have expanded our collection of resources supporting the use and interpretation of Proteus data, including new Technical Briefing Notes and metadata sheets.
- **Training and technical support** - UNEP-WCMC's support activities provide Partners with the information necessary to increase the use of Proteus data in company decision-making. Proteus Partners are provided with training, technical assistance, and customized support. In 2016, UNEP-WCMC delivered five training sessions, four technical assistance projects and responded to over 80 queries.
- **Measuring Proteus impact** - This year saw the completion of the first Proteus impact survey to explore the utilisation of Proteus data in policy decisions. The exercise will be undertaken annually to track the impact of the Partnership over time. 22 responses were obtained from eight Proteus Partner companies, including responses from both technical/data users and policy/corporate users.
- **Engaging on business & biodiversity issues** - UNEP-WCMC participated in two major events which guide the global biodiversity agenda: The IUCN World Conservation Congress, and the Thirteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. These provide opportunities for Proteus Partners to engage with stakeholders and learn from the discussions.

# Improving protected areas data

A total of 90 countries underwent complete updates in the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) over the course of the year. The database saw a net change of over 14,000 additional records. The WDPA now holds over 220,000 records.

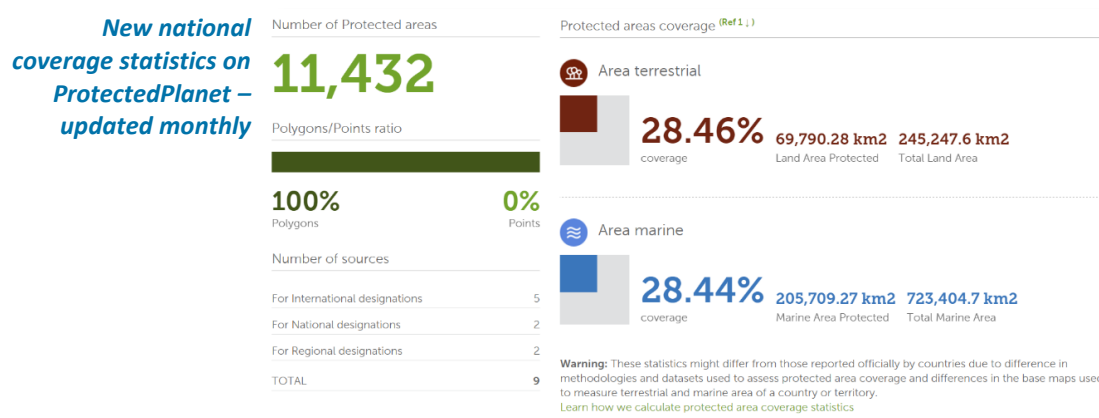
**WDPA data updates** – 87% of records within the WDPA either received updated boundary and attribute information, or were verified by the data provider as being up to date. Data from over 100 countries and territories was updated, 90 of which underwent complete updates. The updates resulted in the addition of 22,000 sites, and removal of 9,000 sites. The percentage of records which are point features continues its decline, from 4.96% to 4.54% of total records.

**Protected areas designated under regional marine agreements** – Complete updates were secured for protected areas designated under the HELCOM, OSPAR and Barcelona Conventions. Collaboration with the Convention secretariats have resulted in two notable highlights: Firstly, the network of Baltic Sea Protected Areas (HELCOM) is now fully represented within the WDPA. Secondly, polygon data is now available for all Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (Barcelona). Negotiations are ongoing with other regional seas conventions to obtain updated data, or support data creation processes<sup>1</sup>.

**Largest gain in area: The marine realm** – In the last 6 months of 2016, over 3 million km<sup>2</sup> of Marine Protected Areas were added to the WDPA. In particular, boundary information for the *Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument* was updated – this is the largest marine protected area in the world, following its expansion in August 2016, in anticipation of the IUCN World Conservation Congress.

**Largest gain in numbers: The United States** – The largest gain in number of protected area records was in the United States. Over 14,000 records were added, and 5,700 records removed as part of an ongoing exercise ensuring that data submitted to the WDPA contains all sites from the PAD-US database that meet the IUCN definition of a protected area.

**New country pages on ProtectedPlanet** - September 2016 saw the launch of new country pages on ProtectedPlanet, the online interface of the WDPA. These offer quick access to a variety of national-level statistics, including monthly updated coverage percentage figures. Country pages are grouped by region to facilitate access to the pages.



<sup>1</sup> For more information on individual designations, consult the [Biodiversity A-Z](#).

# New marine and coastal data

*In 2016, our efforts in the marine and coastal realm focused on three areas of development: Improving existing datasets, negotiating access to new data sources, and identifying potential new data sources.*

**Improving existing datasets** – We are pleased to announce that new versions of occurrence datasets on the known extents of saltmarshes (version 4.0), seagrasses (version 4.0) and cold-water corals (version 3.0) were developed for Proteus Partners. The updated version of the “Global Distribution of Cold-water Corals” includes standardised cold-water coral depth ranges, ISO3 country codes and information on data collection timeframes. The “Reefs at Risk Revisited” dataset was released on the Ocean Data Viewer, providing contextual information on coral reefs globally. Improvements were also made to mangrove records in Myanmar in the World Atlas of Mangroves (2010; version 1.1) dataset.

**Negotiating access to new data sources** – To strengthen awareness of regions with ongoing marine spatial planning initiatives, the team also negotiated access to spatial data for 23 marine spatial planning processes, which were used to develop a preliminary dataset covering more than 50,000,000 km<sup>2</sup> (41 polygons) of some of the existing initiatives globally.

**Identifying new data sources** - Potential new sources of data were identified through a review of 44 sources on the migrations of marine species, examining the feasibility of developing a global dataset of migratory routes. Additional datasets were also identified for all of the global habitat datasets currently hosted on the Ocean Data Viewer, including data sources that could be used to develop new global layers on the distributions of sponges and macroalgae.

**Ocean Data Viewer analytics review** - The Ocean Data Viewer analytics were reviewed in order to better understand the requirements of Proteus Partners and other users. The review identified categories of users, most frequently downloaded datasets, common analyses conducted and information sought by users. This information will be used to guide subsequent development of marine and coastal data and the Ocean Data Viewer, with the aim to increase their relevance to Proteus Partners and establish new partnerships with marine biodiversity data providers.

## *Summary of main improvements to marine and coastal habitat datasets*

- 55,000 km<sup>2</sup> of recorded instances
- 9,300 km<sup>2</sup> added in 2016 (20% increase)

Seagrasses



- 344,958 km<sup>2</sup> of known extent
- 8,000 km<sup>2</sup> and nearly 8,900 data points added in 2016

Saltmarshes



- 32,631 data points, across 132 countries
- A five-fold increase in the number of documented occurrences

Cold-water corals



# Screening for Critical Habitat

An updated version of the marine Critical Habitat layer was developed in 2016. The updated version creates alignment with the terrestrial Critical Habitat layer, building the groundwork for a release of a global Critical Habitat screening layer in 2017. Recognizing Partner needs for higher resolution data, the availability of regional and national level datasets relevant to Critical Habitat was assessed.

**Updated marine Critical Habitat layer**– An updated version of the marine ‘Critical Habitat’<sup>2</sup> screening layer was developed, in order to integrate improved datasets on the global distributions of mangrove, saltmarsh, and seagrass. The revised marine layer further includes updated version of the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) and Key Biodiversity Areas from the World Bird and Biodiversity Database (WBDB). Datasets within the marine layer now align with datasets of the terrestrial ‘Critical Habitat’ layer, facilitating joint use of both datasets upon release at the July 2017 Proteus Annual Meeting.

**Alignment of EBSAs and VMEs to Critical Habitat criteria** - Methodologies for aligning IFC PS6’s Critical Habitat criteria with the classification criteria for Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) and Vulnerable Marine Ecosystems (VMEs) were developed, in order to support the integration of EBSAs and VMEs into the ‘Critical Habitat’ methodology. While formal permission to disseminate these datasets to Proteus Partners is still being sought, these methodologies are available to Proteus Partners for understanding the alignment between these classifications and the IFC PS6 criteria.

**Exploring the feasibility of a regional-level Critical Habitat screening layer** – A global review of marine and coastal habitat monitoring networks was undertaken in 2016, to determine whether sufficient data resources are available to support the development of higher-resolution regional- or national-level marine ‘Critical Habitat’ screening layers. The results revealed 108 existing regional- and national-level habitat monitoring networks or data sources<sup>3</sup>. These may allow to pilot regional-level screening of Critical Habitat in well-monitored regions, such as Europe, Oceania and North America.

● Presence of habitat verified    ○ Absence of habitat verified

*Presence of marine and coastal habitats by region detailing number of relevant datasets identified in preliminary scoping study*

Region	Warm-water corals	Cold-water corals	Sponges	Mangroves	Macroalgae	Saltmarsh	Seagrass	Seamount	Total
Europe	○ -	● 8	● 6	○ -	● 7	● 6	● 7	● 6	40
Oceania	● 9	● 4	● 4	● 6	● 3	● 4	● 7	● 3	40
North America	● 7	● 5	● 3	● 4	● 5	● 2	● 5	● 2	33
Africa	● 7	● 1	● 3	● 5	● 2	● 1	● 2	● 3	24
Caribbean	● 7	● 0	● 1	● 4	● 2	● 0	● 3	● 2	19
Southeast Asia	● 5	○ -	● 1	● 6	● 1	● 0	● 4	● 2	19
Central America	● 6	● 0	● 1	● 3	● 1	● 0	● 4	● 2	17
South America	● 4	● 0	● 3	● 3	● 2	● 0	● 1	● 2	15
Western Asia	● 4	● 0	● 2	● 4	● 2	● 0	● 1	● 2	15
East Asia	● 3	● 0	● 1	● 5	● 0	● 0	● 3	● 2	14
South Asia	● 4	○ -	● 1	● 3	● 1	● 0	● 1	● 2	12
Arctic	○ -	● 1	● 2	○ -	● 1	○ -	○ -	● 3	7
Antarctic	○ -	● 0	● 1	○ -	● 1	○ -	○ -	● 2	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>259</b>

<sup>2</sup> As defined by International Finance Corporation Performance Standard 6 (IFC PS6)

<sup>3</sup> Permission and access to data still to be negotiated

# Taking the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool (IBAT) forward

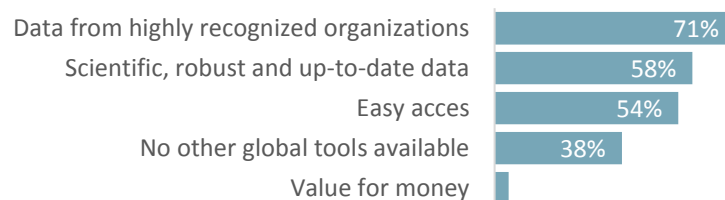
*All three core datasets within IBAT were updated over the course of 2016. A new data factsheet was released as part of the IUCN Red List data update, providing information on taxonomic coverage within the database. Additionally, 2016 marked the launch of the IBAT business plan review, setting off with a comprehensive survey of IBAT users.*

**Data updates within IBAT** – Core datasets within IBAT are updated on an annual basis. Protected areas data within IBAT was updated twice, in January and December 2016. Key Biodiversity Areas data were updated through the inclusion of the December 2016 version of the database. Species ranges for the IUCN Red List were updated to version 2016-1 at the beginning of the year.

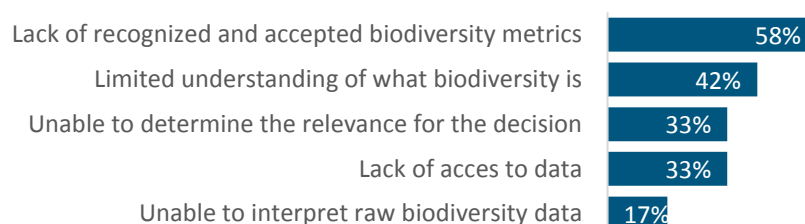
**New factsheet outlining taxonomic coverage of IUCN Red List data** – The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species is the world’s most comprehensive inventory of the global conservation status of species. Spatial distribution data is available for approximately two thirds of the 85,000 species which have been assessed within the database. The new factsheet identifies taxonomic groups which have been comprehensively assessed (e.g. birds, mammals), and those where spatial data gaps are known to occur (e.g. reptiles, plants). The factsheet supports accurate data interpretation, by providing technical users with a better understanding of the taxonomic bias within Red List data.

**IBAT user survey to support business plan review** – A review of the IBAT business plan was launched by surveying 46 organisations from across sectors, including Proteus Partners. Feedback gathered as part of the survey will influence the design of IBAT’s future functionalities to meet the needs of the extractive sector. We were pleased to find that 75% of business users would recommend IBAT to their peers, and a further 17% may do so depending on their peer’s needs.

## What are the main drivers guiding your organization to use the IBAT tools?



## What are the challenges your organization faces, when understanding biodiversity risks and opportunities for decision making?



# New biodiversity resources

*We were pleased to use the Global Biodiversity Agenda webinar series in 2016 to provide Partners with a high-level overview of ongoing developments in the conservation landscape, such as the Sustainable Development Goals. We have expanded our collection of resources supporting the use and interpretation of Proteus data, including new Technical Briefing Notes and metadata sheets.*



**Technical briefing notes** published in 2016 addressed three topics:

- Working with data misalignments in global biodiversity spatial datasets
- Differences between the WDPA and Protected Areas Database-US
- Change in global protected area coverage from 2005 to 2016

These can be accessed via the Proteus [website](#).



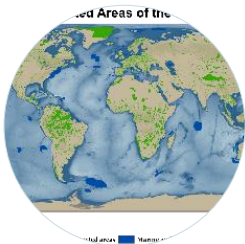
**The Global Biodiversity Agenda webinar series** in 2016 discussed:

- Protected Areas – what we need to know and emerging issues
- The Sustainable Development Goals – implications and opportunities for business.

Recordings and presentations can be accessed via the Proteus [website](#).



**The Protected Planet Report 2016** describes the current status of the world's global protected area coverage. Just under 15% of the world's terrestrial and inland waters, over 10% of the coastal and marine areas within national jurisdiction, and approximately 4% of the global ocean are covered by protected areas. The report can be accessed [here](#).



**The WDPA User Manual 1.4** now includes an appendix on WDPA Data Contributor Agreements (Appendix 2), general updates and edits based on user feedback. Additionally, the WDPA Manual is now available in French and Spanish. Download the manual [here](#).



**New metadata sheets** are available for 14 marine and coastal datasets, and have been updated for a further eight, in preparation for the release of the *Manual of marine and coastal datasets of biodiversity importance* in 2017. These describe the methodologies, limitations, permissions and intended uses of each dataset, following a single metadata standard.

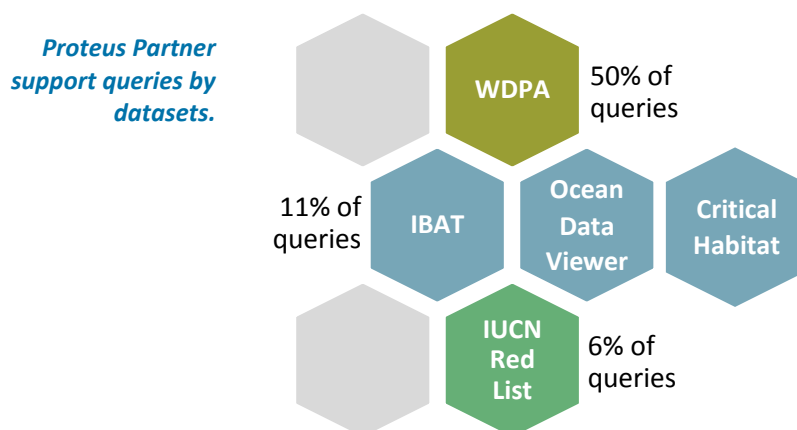
# Training and technical support

*UNEP-WCMC's support activities provide Partners with the information necessary to increase the use of Proteus data in company decision-making. Proteus Partners are provided with training, technical assistance, and customized support. In 2016, UNEP-WCMC delivered five training sessions, four technical assistance projects and responded to over 80 queries.*

**Data verification** - Unlimited support for key datasets was introduced as part of the new 2016-2020 Proteus strategy. Partners have made use of this support, and the Proteus team resolved over 80 queries throughout the year. These related most frequently to the World Database on Protected Areas, with Partners requesting guidance on the use of the dataset or verification of data within the database. These requests have proven to be a valuable means of building capacity in companies to make best use of the data. A number of requests for support also related to data access, in particular supporting access to IBAT or Ocean Data Viewer resources by third party consultants working on behalf of Partners.

**Training** - Five training sessions were delivered over the course of 2016, reaching over 60 attendees. These resulted in a revision of training materials for the Ocean Data Viewer, as well as new materials providing information on fundamental Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services (BES) concepts, the business case for BES management, and on key international-level regulatory frameworks. This aspect of the Proteus work programme also helps UNEP-WCMC to engage beyond Proteus through the IPIECA Peer to Peer training, which was held in Bangkok.

**Technical assistance** – The Proteus team completed four technical assistance projects, including work on biodiversity value screening, an FAQ factsheet on BES, and benchmarking of BES policy against peers. Some of these projects were delivered with the annual allocation of 20hrs per Partner, while others were delivered with additional funding. Over the years a number of Proteus Partners have agreed to sharing outputs of the work they fund as communal resources across the Partnership, which continued in 2016. These resulted in the publication of briefing notes on PAD-US and temporal changes across the WDPA. This area of the Proteus work programme also allows UNEP-WCMC to engage with the industry associations of the Partner companies, including IPIECA, ICMM and CSBI to deliver industry briefings and analysis.<sup>4</sup>



<sup>4</sup> IPIECA is the Oil and Gas industry association for Environmental and Social issues, ICMM is the International Council for Mining and Metals and CSBI is the Cross-sector Biodiversity Initiative

# Measuring Proteus impact

2016 saw the completion of the first Proteus impact survey to explore the utilisation of Proteus data in policy decisions. The exercise will be undertaken annually to track the impact of the Partnership over time<sup>5</sup>. In 2016, 22 responses were obtained from eight Proteus Partner companies, including responses from both technical/data users and policy/corporate users. What did we learn from the survey?

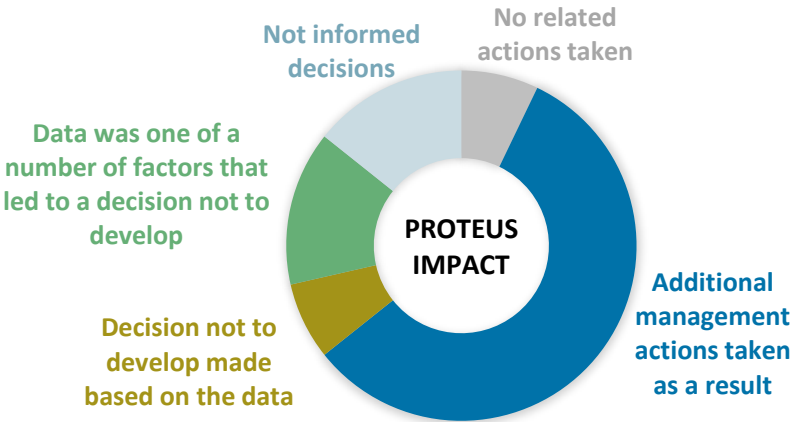
**Policy/corporate users tend to be more familiar with the Proteus Partnership than technical/data users** - The majority of policy/corporate users were extremely familiar with the Proteus Partnership and assigned high or moderate value to the Partnership.

**Data provided through the Partnership is used to shape decisions** - Eight respondents indicated that additional management actions were taken as a result, two indicated that data was one of a number of factors that led to a decision not to develop and one company made a decision not to develop based only on the data.

**Data derived from the Proteus Partnership are most widely used in screening** - Proteus data are also widely used in project-level risk assessment and site selection, internal and/or external reporting and company-level risk management.

**IBAT tends to be the most regularly used tool within the Proteus toolkit** - Although none of the respondents used the tools provided through Proteus on a daily basis, the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool (IBAT) and Protected Planet tend to be used most regularly, with a large proportion of users accessing these on a monthly basis.

**Improvements suggested for prioritisation by Proteus Partners** - 1) Continue to develop Critical Habitat layers and improve accuracy/effectiveness; 2) Continue to improve quality of the data, in particular the WDPA and IBAT, with a focus on capturing IUCN Management Categories in developing countries; and 3) Move from data provider towards insight provider. These areas were addressed as a priority within the 2016 workplan.



<sup>5</sup> Refer to separate paper for results of the 2017 Proteus impact survey.

# Engaging on business & biodiversity issues

*UNEP-WCMC participated in major events which guide the global biodiversity agenda, engaging on issues relevant to business and providing opportunities for Proteus Partners to engage with stakeholders and learn from the discussions.*

**IUCN World Conservation Congress** - The IUCN WCC takes place every four years to set the agenda for IUCN. It is an opportunity for the Government and NGO members of IUCN to come together to discuss the biggest challenges and successes in conservation. The Congress was held in September 2016, in Hawai'i, with travel restrictions limiting the attendance by the private sector, despite many themes being highly relevant to business.

The event presented a busy and active Business Pavilion, hosting daily briefings and offering a forum for engagement to those interested in business issues. While the Pavilion was a success as a focal point, it did mean business issues weren't integrated into the agendas of other Pavilions. Major business-relevant discussions around the Congress looked at the issue of treating protected and other important areas as "No Go" for development, offsets policy, natural capital and its impact on the way businesses engage with biodiversity, and the newly launched standard for identifying Key Biodiversity Areas. UNEP-WCMC engaged in several discussions relevant to the extractive sector and led discussions which took a balanced look at the "No Go" issue. These informed delegates' Decision on the issue, which was passed by the Assembly.

**Thirteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity** – The CBD COP13 met in Cancun, Mexico in December 2016. These biennial conferences bring together representatives of the government Parties to the Convention and other key players to promote the implementation of the Convention. Once again UNEP-WCMC sent a delegation to engage in both the conference and the accompanying side events.

The main business-focussed events were the annual meeting of the Global Business and Biodiversity Partnership and the subsequent Business Forum. The meetings picked-up on the ecosystem-approach, moving to long term thinking, and sustainable use. The sectoral focus was on agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism, but the meeting recognised that the extractive sectors are also a priority, which will now feature prominently at the next meeting in Egypt 2018.

*Common issues across the IUCN WCC and CBD COP 13*

**Natural Capital Protocol**

- The momentum behind the Protocol continues to build, with significant attention given to the potential of the Natural Concept concept and Protocol to contribute to conservation.

**Sustainable Development Goals**

- The international agenda is being dominated by the Global Goals, which are driving a more integrated approach to conservation.

**Indicators and Monitoring**

- Tracking progress (in part linked to the Global Goals) remains a well-recognised challenge for governments and business

The UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) is the specialist biodiversity assessment centre of the United Nations Environment Programme (UN Environment), the world's foremost intergovernmental environmental organization. The Centre has been in operation for over 30 years, combining scientific research with practical policy advice.

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