Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 Country Dossier:
BENIN

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GLOSSARY

AZEs   Alliance for Zero Extinction sites
CEPF   Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund
EBSA   Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Area
EEZ   Exclusive Economic Zone
GCF   Green Climate Fund
GD-PAME   Global Database on Protected Area Management Effectiveness
GEF   Global Environment Facility
IBA   Important Bird and Biodiversity Area
ICCAs   Indigenous and Community Conserved Area Area (may also be referred to as territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples and local communities or "territories of life")
IPLC   Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities
KBA   Key Biodiversity Area
MEOW   Marine Ecosystems of the World
MPA   Marine Protected Area
NBSAP   National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
OECM   Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures
PA   Protected Area
PAME   Protected Area Management Effectiveness
PPA   Privately Protected Area
PPOW   Pelagic Provinces of the World
ProtConn   Protected Connected land indicator
SOC   Soil Organic Carbon
TEOW   Terrestrial Ecosystems of the World
WDPA   World Database on Protected Areas
WD-OECM   World Database on Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures

Disclaimer

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This country dossier is compiled by the UNDP and SCBD from publicly available information. It is prepared, within the overall work of the Global Partnership on Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, for the purpose of attracting the attention of the Party concerned and other national stakeholders to facilitate the verification, correcting, and updating of country data. The statistics might differ from those reported officially by the country due to differences in methodologies and datasets used to assess protected area coverage and differences in the base maps used to measure terrestrial and marine area of a country or territory. Furthermore, the suggestions from the UNDP and SCBD are based on analyses of global datasets, which may not necessarily be representative of national policy or criteria used at the national level. The analyses are also subject to the limits inherent in global indicators (precision, reliability, underlying assumptions, etc.). Therefore, they provide useful information but cannot replace analyses at a national level nor constitute a future benchmark for national policy or decision-making.

The preparation of this dossier was generously supported by: the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GMbH*; the European Commission; the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; and the Government of Japan (Japan Biodiversity Fund). The dossier does not necessarily reflect their views.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document provides information on the coverage of protected areas (PAs) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs), as currently reported in global databases (the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) and World Database on Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (WD-OECM)). It also includes details on the status of the other qualifying elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 based on this data. These statistics might differ from those reported officially by countries due to difference in methodologies and datasets used to assess protected area coverage, differences in the base maps used to measure terrestrial and marine area of a country or territory, or if global datasets differ from the criteria and indicators used at the national level. This dossier also provides a summary of commitments made under Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, and a summary of potential opportunities regarding elements of the target for future planning.

The dossier has been developed in consultation with the UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), which manages the WDPA, WD-OECM and Global Database on Protected Area Management Effectiveness (GD-PAME). Parties to the CBD are requested to contact protectedareas@unep-wcmc.org with any updates to the information in these databases.

Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 Elements: Current status and opportunities for action

Coverage - Terrestrial & Marine

- **Status:** as of May 2021, terrestrial coverage in Benin is 34,414.5 km² (29.6%) and marine coverage is 0.0 km² (0.0%).

- **Opportunities for action:** opportunities for the near-term include updating the WDPA with any unreported PAs, and the recognizing and reporting OECMs to the WD-OECM. In the future, focus on relatively intact areas, while addressing the elements in the following sections, could be considered when planning new PAs or OECMs.

Ecological Representativeness– Terrestrial & Marine

- **Status:** Benin contains 4 terrestrial ecoregions, 1 marine ecoregion, and 1 pelagic province: the mean protected coverage by reported PAs and OECMs is 19.2% (terrestrial), 0.0% (marine), and 0.0% (pelagic); 1 marine ecoregion and 1 pelagic province have no coverage by reported PAs and OECMs.

- **Opportunities for action:** there is opportunity for Benin to increase protection in terrestrial and marine ecoregions and pelagic provinces that have lower levels of coverage by PAs or OECMs. Ecoregions which currently have no coverage by PAs or OECMs are key areas for action.

Areas Important for Biodiversity

- **Status:** Benin has 6 Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs): the mean protected coverage of KBAs by reported PAs and OECMs is 77.3%; all KBAs have at least partial coverage from reported PAs and OECMs.

- **Opportunities for action:** there is opportunity for Benin to increase protection of KBAs that have lower levels of coverage by PAs and OECMs, and to focus on effective management for those that already have higher coverage.

Areas Important for Ecosystem Services

- **Status:** coverage of areas important for ecosystem services: In Benin, 29.9% of aboveground biomass carbon, 38.8% of belowground biomass carbon, 31.0% of soil organic carbon, 0.0% of carbon stored in marine sediments is covered by PAs and OECMs.

- **Opportunities for action:** for carbon, there is opportunity for Benin to increase PA and OECM coverage in both marine and terrestrial areas with high carbon stocks. Protecting areas with high carbon stocks secures the benefits of carbon sequestration in the area.

- For water, there is opportunity to increase the area of the water catchment under protection by PAs and OECMs, or in cases where there is high levels of protection, focus on effective management for these areas. Protecting the current area of forested land and potentially reforesting would have benefits for improving water security.

Connectivity and Integration

- **Status:** coverage of protected-connected lands is 18.3%.

- **Opportunities for action:** there is opportunity to focus on PAs and OECMs management for enhancing and maintaining connectivity. Increasing connectivity increases the effectiveness of PAs and OECMs and reduces the impacts of fragmentation.

- As well, a range of suggested steps for enhancing and supporting integration are included in the voluntary guidance on the integration of PAs and OECMs into the wider land- and seascapes and mainstreaming across sectors to contribute, inter alia, to the SDGs (Annex I of COP Decision 14/8).

Governance Diversity

- **Status:** the most common governance types for reported PAs in Benin is: 4.7% under IPLC governance (Indigenous Peoples).

- **Opportunities for action:** Increase efforts to identify the governance types for the 90.6% of sites that do not have their governance type reported. If applicable, explore opportunities for governance types that have lower representation.

- There is also opportunity for Benin to complete governance and equity assessments, to establish baselines and identify relevant actions for improvement. As well, a range of suggested actions are included in the voluntary guidance on effective governance models for management of protected areas, including equity (Annex II of COP Decision 14/8).

Protected Area Management Effectiveness

- **Status:** 33.0% of terrestrial PAs and 0.0% of marine PAs have completed Protected Area Management Effectiveness (PAME) assessments reported.

- **Opportunities for action:** the 60% target for completed management effectiveness assessments (per COP Decision X/31) **has not** been met for terrestrial PAs and **has not** been met for marine PAs. Therefore, there is opportunity to increase protected area management effectiveness (PAME) evaluations for both terrestrial and marine PAs to achieve the target.

- There is also opportunity to implement the results of completed PAME evaluations, to improve the quality of management for existing PAs and OECMs (e.g. through adaptive management and information sharing, increasing the number of sites reporting 'sound management') and to increase reporting of biodiversity outcomes in PAs and OECMs.

INTRODUCTION

The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 was adopted at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) held in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan from 18-29 October 2010. The vision of the Strategic Plan is one of "Living in harmony with nature" where *"By 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people"* (CBD, 2010). In addition to this vision, the Strategic Plan is composed of 20 targets, under five strategic goals. Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 states that *"By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, 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."*

With the conclusion of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets in 2020, Target 11 on area-based conservation has seen success in the expansion of the global network of protected areas (PA) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs). The negotiation of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and its future targets provide an essential opportunity to further improve the coverage of PAs and OECMs, to improve other aspects of area-based conservation, to accelerate progress on biodiversity conservation more broadly, while also addressing climate change, and the Sustainable Development Goals. This next set of global biodiversity targets are to be adopted at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. These new targets must aim to build upon lessons learned from the last decade of progress to deliver transformative change for the benefit of nature and people, to realize the 2050 Vision for biodiversity.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity have developed the Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 Country Dossiers, which provide countries with an overview of the status of Target 11 elements, opportunities for action, and a summary of commitments made by Parties over the last decade. Each dossier supports countries in assessing their progress on key elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 and identifying opportunities to prioritize new protected areas and OECMs.

This dossier provides an overview of area-based conservation in Benin. Section I of the dossier presents data on the current status of Benin's PAs and OECMs. The data presented in Section I relates to each element of Target 11. Section I also presents the PA and OECM coverage for two critical ecosystem services: water security and carbon stocks. In addition, the dossier presents potential opportunities for action for Benin, in relation to each Target 11 element. The analyses present options for improving Benin's area-based conservation network to achieve enhanced protection and benefits for livelihoods and climate change. Section II presents details on Benin's existing PA and OECMs commitments as a summary of existing efforts towards achieving Target 11. This gives focus not only to national policy and actions but also voluntary commitments to the UN. Furthermore, where data is

available, this dossier provides information on potential OECMs, Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs; also often referred to as territories and areas conserved by Indigenous peoples and local communities or "territories of life") and Privately Protected Areas (PPAs) and the potential contribution they will have in achieving the post-2020 targets.

The information on PAs and OECMs presented here is derived from the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) and World Database on Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (WD-OECM). These databases are joint products of UNEP and IUCN, managed by UNEP-WCMC, and can be viewed and downloaded at www.protectedplanet.net. Parties are encouraged to provide data on their PAs and OECMs to UNEP-WCMC for incorporation into the databases (see e.g. Decisions 10/31 and 14/8). The significant efforts of Parties in updating their data in the buildup to the publication of the Protected Planet Report 2020 (UNEP-WCMC and IUCN, 2021) were greatly appreciated. UNEP-WCMC welcomes further updates, following the data standards described here www.wcmc.io/WDPA_Manual, and these should be directed to protectedareas@unep-wcmc.org. The statistics presented in this dossier are derived from the May 2021 WDPA and WD-OECM releases, unless stated otherwise. Readers should consult www.protectedplanet.net for the latest coverage statistics (updated monthly).

Some data from the WDPA and WD-OECM are not made publicly available at the request of the data-provider. This affects some statistics, maps, and figures presented in this dossier. Statistics provided by UNEP-WCMC (terrestrial and marine coverage) are based upon the full dataset, including restricted data. All other statistics, maps, and figures are based upon the subset of the data that is publicly available.

Where data is less readily available, such as for potential OECMs, ICCAs and PPAs, data has also been compiled from published reports and scientific literature to provide greater awareness of these less commonly recorded aspects. These data are provided to highlight the need for comprehensive reporting on these areas to the WDPA and/or WD-OECM. Parties are invited to work with indigenous peoples, local communities and private actors to submit data under the governance of these actors, with their consent, to the WDPA and/or WD-OECM.

Overall, PAs and OECMs are essential instruments for biodiversity conservation and to sustain essential ecosystem services that support human well-being and sustainable development, including food, medicine, and water security, as well as climate change mitigation and adaptation and disaster risk reduction. The data in this dossier, therefore, aims to celebrate the current contributions of PAs and OECMs, whilst the gaps presented hope to encourage greater progress, not just for the benefit of biodiversity and the post-2020 GBF, but also to recognize the essential role of PAs and OECMs to the Sustainable Development Goals and for addressing the climate crisis.

SECTION I: CURRENT STATUS

Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 refers to both protected areas (PAs) and other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs). This section provides the current status for all elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 where indicators with global data are available. Statistics for all elements are presented using data on both PAs and OECMs (where this data is available and reported in global databases like the WDPA and WD-OECM). It is recognized that statistics reported in the WPDA and WD-OECM might differ from those reported officially by countries due to differences in methodologies and datasets used to assess protected area coverage and differences in the base maps used to measure terrestrial and marine area of a country or territory. Details on UNEP-WCMC's methods for calculating PA and OECM coverage area available here. The global indicators adopted here for presenting the status of other elements of Target 11 may also differ from those in use nationally.

COVERAGE - TERRESTRIAL & MARINE

As of May 2021, Benin has 64 protected areas reported in the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA). 3 PAs that are proposed or have a status of 'not reported', 1 PA that have no spatial boundary and no area listed in the WDPA, and a further 3 UNESCO-MAB Biosphere Reserves are not included in the following statistics (see details on UNWP-WCMCs methods for calculating PA and OECM coverage **here**).
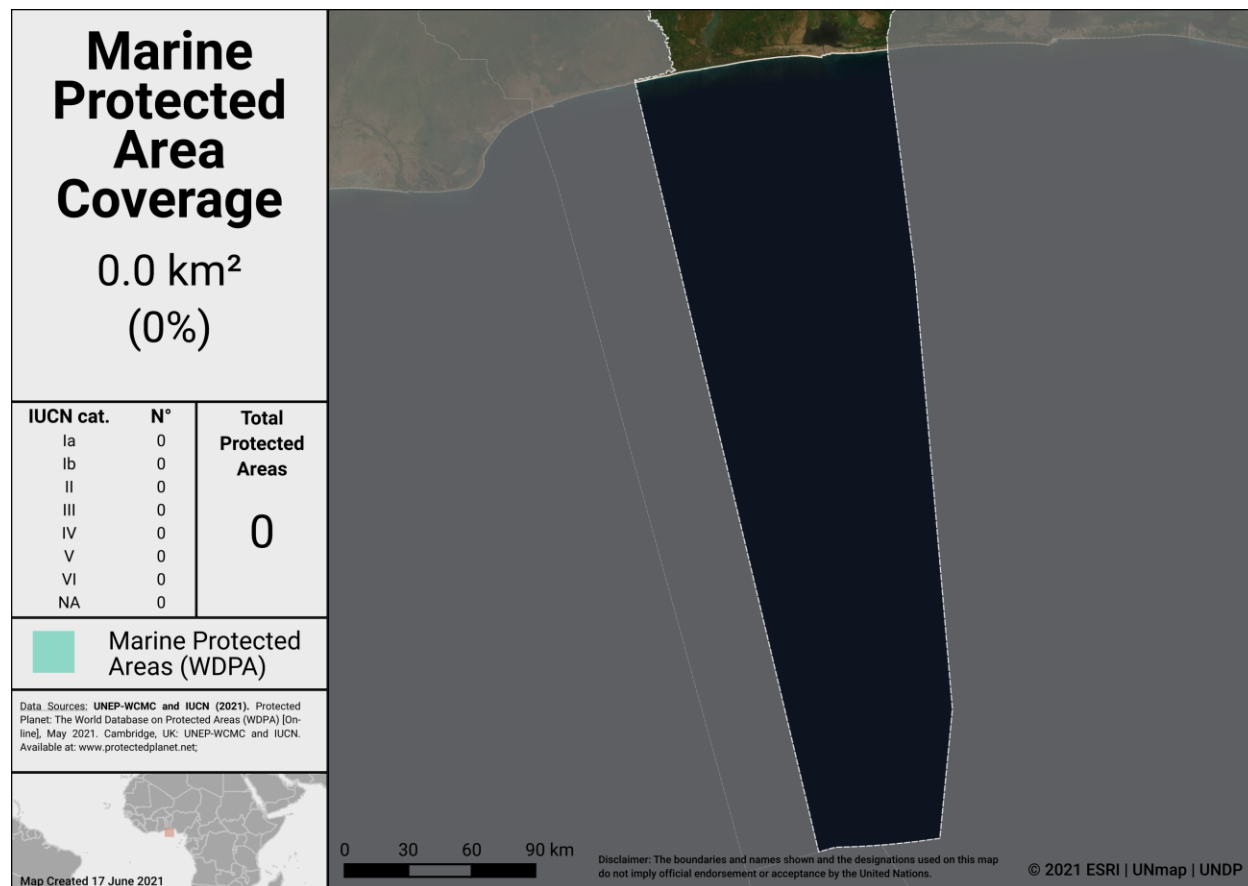
As of May 2021, Benin has 0 OECMs reported in the world database on OECMs (WD-OECM).

Current coverage for Benin:

- 29.6% terrestrial (56 protected areas, 34,414.5 km^2)

- 0.0% marine (0 protected areas, 0.0 km^2)
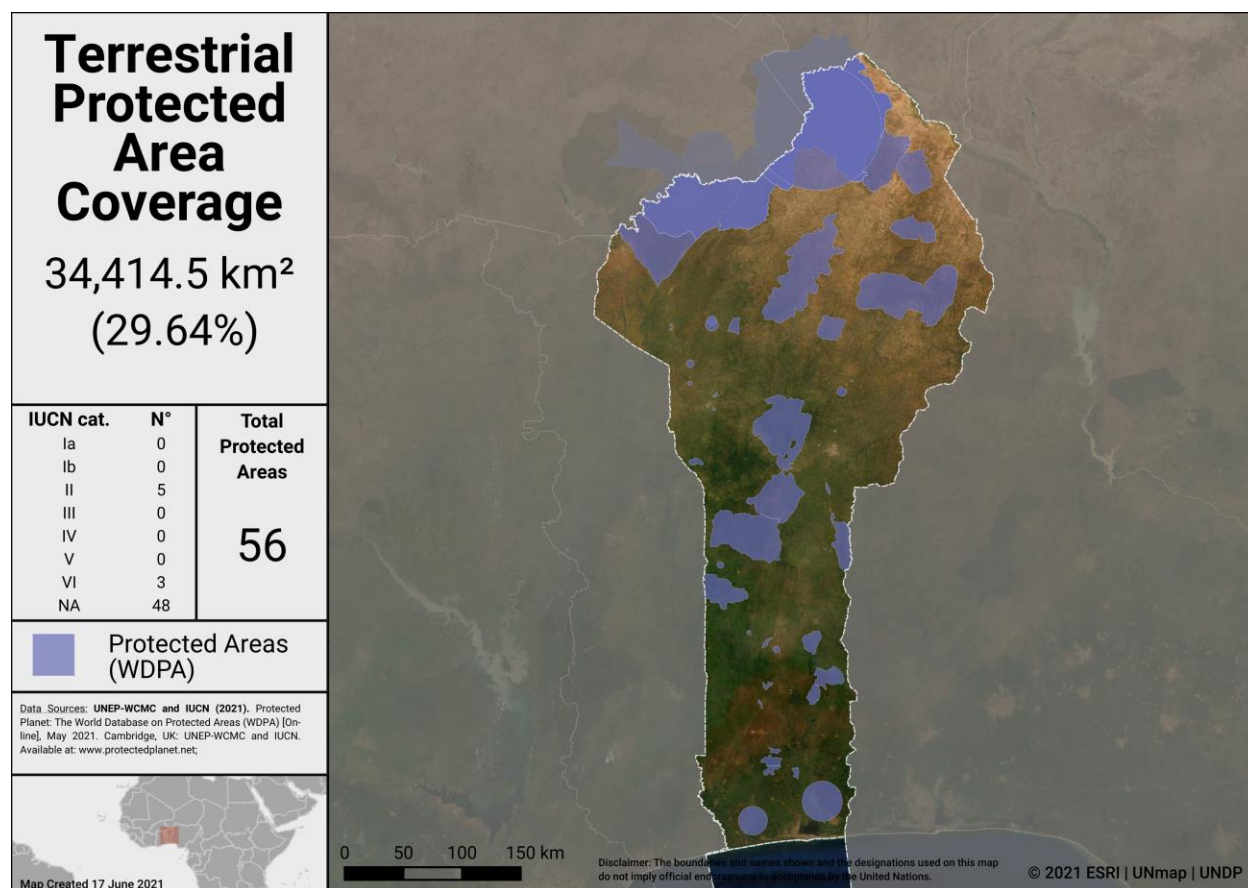
Terrestrial Protected Areas in Benin

Marine Protected Areas in Benin

Potential OECMs

There are currently no potential OECM examples for **Benin.**

Opportunities for action

Opportunities for the near-term include updating the WDPA with any unreported PAs, and the recognizing and reporting OECMs to the WD-OECM. In the future, as Benin considers where to add new PAs and OECMs, the map below identifies areas in Benin where intact areas are not currently protected. Focus on relatively intact areas, while addressing the elements in the following sections, could be considered if planning new PAs or OECMs.

Intactness in Benin

To explore more on intactness visit the UN Biodiversity Lab: map.unbiodiversitylab.org.

ECOLOGICAL REPRESENTATIVENESS – TERRESTRIAL & MARINE

Ecological representativeness is assessed based on the PAs and OECMs coverage of broad-scale biogeographic units. Globally, ecoregions have been described for terrestrial areas (Dinerstein et al., 2017), marine coastal and shelf ecosystems (to a depth of 200m; Spalding et al., 2007) and surface pelagic waters (Spalding et al., 2012).

Benin has 4 **terrestrial** ecoregions. Out of these:

- All 4 ecoregions have at least some coverage from PAs and OECMs.
- 2 ecoregions have at least 17% protected within the country.
- The average terrestrial coverage of ecoregions is 19.2%.

Benin has 1 **marine** ecoregion and 1 **pelagic province:**

- Coverage of from PAs and OECMs is 0.0% for marine ecoregions and is 0.0% for pelagic provinces.

A full list of terrestrial ecoregions in Benin is available in Annex I.
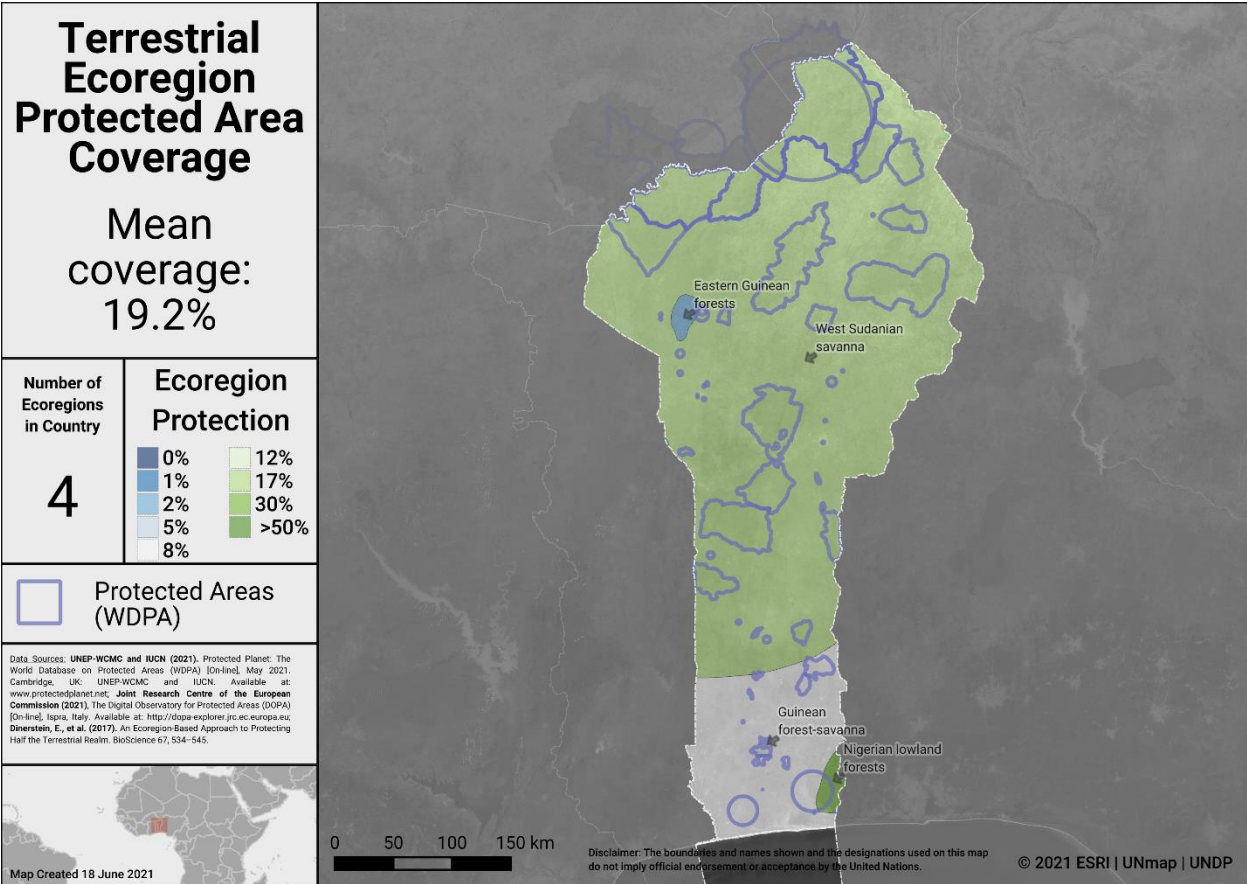
Terrestrial ecoregions in Benin
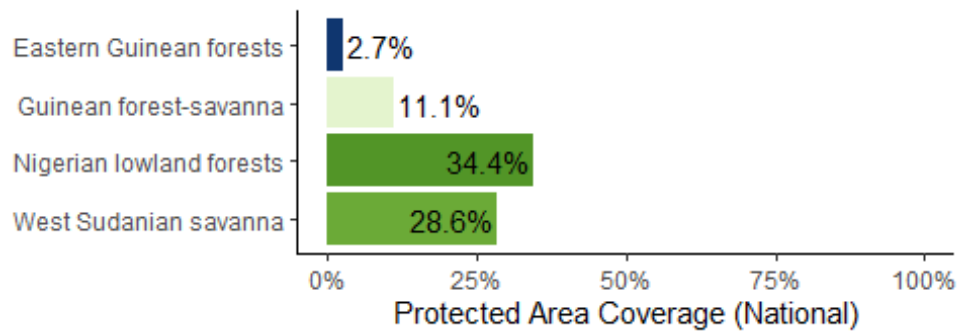
Terrestrial ecoregions of the World (TEOW) in Benin
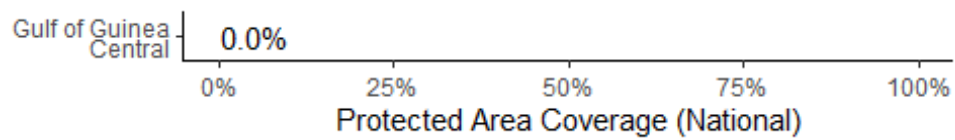
Marine Ecoregions of the World (MEOW) in Benin
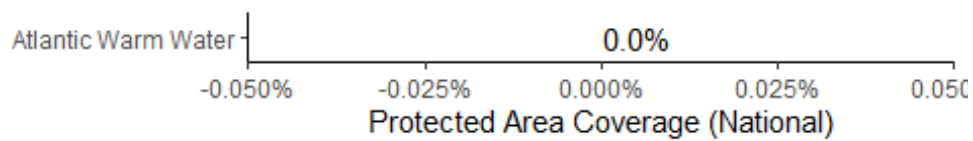
Pelagic Provinces of the World (PPOW) in Benin
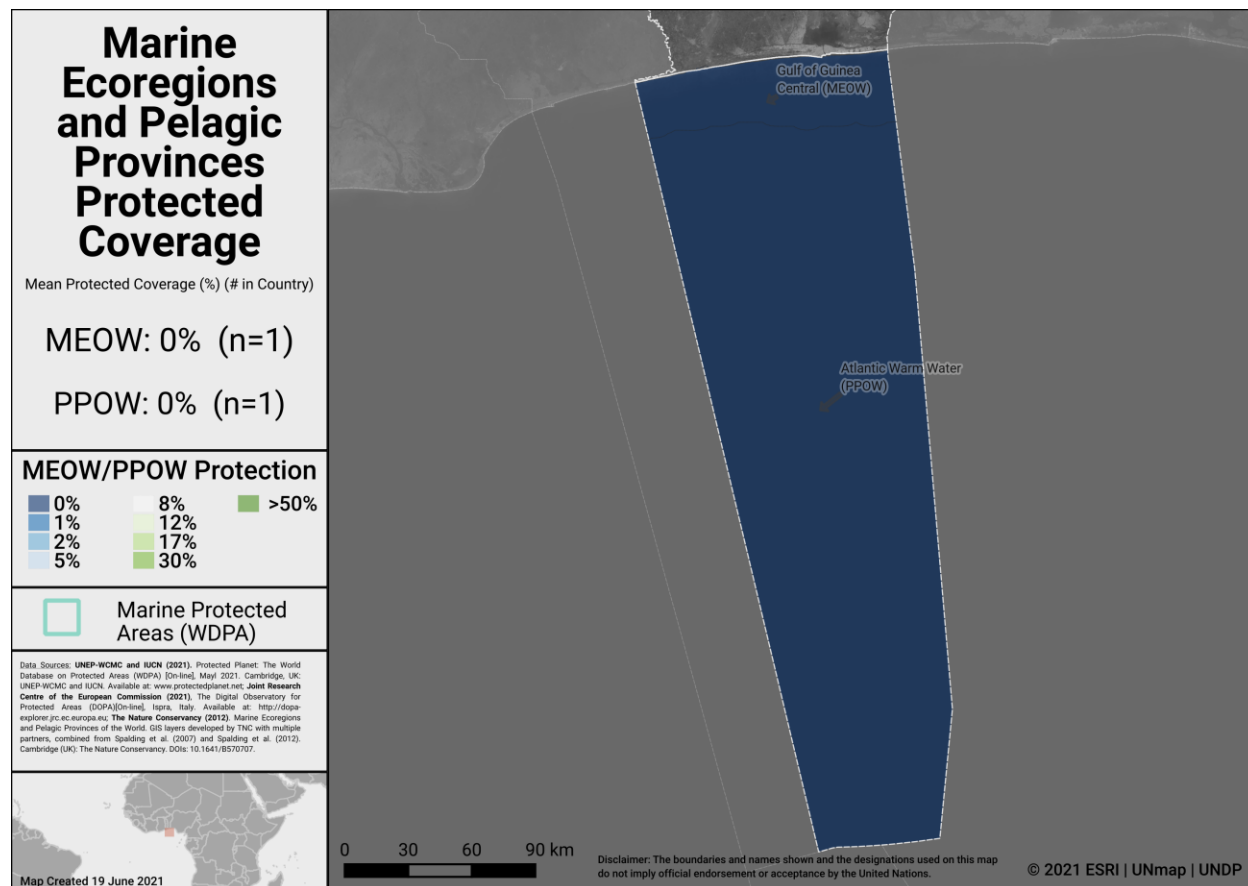
Marine ecoregions and pelagic provinces

Opportunities for action

There is opportunity for Benin to increase protection in terrestrial and marine ecoregions and pelagic provinces that have lower levels of coverage by PAs or OECMs. Ecoregions which currently have no coverage by PAs or OECMs are key areas for action.

AREAS IMPORTANT FOR BIODIVERSITY

Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs)

Protected area and OECM coverage of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) provide one proxy for assessing the conservation of areas important for biodiversity at national, regional and global scales. KBAs are sites that make significant contributions to the global persistence of biodiversity (IUCN, 2016). The KBA concept builds on four decades of efforts to identify important sites for biodiversity, including Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas, Alliance for Zero Extinction sites, and KBAs identified through Hotspot ecosystem profiles supported by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund. Incorporating these sites, the dataset of internationally significant KBAs includes Global KBAs (sites shown to meet one or more of 11 criteria in the Global Standard for the Identification of KBAs, clustered into five categories: threatened biodiversity; geographically restricted biodiversity; ecological integrity; biological processes; and irreplaceability), Regional KBAs (sites identified using pre-existing criteria and thresholds, that do not meet the Global KBA criteria based on existing information), and KBAs whose Global/Regional status is Not yet determined, but which will be assessed against the global KBA criteria within 8-12 years. Regional KBAs are often of critical international policy relevance (e.g., in EU legislation and under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands), and many are likely to qualify as Global KBAs in future once assessed for their biodiversity importance for other taxonomic groups and ecosystems. To date, nearly 16,000 KBAs have identified globally, and information on each of these is presented in the World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas: www.keybiodiversityareas.org.

Benin has **6** Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs).

- Mean percent coverage of all KBAs by PAs and OECMs in Benin is **77.3%**.
- **4** KBAs have full (>98%) coverage by PAs and OECMs.
- **2** KBAs have partial coverage by PAs and OECMs.
- **0** KBAs have no (<2%) coverage by PAs and OECMs.

Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs)

Other important areas for biodiversity may also include Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs), which were identified following the scientific criteria adopted at COP-9 (Decision IX/20; see more at: https://www.cbd.int/ebsa/). Sites that meet the EBSA criteria may require enhanced conservation and management measures; this could be achieved through means including MPAs, OECMs, marine spatial planning, and impact assessment.

Benin has 2 EBSAs with some portion of their extent within Benin's EEZ, both of which have no coverage from reported PAs and OECMs.
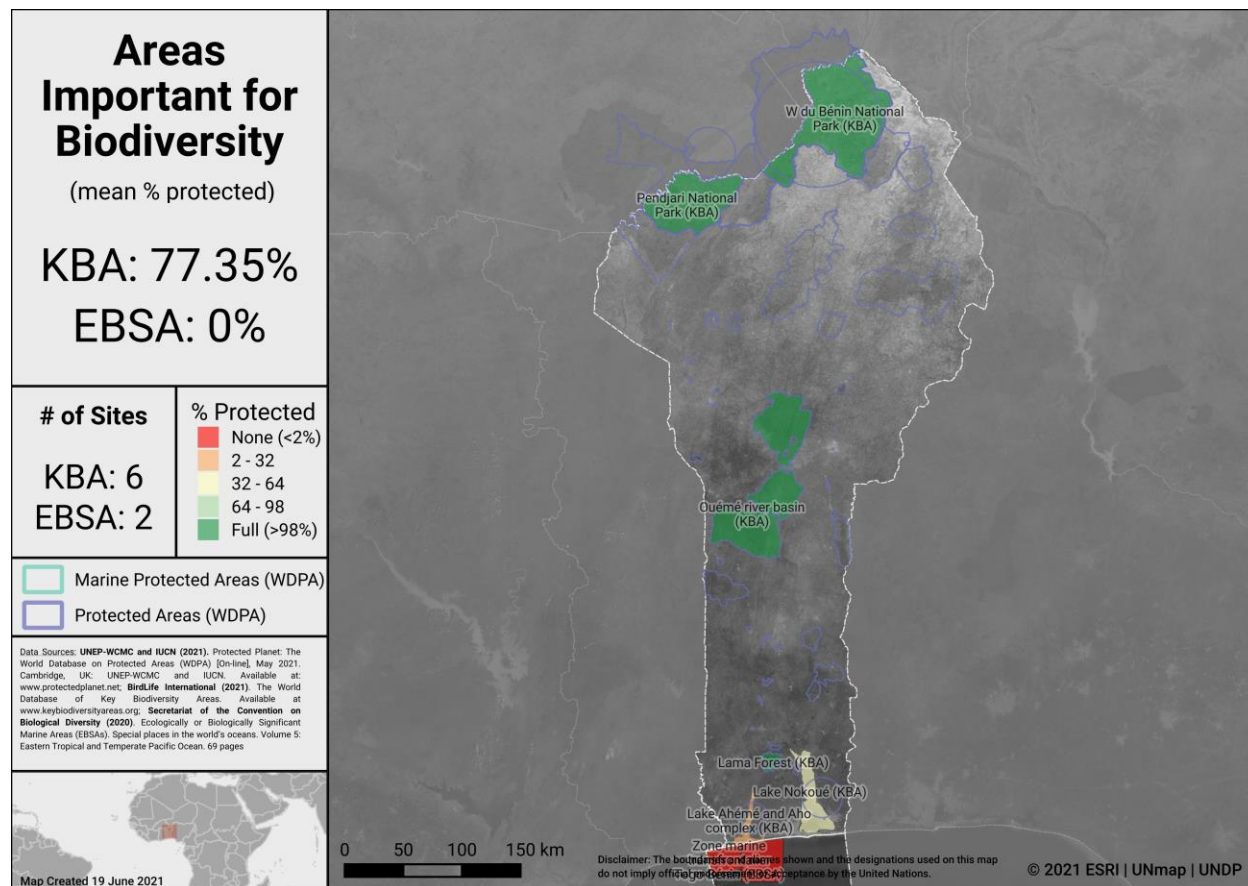
Areas Important for Biodiversity in Benin
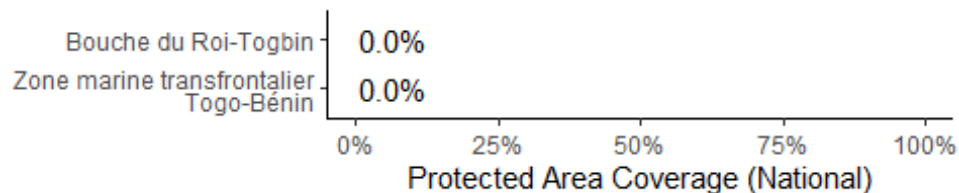
Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) in Benin
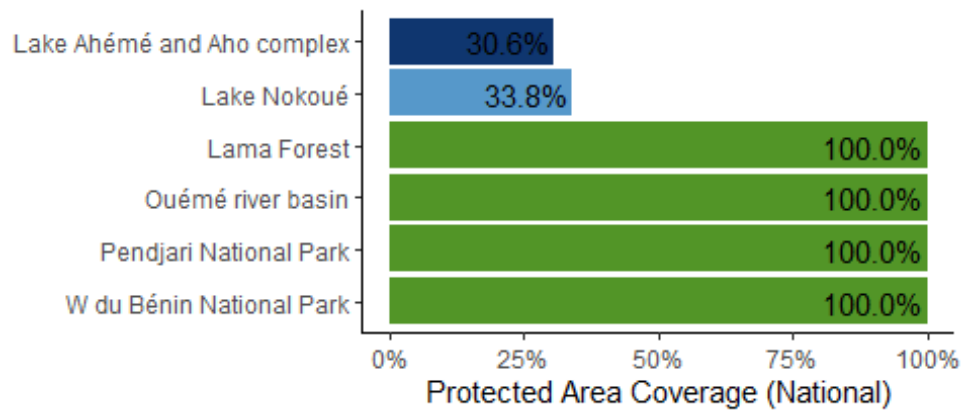
Key Biodiversity Area Coverage (KBA) in Benin

Opportunities for action

There is opportunity for Benin to increase protection of KBAs that have lower levels of coverage by PAs and OECMs, and focus on effective management for those that already have higher coverage.

AREAS IMPORTANT FOR ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

There is no single indicator identified for assessing the conservation of areas important for ecosystem services. For simplicity, two services with available global datasets are assessed here (carbon and water). In future, other critical ecosystem services could be explored.

Carbon

Data for biomass carbon comes from temporally consistent, harmonized global maps of aboveground biomass and belowground biomass carbon density (at a 300-m spatial resolution); the maps integrate land-cover specific, remotely sensed data, and land-cover specific empirical models (see Spawn et al., 2020 for details on methods). The Global Soil Organic Carbon Map present an estimation of SOC stock from 0 to 30 cm (see FAO, 2017 for details on methods). Data is also presented from global maps of marine sedimentary carbon stocks, standardized to a 1-meter depth (see Sala et al., 2021, and Atwood et al., 2020 for details).

The map below presents the total carbon stocks in Benin and the percent of carbon in protected areas. The total carbon stocks is 174.9 Tg C from aboveground biomass (AGB), with 29.9% in protected areas; 148.0 Tg C from below ground biomass (BGB), with 38.8% in protected areas; 368.6 Tg C from soil organic carbon (SOC), with 31.0% in protected areas; and 368.6 Tg C from marine sediment carbon, with 0.0% in protected areas.
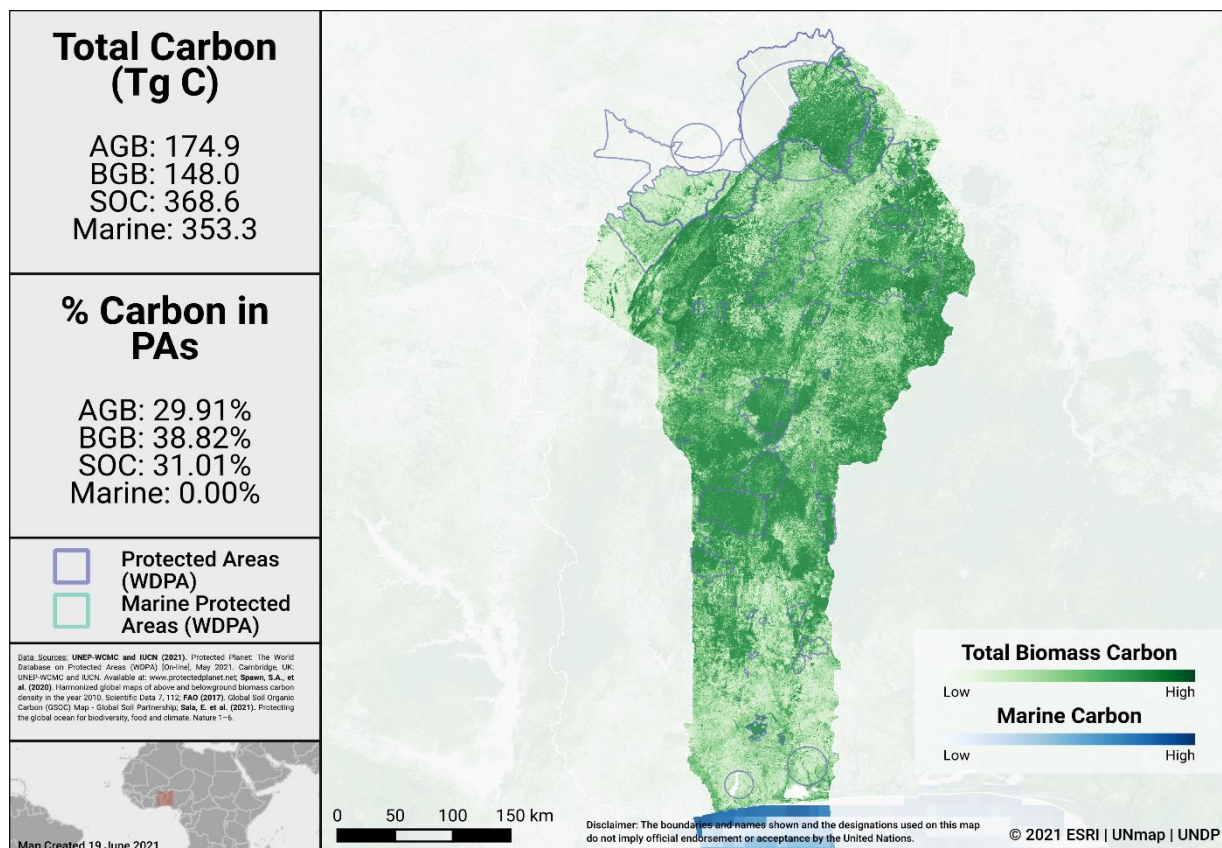
Carbon Stocks in Benin

Water

Forests and intact ecosystems support stormwater management and clean water availability, especially for large urban populations. Research that has examined the role of forests for city drinking water supplies shows that of the world's 105 largest cities, more than 30% (33 cities) rely heavily on the local protected forests, which provide ecosystem services that underpin local drinking water availability and quality (Dudley & Stolton, 2003).

Drinking water supplies for cities in Benin may similarly depend on protected areas within and around water catchments. Intact catchments can support more consistent water supply and improved water quality.

Opportunities for action

For carbon, there is opportunity for Benin to increase PA and OECM coverage in both marine and terrestrial areas with high carbon stocks, as identified in the map above. Protecting areas with high carbon stocks secures the benefits of carbon sequestration in the area.

For water, there is opportunity to increase the area of the water catchment under protection by PAs and OECMs, or in cases where there is high levels of protection, focus on effective management for these areas. Protecting the current area of forested land and potentially reforesting would have benefits for improving water security.

CONNECTIVITY & INTEGRATION

Two global indicators, the Protected Connected land indicator (ProtConn; EC-JRC, 2021; Saura et al., 2018) and the PARC-Connectedness indicator (CSIRO, 2019), have been proposed for assessing the terrestrial connectivity of PA and OECM networks. To date there is no global indicator for assessing marine connectivity, though some recent developments include proposed guidance for the treatment of connectivity in the planning and management of MPAs (see Lausche et al., 2021).

Protected Connected Land Indicator (Prot-Conn)

As of January 2021, as reported in the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission's Digital Observatory for Protected Areas (DOPA) (JRC, 2021), the coverage of protected-connected lands (a measure of the connectivity of terrestrial protected area networks, assessed using the ProtConn indicator) in Benin was 18.3%.

PARC-Connectedness Index

In 2019, as assessed using the PARC-Connectedness Index (values ranging from 0-1, indicating low to high connectivity), connectivity in Benin is 0.49. This represents no significant change since 2010.

Corridor case studies

There are currently no corridor case studies available for Benin (but see general details on conserving connectivity through ecological networks and corridors in Hilty et al 2020).

Opportunities for action

There is opportunity to focus on PA and OECM management for enhancing and maintaining connectivity. Increasing connectivity increases the effectiveness of PAs and OECMs and reduces the impacts of fragmentation.

As well, a range of suggested steps for enhancing and supporting integration are included in the voluntary guidance on the integration of PAs and OECMs into the wider land- and seascapes and mainstreaming across sectors to contribute, inter alia, to the SDGs (Annex I of COP Decision 14/8).

GOVERNANCE DIVERSITY

There is a lack of comprehensive global data on governance quality and equity in PAs and OECMs. Here, we provide data on the diversity of governance types for reported PAs and OECMs.

As of May 2021, PAs in Benin reported in the WPDA have the following governance types:

- 1.6% are governed by **governments** (by federal or national ministry or agency)
- 3.1% are under **shared** governance
  - 0.0 % by collaborative governance
  - 1.6% by joint governance
  - 1.6% by transboundary governance
- 0.0% are under **private** governance
- 4.7% are under **IPLC** governance
  - 4.7% by Indigenous Peoples
  - 0.0% by local communities
- 90.6% **do not** report a governance type

OECMs

As of May 2021, there are **0** OECMs in Benin reported in the WD-OECM, therefore there is no data available on OECM governance types.

Privately Protected Areas (PPAs)

There is no data available on PPAs for Benin (see Gloss et al., 2019, and Stolton et al., 2014 for details).

Territories and areas conserved by Indigenous Peoples and local communities (ICCAs)

Examples of ICCAs in Benin include the *Forêt Sacrée Kouvizoun Adakplamè-Ewè* (the largest sacred forest in Bénin), *Têdozoun* (aiming to maintain and enhance natural resources, conserve biodiversity, improve land ownership security and share the riches of the forest with future generations), and *Orozoun* (a dense, semi-deciduous humid forest conserving a diversity of flora and fauna), among many others. See case study details for these and other ICCAs in the **ICCA Registry**.

Other Indigenous lands

Lands managed and/or controlled by Indigenous Peoples cover an area of 94,608.0 km^2, of which 66,695.0 km^2 falls outside of formal protected areas. Indigenous lands with a human footprint less than 4 (considered as 'natural landscapes') cover an area of 10,014.0 km^2 (for details on analysis see Garnett et al., 2018).

For Benin, evidence for the presence of Indigenous Peoples comes from: Ndahinda, F. M. Indigenousness in Africa: a contested legal framework for empowerment of 'marginalized' communities (Springer Science & Business Media, 2011).

Boundaries of the lands Indigenous Peoples manage or have tenure rights over come from: Harrison, A. Fulfulde Language Family Report (SIL International, 2003).

Opportunities for action

Increase efforts to identify the governance types for the 90.6% of sites that do not have their governance type reported. If applicable, explore opportunities for governance types that have lower representation.

There is also opportunity for Benin to complete governance and equity assessments, to establish baselines and identify relevant actions for improvement. Examples of existing tools and methodologies include: Governance Assessment for Protected and Conserved Areas (Franks & Brooker, 2018), Social Assessment of Protected Areas (Franks et al 2018), and Site-level assessment of governance and equity (IIED, 2020). As well, a range of suggested actions are included in the voluntary guidance on effective governance models for management of protected areas, including equity (Annex II of COP Decision 14/8).

Equator Prize Projects

The Equator Initiative brings together the United Nations, governments, civil society, businesses and grassroots organizations to recognize and advance local sustainable development solutions for people, nature and resilient communities. The Equator Prize projects provide examples of unique and locally based governance of natural resources. Benin has the following Equator Prize winners that showcase examples of local, sustainable community action:

Organization	Year	Project Description
Centre Régional de Recherche et d'Education pour un Développement Intégré	2019	In South Benin, Centre Régional de Recherche et d'Education pour un Développement Intégré (CREDI-ONG, Regional Centre of Research and Education for Integrated Development) is putting youth at the centre of efforts to mitigate climate change while promoting community resilience. Established in 2006, CREDI-ONG has created an agroecological farm and a 67,000-hectare Community Natural Park in the Sitatunga Valley. Working in key wetland and forest ecosystems, the organization uses a participatory approach to promote integrated aquaculture, agroecological farming, and environmental protection, reaching 150,000 people. One thousand people — 84 percent of them women — have benefitted from 12 village savings and loan groups, agroecological clubs, and seven community apiculture units. Parallel environmental education clubs have empowered 1,250 youth as the next generation's conservation leaders. Operating in an area with limited sustainable livelihood opportunities, CREDI-ONG provides a powerful example of how environmental conservation can mitigate climate change and ensure community resilience.

Organization	Year	Project Description
Réseau de Développement de Réserves naturelles Communautaires (REDERC, Community Nature Reserve Development Network)	2010	The Réseau de Développement de Réserves naturelles Communautaires (REDERC, Community Nature Reserve Development Network) originated in the community of Papatia, which established the Botanical Garden of Papatia in response to rapid depletion of local natural resources. The organization unites traditional healers, beekeepers, farmers, women's groups, and students, from different ethnic groups, to protect the region's biodiversity and natural resources as the basis of sustainable development. Activities focus on creating community and school protected area, over 20 of which have been established to date. Additionally, the network provides environmental education, and documentation and commercialisation strategies for traditional medicines and related knowledge. The network has developed new, sustainable sources of income including ecotourism, apiculture, and sale of local plants and herbs. A literary and professional learning centre for girls serves as a model for other initiatives by the village.

Photo from the Equator Prize Winner

PROTECTED AREA MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS

This section provides information on the coverage of PAs and OECMs with completed protected area management effectiveness (PAME) assessments as reported in the global database (GD-PAME). The proportion of terrestrial and marine PAs with completed PAME assessments is also calculated and compared with the 60% target agreed to in COP-10 Decision X/31. Information is also included regarding changes in forest cover nationally within PAs and OECMs.

Protected area management effectiveness (PAME) assessments

As of May 2021, Benin has 61 PAs reported in the WDPA; of these PAs, 7 (10.9%) have management effectiveness evaluations reported in the global database on protected area management effectiveness (GD-PAME).

- 9.8% (11,331 km^2) of the terrestrial area of the country is covered by PAs with completed management effectiveness evaluations.
    - 33.0% of the area of terrestrial PAs have completed evaluations.
- 0.0% (0.0 km^2) of the marine area of the country is covered by PAs with completed management effectiveness evaluations.
    - 0.0% of the area of marine PAs have completed evaluations.

The 60% target for completed management effectiveness assessments (per COP Decision X/31) **has not** been met for terrestrial PAs and **has not** been met for marine PAs.

As of May 2021, there are 0 OECMs in Benin reported in the WD-OECM and no information available on the management effectiveness of potential OECMs.

Changes in forest cover in protected areas and OECMs

Forested areas in Benin cover approximately 0.6% of the country, an area of 654.8 km^2. Approximately 36.7% (240.4 km^2) of this is within the protected area estate of Benin. Over the period 2000-2020, loss of forest cover amounted to over 382.6 km^2, or 58.4% of forested area, of which 60.4 km^2 (15.8% of forest loss) occurred within protected areas. The map below shows how forest cover has changed in Benin from 2000-2020 both inside and outside of PAs. This can indicate how effective PAs are in reducing forest cover loss.

Forest Cover	
Total Forested Area (km²)	654.8
% of Country Forested	0.6%
% of Forested Areas Protected	36.7%
Forest Loss (2000-2020) (km²)(%)	382.6 (58.4%)
Outside PAs (2000-2020) (km²)(%)	322.1 (84.2%)
Inside PAs (2000-2021) (km²)(%)	60.5 (15.8%)

Protected Areas (WDPA)

Forest Canopy Cover 10% 100%

Forest Year of Loss 2000 2010 2020

Data Sources: **UNEP-WCMC and IUCN (2021)**. Protected Planet: The World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) [On-line], May 2021. Cambridge, UK: UNEP-WCMC and IUCN. Available at: www.protectedplanet.net; **Hansen, M.C., et al. (2013)**. High-Resolution Global Maps of 21st-Century Forest Cover Change. Science 342, 850–853; **Dubois, G., et al (2018)**: Digital Observatory For Protected Areas. European Commission, Joint Research Centre (JRC): http://data.europa.eu/89h/jrc-dopa-maps-and-datasets.

Map Created 19 June 2021

0 50 100 150 km

Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

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Forest Cover and Forest Loss in Benin
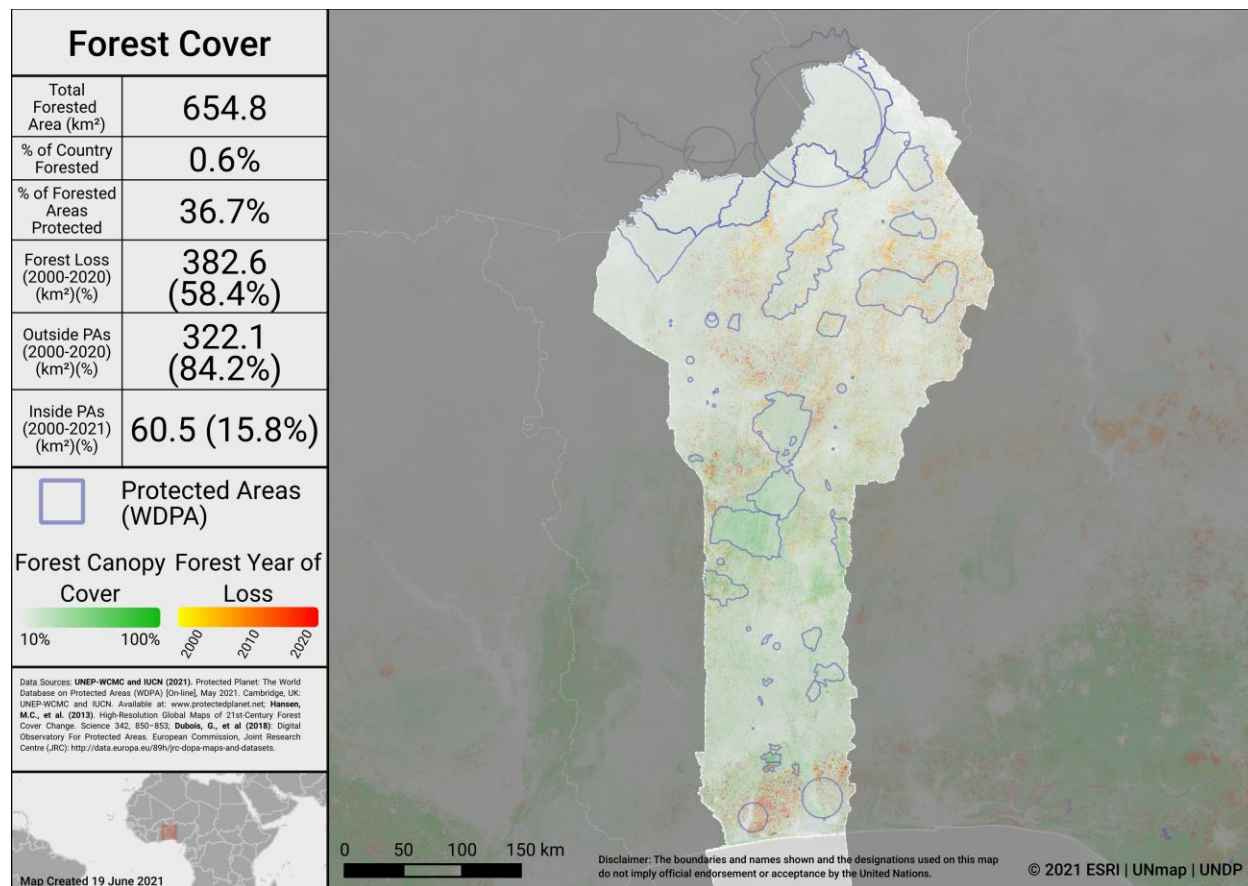
Opportunities for action

The 60% target for completed management effectiveness assessments (per COP Decision X/31) **has not** been met for terrestrial PAs and **has not** been met for marine PAs. Therefore, there is opportunity to increase protected area management effectiveness (PAME) evaluations for both terrestrial and marine PAs to achieve the target.

There is also opportunity to implement the results of completed PAME evaluations, to improve the quality of management for existing PAs and OECMs (e.g. through adaptive management and information sharing, increasing the number of sites reporting 'sound management') and to increase reporting of biodiversity outcomes in PAs and OECMs.

SECTION II: EXISTING PROTECTED AREA AND OECM COMMITMENTS

NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLANS (NBSAPs)

Benin has submitted an NBSAP during the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (most recent NBSAP is available at: https://www.cbd.int/nbsap/search/).

This NBSAP **did** include a quantitative target for **terrestrial** PAs or OECMs.

Objective 10. Establish a coherent system for the conservation of continental ecosystems (including mountains, hills and inselbergs) and marine ecosystems built on ecologically representative and well-connected networks of protected areas. Outcome - By 2020, a national network of protected areas covering at-least 10% of terrestrial areas, representative of different ecosystems, is set up and managed according to the rules of art.

- As of May 2021 (based on the WDPA/WD-OECM) has the target been met: **YES**

This NBSAP **did** include a quantitative target for **marine** protected areas or OECMs.

Objective 10. Outcome - By 2020, a national network of protected areas covering at-least 5% of coastal and marine areas, representative of different ecosystems, is set up and managed according to the rules of art.

- As of May 2021 (based on the WDPA/WD-OECM) has the target been met: **NO**
- Accounting for other projects, actions and commitments, if this target is met, coverage in the country will increase by **1,521 km²**.

Actions from the NBSAP will also address other elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11:

NBSAP Action #	Action (original language from NBSAP)	Action (English translation)
4.1	Renforcer l'intégration des forêts sacrées et zones humides dans les aires protégées	Strengthen the integration of sacred forests and wetlands in protected areas
4.2	Identifier et délimiter les zones potentielles des écosystèmes fragiles (collines, montagnes et inselbergs, etc.) et créer autour d'elles des aires protégées et/ou des espaces de reboisement	Identify and define potential areas of fragile ecosystems (hills, mountains and inselbergs, etc.) and create around them protected areas and / or areas of reforestation
4.4	Assurer la sécurisation foncière des habitats de la faune et autres habitats de grande valeur	Ensuring land security for wildlife habitats and other valuable habitats

NBSAP Action #	Action (original language from NBSAP)	Action (English translation)
4.7	Conserver les espaces forestiers fragiles aux fins des services écosystémiques en particulier la séquestration de carbone, les PFNL, etc.	Keep fragile forest areas for ecosystem services in particular carbon sequestration, NWFP, etc
9.3	Engager les démarches et procédures pour l'instauration et la gestion des Aires marines et côtières protégées	Engage the steps and procedures for the establishment and management of marine and coastal protected areas
10.1	Assurer la protection des zones à forte diversité biologique et des zones procurant des services d'écosystèmes essentiels	Ensure the protection of areas of high biodiversity and areas providing essential ecosystem services
10.2	Promouvoir des Aires Marines Protégées (AMP) avec la participation des communautés	Promote Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) with the participation of communities
10.3	Elaborer /actualiser de concert avec les pays voisins des outils de gestion durable de la biodiversité des aires protégées transfrontalières	Develop / update in conjunction with neighboring countries tools for the sustainable management of biodiversity in transboundary protected areas
10.4	Créer un nombre suffisant d'espaces protégés assez représentatifs des différents milieux naturels efficacement et équitablement gérés selon l'approche par écosystème	Create a sufficient number of protected areas representative enough of the different natural environments effectively and equitably managed in the ecosystem approach
10.5	Mobiliser les communautés autochtones et locales et la Coopération régionale et internationale autour d'un programme d'intégration des aires protégées aux paysages terrestres et marins	Mobilize Indigenous and local communities and regional and international cooperation around a program of integration of protected areas in landscapes and seascapes
16.7	Promouvoir les démarches et outils de classement des aires protégées et forêts au Bénin	Promote approaches and ranking tools for protected areas and forests in Benin

APPROVED GEF-5, GEF-6, & GCF PROTECTED AREA PROJECTS

Approved GEF-5 and GEF-6 PA-related biodiversity projects

This includes biodiversity projects from the fifth and sixth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility (GEF-5 and GEF-6) with a clear impact of the quantity or quality of PAs; also including some projects occurring within the wider landscapes/seascapes around PAs. Only those with a status of 'project approved' or 'concept approved' as of June 2019 were considered. The qualifying elements likely benefiting from each GEF project is assessed based on a keyword search of Project Identification Forms (PIF). Where spatial data for the proposed PAs was available, further details (based on an analysis by UNDP) regarding their impacts for ecological representation, coverage of KBAs, and coverage of areas important for carbon storage is included.

GEF ID	PA increase?	Area to be added (km²)	Type of new protected area	Qualitative elements potentially benefitting (based on keyword search of PIFs)
5215	No	N/A	N/A	All except Ecologically representative and Connectivity
9383	Yes	80	Terrestrial	All Qualitative Elements

Approved Green Climate Fund (GCF) Protected Area-related biodiversity projects

The Green Climate Fund's investments listed as approved projects as of May 2021 were considered. The GCF supports paradigm shifts in both climate change mitigation and adaptation that may impact quality of PAs or contribute to better integration within the wider land- and seascapes around PAs. Only projects with result areas for either or both *Forest and Land Use and Ecosystems and Ecosystem Services result areas* were included.

GCF ID	Project theme	Result area	Target 11 element
FP092	Cross-cutting	Forest and land use	Effectively managed; Integration
SAP005	Adaptation	Ecosystems and ecosystem services	Effectively managed; Integration

OTHER ACTIONS/COMMITMENTS

Benin's statement at the 2020 UN Biodiversity Summit mentions PAs, OECMs or corridors:

We have also undertaken the following important initiatives in order to increase the area covered by protected areas, for example, we've created the national cross-border biosphere reserve in Mono, this was approved by UNESCO in 2017. We intend to create a Marine Protected Area and we've already identified the marine and coastal environmentally important areas.

High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People

Benin **has** joined the High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People.

The High Ambition Coalition for Nature and People (HAC) is an intergovernmental group, co-chaired by France and Costa Rica [currently including 65 countries and the European Commission]. Its objective is to support the adoption of a target aiming to protect 30% of the planet's land and 30% of its oceans by 2030 (30x30 target), within the future global framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) for the protection of biodiversity, which is to be adopted at the next COP in China this autumn.

Global Ocean Alliance

Benin **has** joined the Global Ocean Alliance: 30by30 initiative.

The Global Ocean Alliance 30by30 is a UK led initiative [currently containing 53 countries as signatories]. Its aim is to protect at least 30% of the global ocean as Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) by 2030.

Commitments for PAs and OECMs from Other National Policies

Policy document	Ecosystem	Policy text
Nationally Determined Contribution	Forest ecosystems	Forest conversion avoided: 0.57 Mt CO_2e/year
Nationally Determined Contribution	Wetland ecosystems	Avoided impacts of peat: 0.03 Mt CO_2e/year

ANNEX I

FULL LIST OF TERRESTRIAL ECOREGIONS

Ecoregion Name	Area (km^2)	% of Global Ecoregion in Country	% of Country in Ecoregion	Area Protected (km^2)	% Protected in Country
Eastern Guinean forests	641.5	0.3	0.6	17.4	2.7
Guinean forest-savanna	16,468.6	2.5	14.2	1,833.5	11.1
Nigerian lowland forests	799.8	1.2	0.7	274.9	34.4
West Sudanian savanna	97,831.0	6.0	84.6	27,927.8	28.5

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