Goal 1.1: To establish and strengthen national and regional systems of protected areas integrated into a global network as a contribution to globally agreed goals

Target: By 2010, terrestrially [68]/ and 2012 in the marine area, a global network of comprehensive, representative and effectively managed national and regional protected area system is established as a contribution to (i) the goal of the Strategic Plan of the Convention and the World Summit on Sustainable Development of achieving a significant reduction in the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010; (ii) the Millennium Development Goals - particularly goal 7 on ensuring environmental sustainability; and (iii) the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.

Suggested activities of the Parties

1.1.1 By 2006, establish suitable time-bound and measurable national and regional level protected area targets and indicators.

1.1.2 As a matter of urgency, by 2006, take action to establish or expand protected areas in any large, intact or relatively unfragmented or highly irreplaceable natural areas, or areas under high threat, as well as areas securing the most threatened species in the context of national priorities [69], and taking into consideration the conservation needs of migratory species.

1.1.3 As a matter of urgency, by 2006 terrestrially and by 2008 in the marine environment, take action to address the under-representation of marine and inland water ecosystems in existing national and regional systems of protected areas, taking into account marine ecosystems beyond areas of national jurisdiction in accordance with applicable international law, and transboundary inland water ecosystems.

1.1.4 By 2006, conduct, with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities and relevant stakeholders, national-level reviews of existing and potential forms of conservation, and their suitability for achieving biodiversity conservation goals, including innovative types of governance for protected areas that need to be recognized and promoted through legal, policy, financial institutional and community mechanisms, such as protected areas run by Government agencies at various levels, co-managed protected areas, private protected areas, indigenous and local community conserved areas.

1.1.5 By 2006 complete protected area system gap analyses at national and regional levels based on the requirements for representative systems of protected areas that adequately conserve terrestrial, marine and inland water biodiversity and ecosystems. National plans should also be developed to provide interim measures to protect highly threatened or highly valued areas wherever this is necessary. Gap analyses should take into account Annex I of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other relevant criteria such as irreplaceability of target biodiversity components, minimum effective size and viability requirements, species migration requirements, integrity, ecological processes and ecosystem services.

1.1.6 By 2009, designate the protected areas as identified through the national or regional gap analysis (including precise maps) and complete by 2010 terrestrially and 2012 in the marine environments the establishment of comprehensive and ecologically representative national and regional systems of protected areas.

1.1.7 Encourage the establishment of protected areas that benefit indigenous and local communities, including by respecting, preserving, and maintaining their traditional knowledge in accordance with article 8(j) and related provisions.

Suggested supporting activities of the Executive Secretary

1.1.8 Identify options for quantitative and qualitative protected areas targets and indicators that should be used at the global level that could contribute to the 2010 target and the Millennium Development Goals.
1.1.9 Invite relevant international and regional organizations to offer their assistance to the Parties in conducting national-level gap analyses.
1.1.10. Compile and disseminate through the clearing-house mechanism and other relevant media relevant approaches, frameworks and tools for system planning and promote and facilitate the exchange of experiences and lessons learned in applying and adapting them to different ecological and social settings.

Learn more about goal 1.1:

Key activities include:
- Establish measurable and time-bound targets and indicators
- Protect large, intact areas and areas under high threat
- Address the under-representation of marine and inland water ecosystems
- Review existing and potential forms of conservation and promote innovative types of governance
- Complete and ecological gap assessment
- Designate protected areas to fill ecological gaps
- Encourage protected areas that benefit indigenous and local communities

What are measurable, time-bound targets and indicators?
Targets and indicators are a set of milestones in protection that a country can achieve. For example, a country might set a target of achieving 20% of protection of its near-shore marine environment by 2020.

What are innovative types of governance?
Protected areas can be managed for a wide range of objectives, from strict protected areas to multiple use areas; and can be governed by a wide range of actors, including governments, private owners, communities, and partnerships. Innovative governance types may include, for example, indigenous reserves, private protected areas, community conserved areas, locally managed marine areas, and other forms of protected areas. Having a diverse portfolio of different categories and governance types is likely to strengthen the overall protected area system.

What is an assessment of ecological gaps?
An ecological gap assessment analyzes the extent to which key biodiversity features (species, natural communities and ecological systems and the ecological processes that sustain them), are sufficiently represented within a protected area network. The aim is to identify those key biodiversity features that are not well represented within a protected area network, such as inland waters, for example.

What steps are involved in assessing ecological gaps?
The steps typically involved in conducting an ecological gap assessment include:

a. **Assessing biodiversity status** by identifying focal biodiversity features, including terrestrial, freshwater and marine systems, and irreplaceable and vulnerable species. This step also entails assessing the viability and threat status of these focal biodiversity features, and determining the optimal number, distribution, and design for each biodiversity feature to ensure long-term persistence.

b. **Assessing protection status** by mapping the boundaries and designation of protected and other conserved areas, by mapping the results of management effectiveness assessments (by creating a gradient from well-managed to poorly-managed areas); and by mapping the governance type and category of each protected area.

c. **Analyzing results** by identifying ecological gaps, including biodiversity features that are absent or underrepresented, or are of insufficient viability to ensure long-term persistence. This step also

entails identifying management gaps, including protected areas that require improved management effectiveness or stronger legal designation.

d. **Developing a plan** to fill gaps by prioritizing ecological gaps based on threat, urgency and irreplaceability, and then developing strategies and estimating costs to fill ecological gaps

What are strategies for filling ecological gaps?

Examples of strategies to fill gaps include:

*   **Revising protected area designations:** The IUCN categorization system ranges from strict protection (Category I) through multiple use areas (Category VI). Changing protected area designation can be an efficient way of filling critical ecological gaps and increasing protection levels.
*   **Exploring alternative governance:** When creating new government protected areas is difficult because of financial or political constraints, governments may want to encourage community conserved areas, tribal and indigenous areas, co-managed areas and private protected areas.
*   **Encouraging 'other conserved areas:'** Areas that have long-term conservation status, but are not legally designated as protected areas (e.g., certified forestry operations, wetland reserve areas, organic farms), can help fill critical gaps within the protected area network.
*   **Expanding existing protected areas:** Even a small change to the design of a protected area, such as expanding the boundaries to include more elevational gradients, can make a major contribution to filling ecological gaps and meeting critical breeding, feeding and migration needs of species.
*   **Creating ecological corridors:** In many cases it may be necessary to create corridors that allow species movement and ecological processes to occur. Although the overall area of these corridors may be small, the benefits to the overall protected area system can be substantial.
*   **Creating new protected areas:** Governments should consider the most critical, irreplaceable, under-represented species and ecological systems – typically areas of high productivity that have already been largely transformed across the landscape – as priority candidates for new reserves.
*   **Restoring degraded protected areas:** The restoration and expansion of remnant patches of fragmented ecosystems, the rehabilitation of ecological structures and processes within a partly functioning system, and the reintroduction of extirpated species can help fill ecological gaps.

What are some key documents that can help in the implementation of Goal 1.1?

Resources for conducting protected area gap assessment can be found at http://www.cbd.int/protected/tools/