

Enhancing the World Database on Protected Areas

What is the World Database on Protected Areas?

The World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) is the only authoritative global database of terrestrial and marine protected areas. It is a joint project of UNEP and IUCN, managed by UNEP-WCMC, and it can be viewed and downloaded at www.protectedplanet.net.

What is the WDPA used for?

- ◆ The WDPA is used to support conservation decision making, as well as to assess progress towards Aichi Biodiversity Target 11.
- ◆ It is also used for scientific studies and for reports such as the Protected Planet Report 2014.

What does the WDPA contain?

- ◆ The WDPA includes information on over 200,000 protected areas.
- ◆ It is dominated by protected areas under government-level governance.
- ◆ Protected areas under other governance types, such as Privately Protected Areas and ICCAs (indigenous peoples' and community conserved territories and areas) are not currently adequately represented.

Why change the WDPA?

Without appropriate representation of the full range of governance types in the WDPA, progress towards global and national targets cannot be accurately measured. This affects our understanding of all aspects of the global protected area estate, from its geographical coverage, to how well connected conservation areas are across the landscape and seascape, to how representative it is of different ecosystems and species. In the absence of this knowledge, it is impossible to improve the protected area network in the ways that will be of the most benefit to conservation.

In response to these challenges, the WDPA is set to change in 2015 to allow it to better reflect non-government governance types and '*other effective area-based conservation measures*'. Changes will also be made to improve the quality of data on marine protected areas.

This leaflet summarises these changes.

WDPA attributes (*changes in orange*)

Name	Attribute	Definition
WDPA ID	WDPAID	WDPA ID is assigned by UNEP-WCMC. The WDPA ID is unique to a single protected area, but may be shared by several records if they represent legal zones of a single protected area (see WDPA Parcel ID).
WDPA Parent ID	WDPA Parcel ID	WDPA Parcel ID is assigned by UNEP-WCMC to legal zones (or 'parcels') of a single protected area. Legal zones that are part of the same protected area will share a WDPA ID, but have different WDPA PIDs.
Metadata ID	METADATAID	An ID linking the data to its source data. The Metadata ID is assigned by UNEP-WCMC.
Name	NAME	The name of the protected area provided in Latin characters (including accents).
Original Name	ORIG_NAME	The name of the protected area in any language supported by UTF 8 encoding.
Parent ISO ₃	PARENT_ISO3	The country that a protected area jurisdictionally resides within, as given by its ISO 3166-1 alpha-3 code.
ISO ₃	ISO3	The country, territory or other administrative unit of geographical interest that a protected area jurisdictionally resides within, as given by its ISO 3166-1 alpha-3 code.
Sub-national Location	SUB_LOC	The principle subdivision that a protected area geographically resides within, given by an ISO 3166-2 sub-national code.
Designation	DESIG	The type of protected area as legally/officially established or recognised, supported by UTF 8 encoding.
English Designation	DESIG_ENG	The type of protected area as legally/officially established or recognised translated into English.
Designation Type	DESIG_TYPE	Describes whether a protected area is 'National', 'Regional' or 'International' by designation. 'Not Applicable' is a new option for those sites whose status is 'Established' (i.e. not designated or proposed in a legal/official sense).
IUCN Category	IUCN_CAT	The classification of IUCN Management Category (Ia, Ib, II, III, IV, V or VI) adopted for national protected areas. For reporting on international protected areas the option of listing 'Not Applicable' is accepted. For national protected areas where an IUCN category has not been adopted 'Not Assigned' can be listed.
Marine	MARINE	Previously listed as '1' if any part of the site was marine, and '0' if the site was wholly terrestrial, this field will now accept three values. '0' will indicate that the site is terrestrial; '1' will indicate that the site is partly terrestrial and partly marine; '2' will indicate that the site is entirely marine.
Reported Marine Area (km ²)	REP_M_AREA	If Marine is '1' or '2' a reported marine area must be given as the total marine extent of the protected area in square kilometres.
GIS Marine Area (km ²)	GIS_M_AREA	GIS area of the marine component, where applicable, calculated by UNEP-WCMC in square kilometres.
Reported Area (km ²)	REP_AREA	Total protected area extent, including both marine (if applicable) and terrestrial areas in square kilometres.
GIS Area (km ²)	GIS_AREA	GIS area calculated by UNEP-WCMC in square kilometres.
Status	STATUS	The current legal or 'official' standing of the protected area. Either 'Proposed' or 'Designated'. A third option, 'Established', will apply to sites that are not designated or proposed in a legal/official sense.
Status Year	STATUS_YR	The year in which the current status was officially decreed, or, where Status is listed as 'Established', the year in which the site was established by other effective means.
International Criteria	INT_CRIT	Relevant only to World Heritage Sites where a set of criteria is used to define the protected area. For all other sites this is 'Not Applicable'.
Governance Type	GOV_TYPE	A description of the governance structure of a protected area, written as one of the 11 governance sub-types, described in the IUCN Guidelines on protected areas.
Management Authority	MANG_AUTH	The organisation(s) or agency(ies) responsible for management of the protected area.
Management Plan	MANG_PLAN	Reference to an official management plan for the protected area as a link to the document(s) on-line or a full bibliographic reference.
No Take	NO_TAKE	Listed when part or all of a marine protected area is no take, meaning that the taking of living resources is prohibited in the no take area.
No Take Area	NO_TK_AREA	The total size of the no take area in square kilometres.
Protected Area Definition	PA_DEF	Identifies whether the site meets the IUCN definition of a protected area. If it does not, the site can be included in the WDPA as an 'other effective area-based conservation measure' if it maintains/enhances conservation values in the long-term.
Verification	VERIF	Assigned by UNEP-WCMC. Indicates whether the data have been verified by the national government or by non-government experts.
Ownership Type	OWN_TYPE	The ownership type of the sites, written as one of nine categories.
Restrictions	RESTRICT	Describes the ways in which the data can be used. For UNEP-WCMC use prior to dissemination.

WDPA source table (*changes in orange*)

Name	Attribute	Definition
Data Set Title	DATA_TITLE	The title of the dataset being provided as an update to the WDPA.
Responsible Party	RESP_PARTY	The organisation, consultancy, national government, private company or other entity that claims ownership/authorship of the data or that is providing the data on behalf of the ownership/authorship entity.
Responsible Party Contact E-mails	RESP_EMAIL	Contact e-mails of person(s) and organisation(s) associated with the resource.
Verifying Party	VERIFIER	The organisation or national government that has verified the data and/or data provider.
Verifying Party E-mails	V_EMAIL	Contact e-mails of person(s) and organisation(s) responsible for verifying the data and/or data provider.
Creation Date	YEAR	The reference date, as a four digit year, indicating when the dataset was created prior to inclusion in the WDPA.
Update Date	UPDATE	The reference date, as a four digit year, indicating when the dataset was included, or last updated, in the WDPA.
Dataset Language	LANGUAGE	Language(s) used within the dataset.
Dataset Character Set	CHAR_SET	Full name of the character coding standard used for the dataset.
Coordinate System	REF_SYSTEM	Name and parameters of the coordinate system of the original dataset including where applicable, datum, ellipsoid or projection. The WDPA is based on Geographic Coordinate System: World Geodetic Survey (WGS) 1984.
Scale	SCALE	The scale of the source data given as the denominator of the representative fraction. For example, on a scale of 1:150000, the denominator would be 150000.
Lineage	LINEAGE	Information about an event, change or transformation in the life of a dataset including the process used to create and maintain the dataset including dates associated with each event.
Citation	CITATION	Recommended text to be used referencing for the dataset on www.protectedplanet.net .
Disclaimer	DISCLAIMER	Warnings/exceptions to use of the data, displayed on www.protectedplanet.net .

Changes to data collection

- ◆ From 2015, the WDPA will accept data from any individual or organisation provided they have the consent of relevant stakeholders and rights-holders.
- ◆ This broadening of potential data sources will be accompanied by a new verification process, ensuring that the high quality of the WDPA, and the validity of incoming data, is maintained.
- ◆ Governments and non-government experts will quality check data before it enters the WDPA. Whether the data has been quality checked by governments or non-government experts will be indicated in a new 'Verification' attribute.
- ◆ The verifier's details will also be provided in the source table alongside those of the data provider.

Changes to the WDPA structure

- ◆ The WDPA stores spatial data in polygon format where possible, and in point format where not. It also stores descriptive information in 25 attributes.
- ◆ Some of these attributes will change, and others will be added, to improve the way the WDPA captures data.
- ◆ Changes to the existing WDPA schema and source data are highlighted in the tables above.

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These changes will allow the WDPA to

- ◆ Fully represent the diversity of protected area governance types,
- ◆ Recognise the contributions of ‘*other effective area-based conservation measures*’ to the global conservation network,
- ◆ Offer the most complete picture of existing conservation initiatives, and be optimally placed to measure progress towards meeting Aichi Biodiversity Target 11,
- ◆ Be a more effective tool for conservation planners and policy makers seeking to build on the existing conservation network.

If you would like to learn more about the WDPA, or to submit or download data, go to www.protectedplanet.net

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