

WDPA Data Status Report

The World Database on Protected Areas

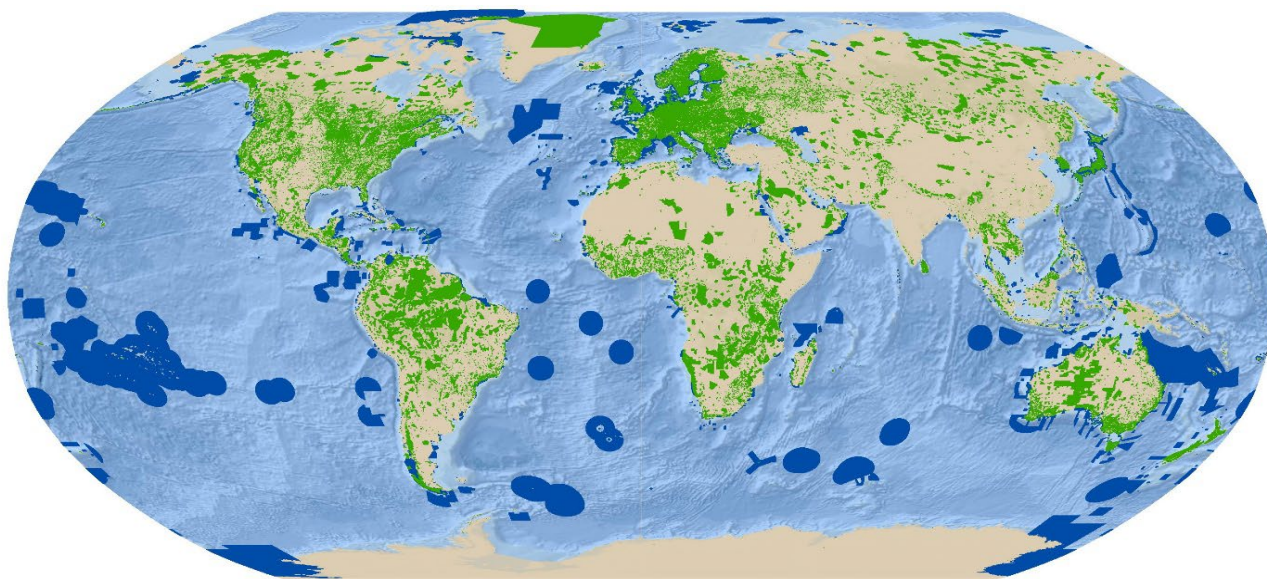
July 2025

About this Report and the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA)



The WDPA is the most comprehensive global dataset on terrestrial and marine protected areas, incorporating the official UN List of Protected Areas. The WDPA dataset is not necessarily a complete representation of all the protected areas which have been designated in country. The quality of the WDPA depends on the accessibility of accurate, comprehensive, up-to-date protected areas information from data holders.

This report describes the current status of data in the WDPA for all sites included in the July 2025 monthly release.

Map showing protected areas in the WDPA

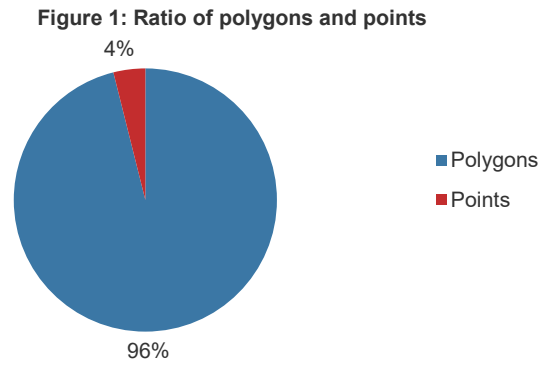


Source: UNEP-WCMC and IUCN (2025). Protected Planet: The World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) [On-line], July 2025, Cambridge, UK: UNEP-WCMC. Available at www.protectedplanet.net

 Terrestrial & inland waters protected areas  Marine and coastal protected areas

Protected areas data in the WDPa

There are 305,240 protected area records stored in the WDPa. 269,253 are national-level protected areas with 35,734 designated under international and regional agreements or conventions. 96% of the data have boundaries in polygon format, with the remaining 4% depicted in point format (i.e. a single latitude and longitude point for the protected area). See Figure 1.



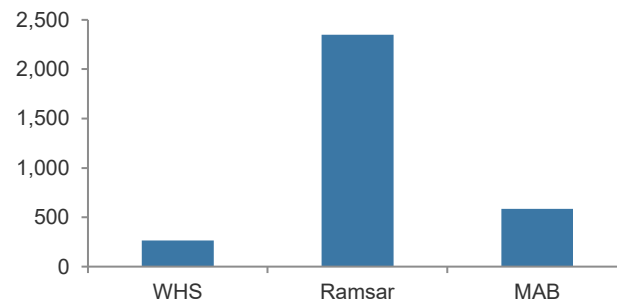
Of the 305,240 protected areas, 16,970 (6%) include a marine or coastal component. These protected areas may be either partially or completely within the marine environment.

Data for protected areas designated under international conventions and agreements

There are 3,201 protected areas in the WDPa designated under international conventions or agreements.

266 are World Heritage sites (WHS), 2,349 are Ramsar Wetlands of International Importance, 586 are UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Reserves (MAB). See Figure 2.

Figure 2: Sites designated under international conventions and agreements



Data for protected areas designated under regional conventions and agreements

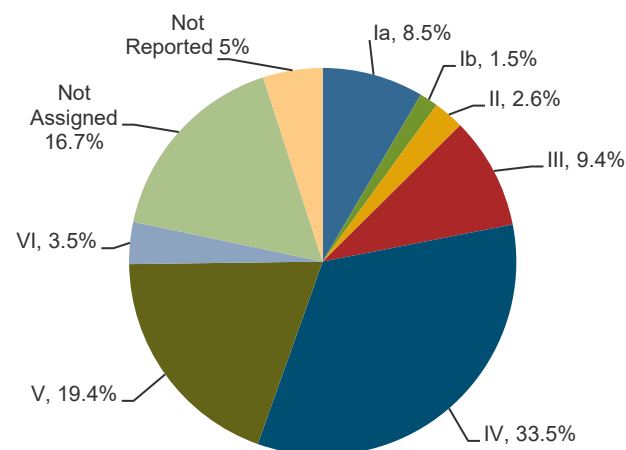
There are 32,533 protected areas in the WDPa designated under regional conventions or agreements. 29,205 are Natura2000 sites, 752 sites are designated under regional seas conventions and 2,576 are Areas of Special Conservation Interest (Emerald Network).

Data for national-level protected areas

There are 269,253 national-level protected area records in the WDPa. IUCN Management Categories have been reported for 210,835 of these records. The remaining 58,418 are recorded as Not Reported and Not Assigned.

Figure 3 shows the allocation of IUCN Management Categories across national-level protected area records in the WDPa (numbers of sites in each category are shown in Table 2 at the end of this report).

Figure 3: National-level protected areas by IUCN Management Category



Data for areas protected by local communities, indigenous people and private entities, through non-legal means

There are 253 records in the WDPa that are established through non-legal means.

Completeness of WDPA Data Attributes

The WDPA requires that a minimum set of information is provided with each protected area record. These data attributes are defined by the WDPA Data Standard.

Table 1 shows the extent to which key attributes have been reported by data providers for all protected area records in the WDPA.

Table 1: Completeness of selected attributes

Attribute	Completeness
IUCN Category	78%
Status (designated or proposed)	99%
Status Year	88%
Governance Type	94%
Management Authority	86%
Link to Management Plan	15%

The WDPA User Manual 1.6 can be viewed at http://wcmc.io/WDPA_Manual.

Data sources in the WDPA

Data for protected area records in the WDPA have been obtained or validated from approximately 400 sources.

Figure 4 shows the breakdown of when protected area records in the WDPA were last updated or validated.

Data for protected areas designated under international agreements and conventions have been sourced from the relevant convention secretariat. This includes: UNESCO World Heritage Centre, Ramsar Convention Secretariat and UNESCO Man and The Biosphere Programme.

Data for national-level protected areas in the WDPA have been sourced from national authorities wherever possible. Information may also be supplemented by data from other agencies or organisations working in each country. As part of the update process for national data, national authorities are given the opportunity to review, validate and, where necessary, edit all existing WDPA records for their country. All updates to the WDPA by national authorities take priority over other sources and are considered to be the authoritative version.

There are 705 records in the WDPA with no reported source.

Figure 4: Percentage of records updated or validated by year

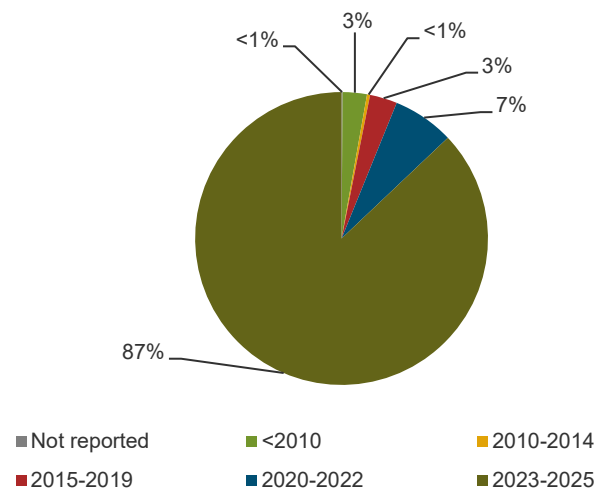


Table 2: WDPa Data (as of July 2025)

	Polygons	Points	Total
Realm			
Terrestrial	276,722	11,548	288,270
Coastal*	10,451	0	10,451
Marine	6,128	391	6,519
* under validation by data providers			
Status			
Designated	288,897	11,632	300,529
Proposed	1,183	105	1,288
Established	3,189	192	3,381
Status not reported	32	10	42
Areas designated under international conventions and agreements			
UNESCO World Heritage sites (natural or mixed)	266	0	266
Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites)	1,919	430	2,349
UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserves	298	288	586
Areas designated under regional conventions and agreements			
Areas of Special Conservation Interest, Emerald Network (Bern Convention)	2,575	1	2,576
ASEAN Heritage Park	12	0	12
Baltic Sea Protected Area (HELCOM)	177	0	177
Marine Protected Area (CCAMLR)	6	0	6
Marine Protected Area (OSPAR)	494	0	494
Site of Community Importance (Habitats Directive)	2,268	0	2,268
Special Areas of Conservation (Habitats Directive)	21,503	0	21,503
Special Protection Area (Birds Directive)	5,434	0	5,434
Specially Protected Area (Cartagena Convention)	29	0	29
Specially Protected Area of Mediterranean Importance (Barcelona Conv.)	34	0	34
National-level protected areas: IUCN Management Category			
Ia: Strict Nature Reserve	22,721	67	22,788
Ib: Wilderness Area	4,158	4	4,162
II: National Park	6,762	126	6,888
III: Natural Monument or Feature	18,414	6,795	25,209
IV: Habitat / Species Management Area	88,883	1,345	90,228
V: Protected Landscape / Seascape	51,962	140	52,102
VI: Protected area with sustainable use of natural resources	9,340	118	9,458
Not Assigned	43,816	1,201	45,017
Not Reported	12,168	1,233	13,401
Areas protected by local communities, indigenous people and private entities, through non-legal means			
Established	62	191	253
Total number of records in the WDPa			
	293,301	11,939	305,240

WDPA Quality Indicators

The percentage of records with boundaries in polygon format

The WDPA stores all records with spatial (location) data. These data can be polygons which represent the boundaries of the protected area, or a single latitude/longitude point which shows the general location of the protected area. This indicator shows the percentage of records with boundaries - the preferred spatial data.



The percentage of data attributes which have been reported by the data provider

Each record in the WDPA has 25 fields for which data attributes are requested. This indicator shows the weighted percentage of data fields which have been reported, based on the minimum and complete attributes.



The percentage of records updated or validated by the data provider in the last 5 years

UNEP-WCMC sets a target to update each record in the WDPA at least every five years. This indicator shows the percentage of records updated in the last 5 years (July 2020 to July 2025).



The percentage of records where the area of the polygon is within 5% of the area reported

The area (km²) reported for a protected area may sometimes differ from the area of the boundary polygon provided, possibly indicating a discrepancy within the information submitted. This indicator shows the percentage of records where the area of the polygon is within a threshold of 5% of the area reported. The threshold allows for differences due to projections and software used for calculating the GIS area.

