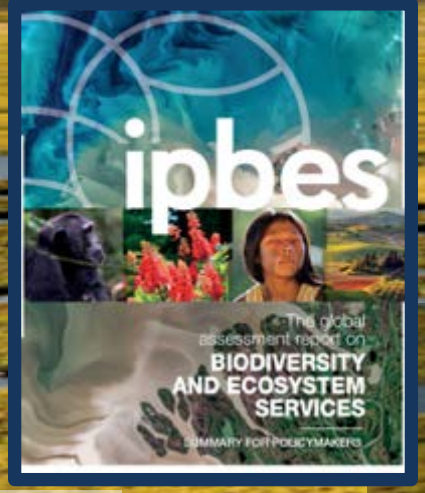
Understanding the role and potential of Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) in the Asia Pacific Region

Opening Remarks

Madhu Rao
Chair
IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas



Nature is essential for human existence and good quality of life

Direct and indirect drivers of change have accelerated during the past 50 years

Nature and its vital contributions to people are deteriorating worldwide

Draft Target 3: Global Biodiversity Framework 1.0

30% by 2030

Areas important for biodiversity and ecosystem services

Ecologically representative

Equitably governed

Effectively managed

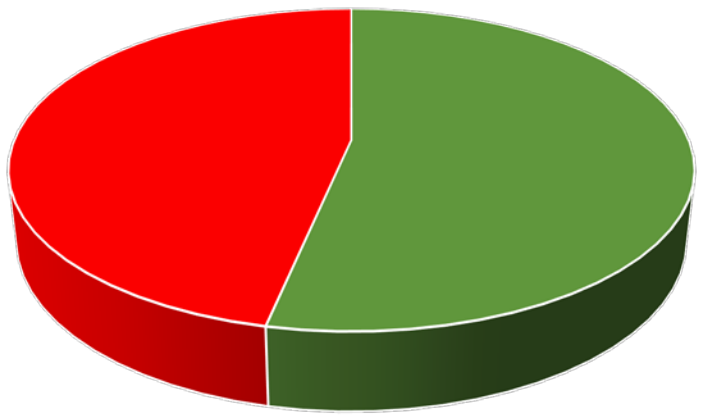
Integrated into wider landscapes and seascapes

2020 Protected Planet Report

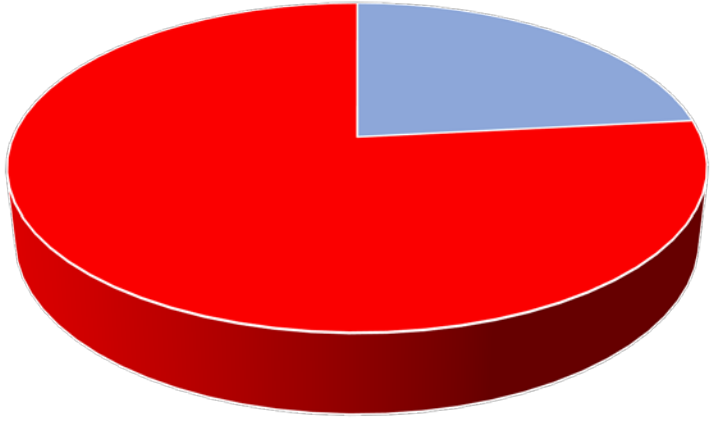
17% Terrestrial;
10% Marine

30% by 2030
(Terrestrial & Marine)

Terrestrial PA coverage



Marine PA coverage



Conservation Challenges in South and SE Asia

Land use change: Agricultural expansion and encroachment; Biomass extraction

Wildlife crime and unsustainable exploitation

Extractive industries, energy and linear infrastructure

Dams and hydropower development

30x30 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Does the 30% target apply equally to all countries?

The 30% Target is a GLOBAL Target

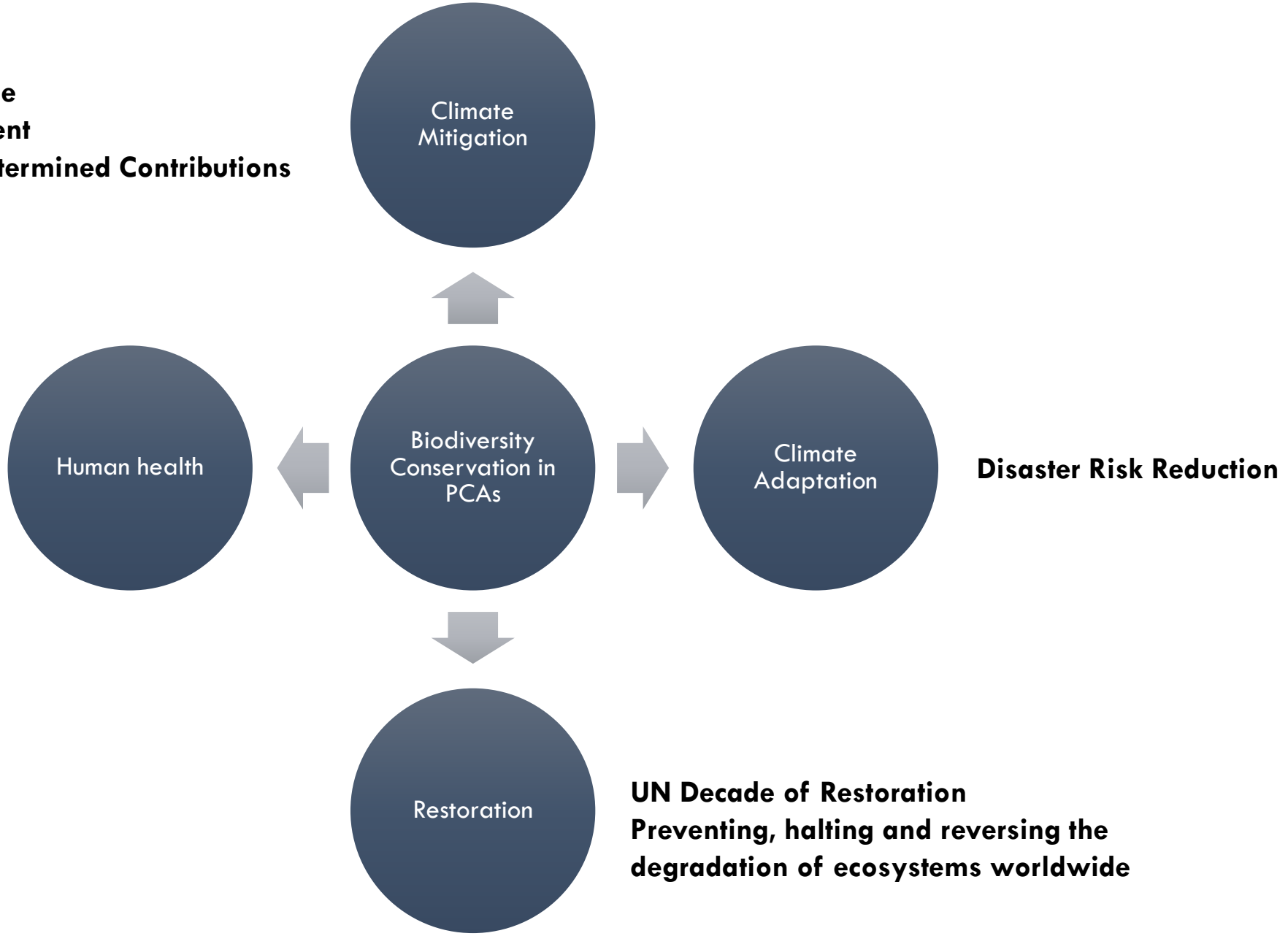
It will be applied differently across countries according to national circumstances

2. Can we afford 30x30?

Economic benefits of Protecting 30% of Planet's Land and Ocean Outweigh the Costs at Least 5-to-1

3. How can achieving 30x30 be effectively financed?

Carbon storage
Paris Agreement
Nationally Determined Contributions

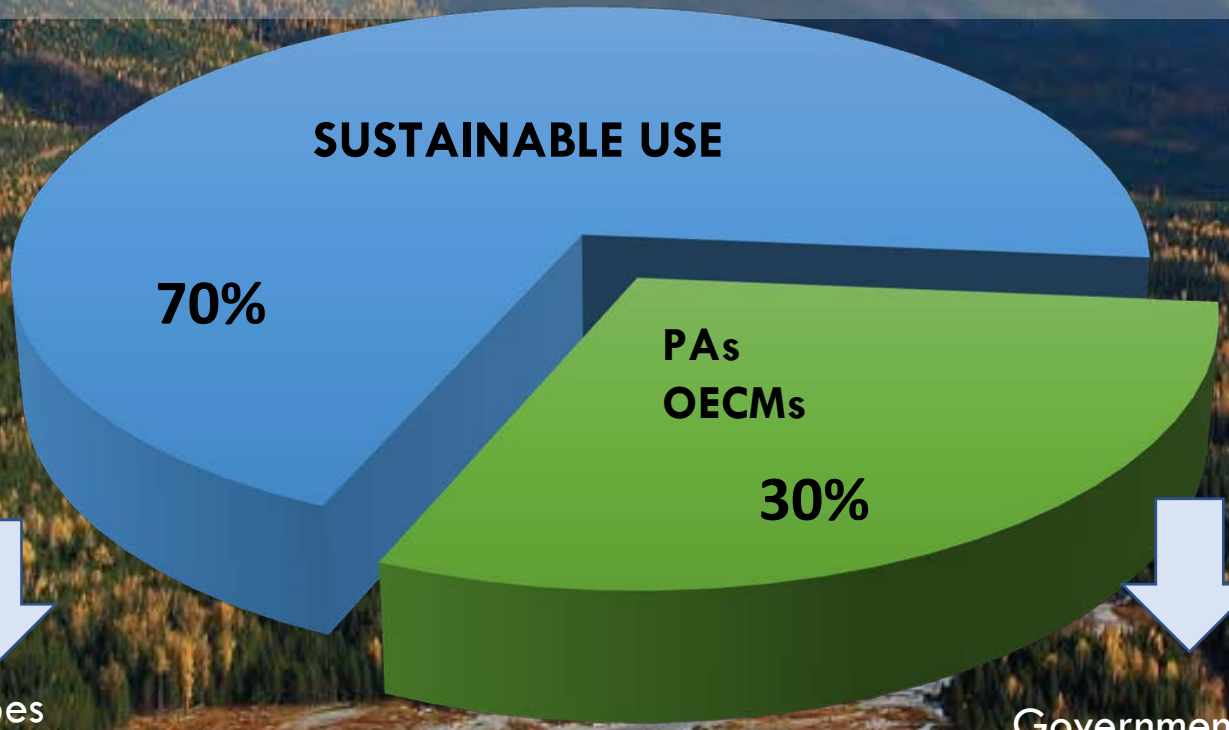


Biodiversity Loss and emergence of infectious disease

Disaster Risk Reduction

UN Decade of Restoration
Preventing, halting and reversing the degradation of ecosystems worldwide

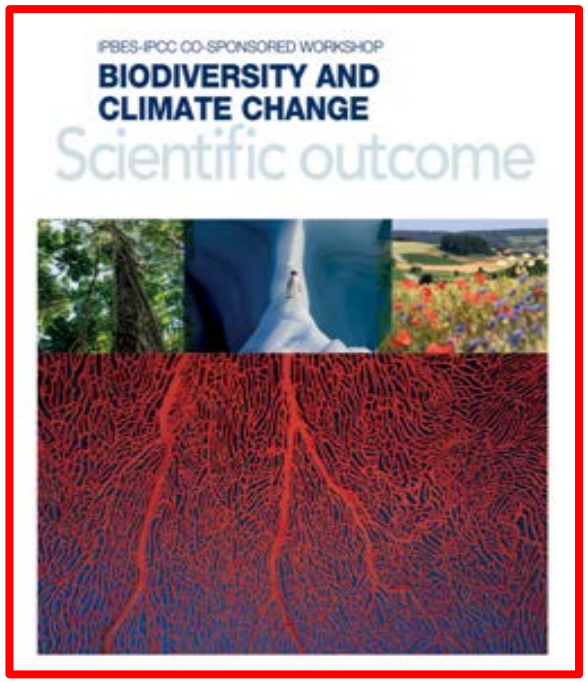
4. What counts to 30%?



Areas of biodiversity importance

Production landscapes
Commercial Fisheries
Commercial logging areas
Agricultural plantations

Government PAs
IPLCs
ICCAs
Privately Protected Areas
OECMs



5. Can Protecting Biodiversity help address the impacts of Climate Change?

Limiting global warming and protecting biodiversity
are mutually supporting goals,
and their achievement is essential for sustainably and equitably providing benefits to people.

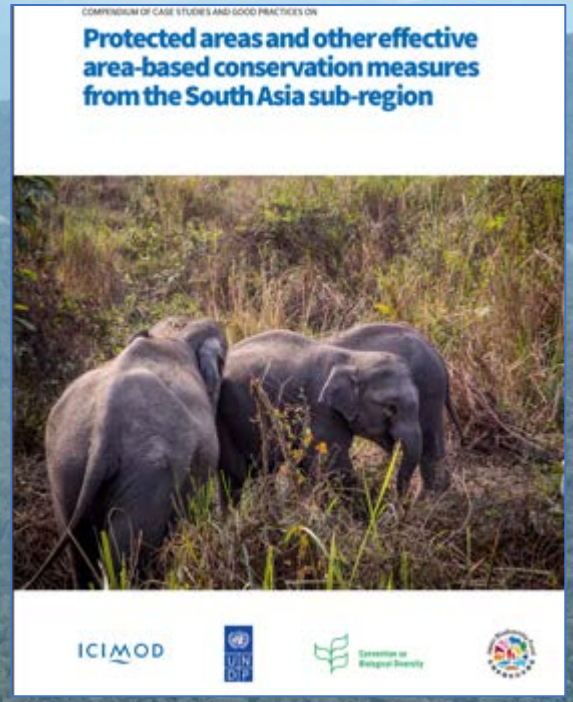
Actions to protect, sustainably manage and restore ecosystems have co-benefits for:

climate mitigation, climate adaptation and biodiversity objectives.

Challenges and Opportunities to achieving 30x30 in South Asia

Achieving 30x30:
Key Lessons for PAs in South Asia

- PAs are the last strongholds for conserving threatened species- including wide-ranging, flagship species
- Community Institutions; Law enforcement
- Science - evidence-based policy development
- Biological corridors, connectivity and landscape approaches
- Integration of indigenous knowledge
- Civil society engagement and support
- Political commitment



Protected areas: critically important tools for the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services

Need to improve effectiveness of existing protected area networks to achieve biodiversity outcomes.

CHALLENGES to ACHIEVING 30x30 in South Asia

Strengthening effectiveness of existing PA systems for Biodiversity outcomes, using rights-based approaches and reducing threats affecting PAs

Needs: Financial investments, enabling policies, eliminating harmful subsidies

Protecting the right 30%- Where are the areas of high biodiversity importance? Are they protected?

Needs: Spatial planning to identify priority sites that need urgent protection

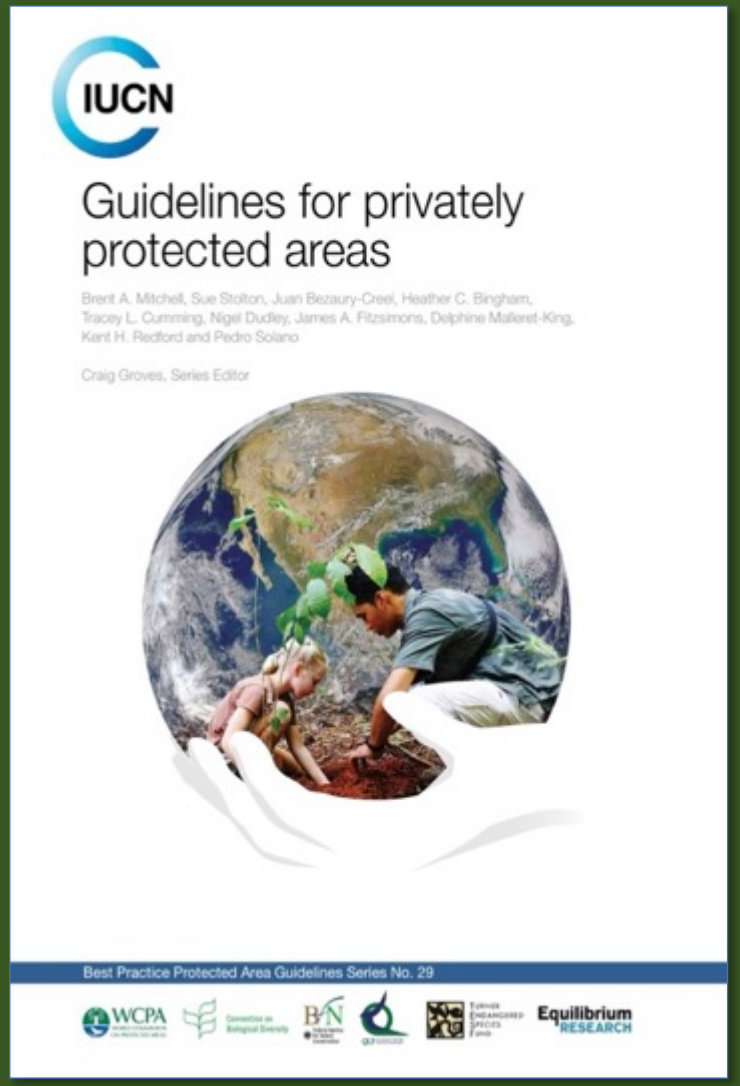
Diversification in governance and management models for Protected Areas: ICCAs, Privately Protected Areas, Public-private partnerships for PAs

Needs: Investments in suitable partnerships or governance models for PAs

Privately Protected Areas

- A **privately protected area** is a protected area, as defined by IUCN, under private governance
  - Individuals and groups of individuals
  - Non-governmental organizations
  - Corporations (for-profit and conservation)
  - Research entities (universities, field stations)
  - Religious entities

- May be particularly important to 30x30
  - Underreported globally
  - Connectivity and ecological representation
  - Essential to create enabling policy environment to recognize and report on such areas



http://privateconservation.net

Large areas of wildlife habitat lie outside formal PA systems

35% of India's tiger range is outside protected areas:
UNEP-WWF Report 2021

Protected Areas in S. Asia
[N =928]
~ 80% less than 100 km^2

44% less than 5 km^2

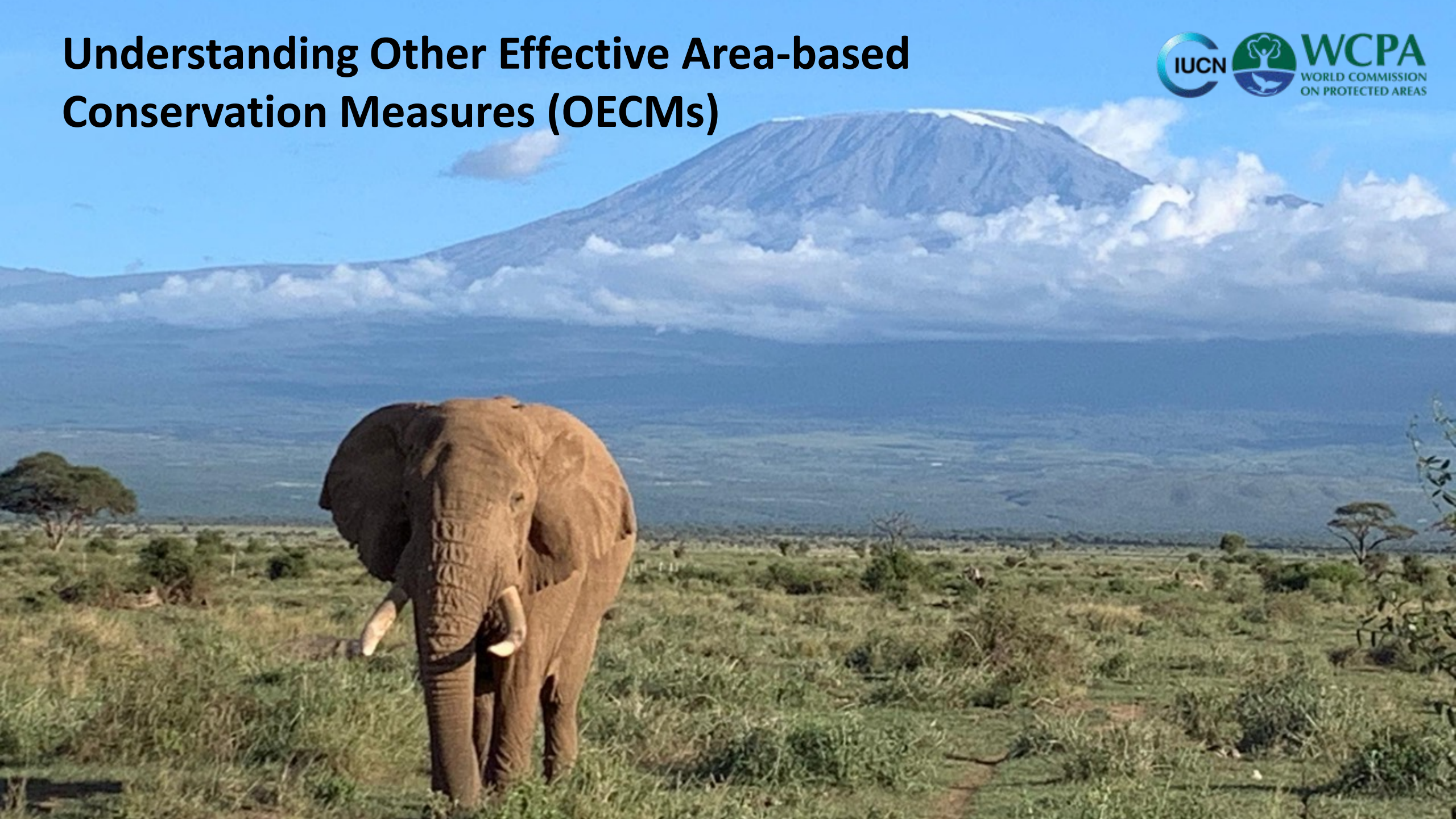
22% less than 1 km^2

S. Chowdhury et al. 2022

Achieving 30% by 2030

- **Both: PAs and OECMs**
- **Political Will**
- **Financing**
- **Policy frameworks**

Understanding Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs)



OTHER EFFECTIVE AREA-BASED CONSERVATION MEASURES (OECMs) (CBD COP DECISION 14/8)

A geographically defined area other than a Protected Area

which is governed and managed…

in ways that achieve positive and sustained long-term outcomes for the *in situ* conservation of biodiversity …

with associated ecosystem functions and services and where applicable, cultural, spiritual, socio-economic, and other locally relevant values.

CORE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PAs AND OECMs

Protected areas must have a ***primary conservation objective.***

OECMs should ***deliver*** the effective and enduring *in-situ* conservation of biodiversity, ***regardless*** of its objectives.

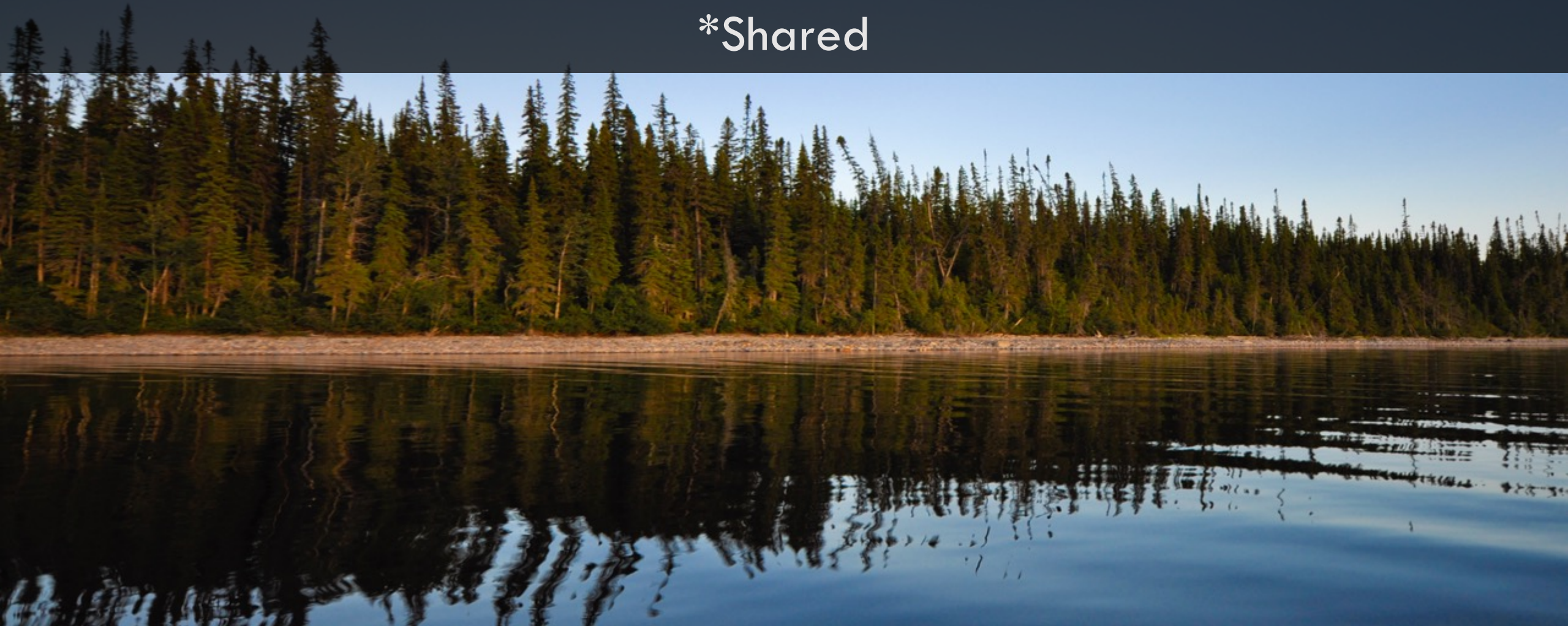
OECMs can have a range of governance types:

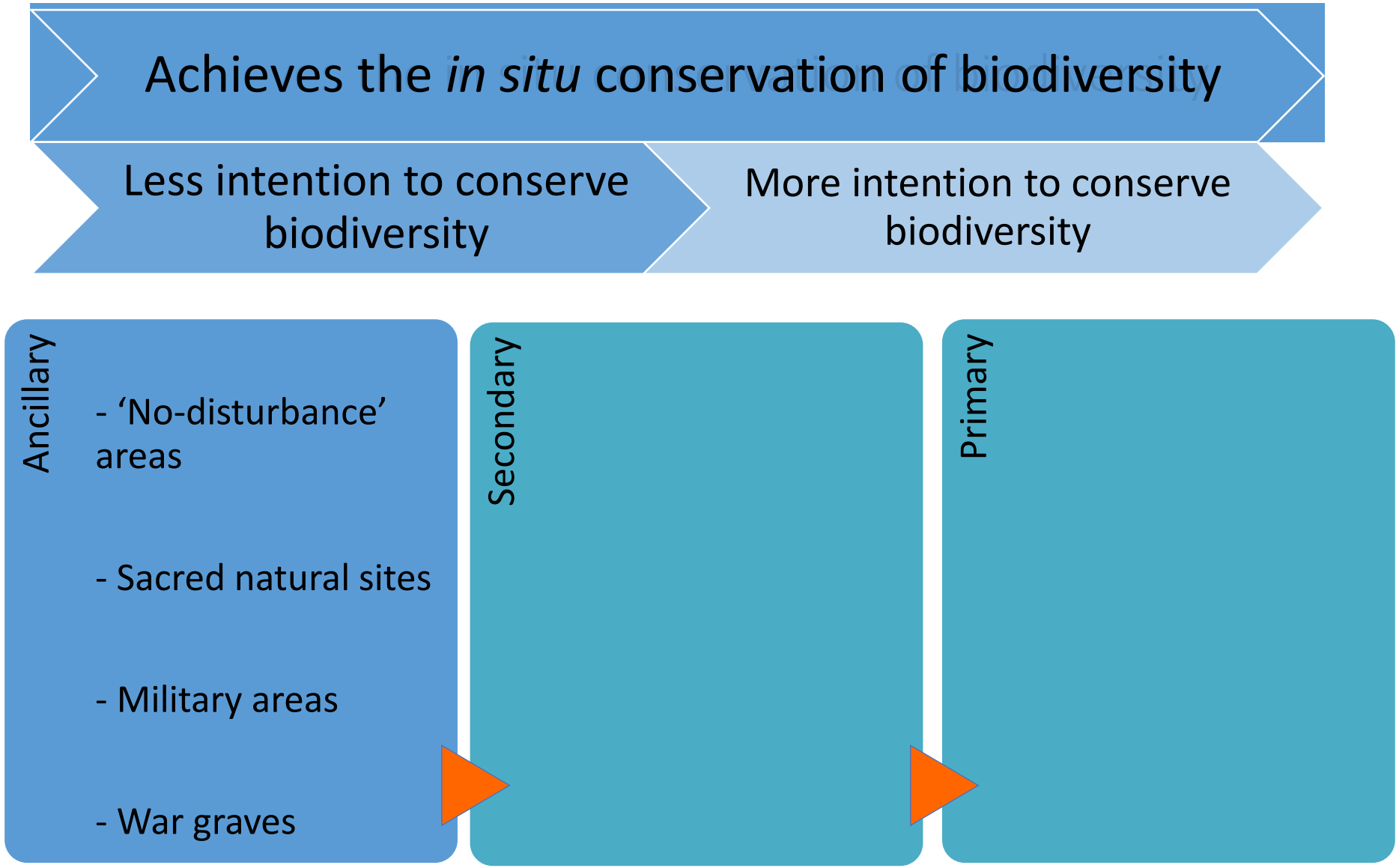
*Government

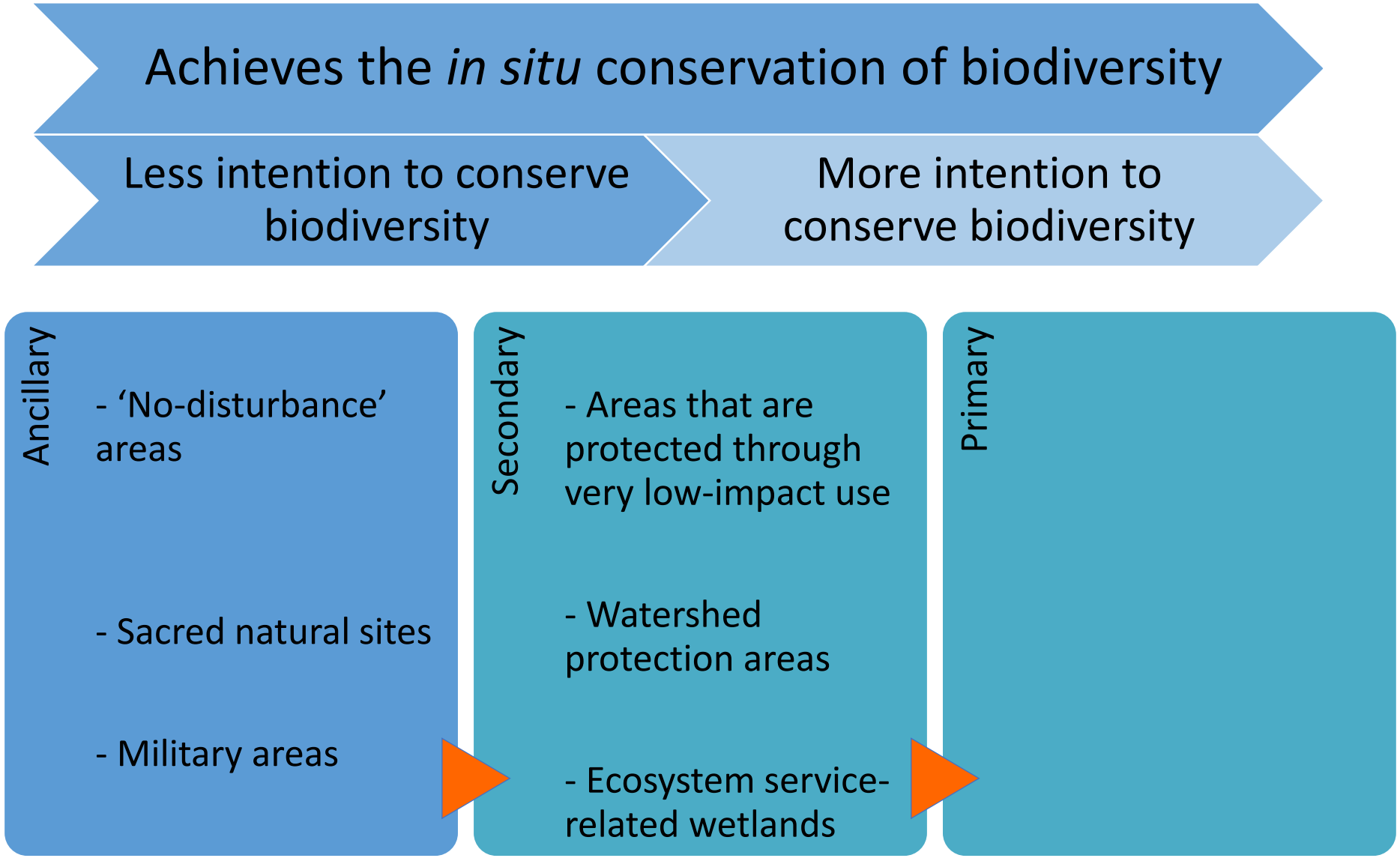
*Private

*Indigenous peoples and local communities

*Shared




Achieves the *in situ* conservation of biodiversity
Less intention to conserve biodiversity
More intention to conserve biodiversity
Ancillary
- 'No-disturbance' areas
- Sacred natural sites
- Military areas
- War graves
Secondary
Primary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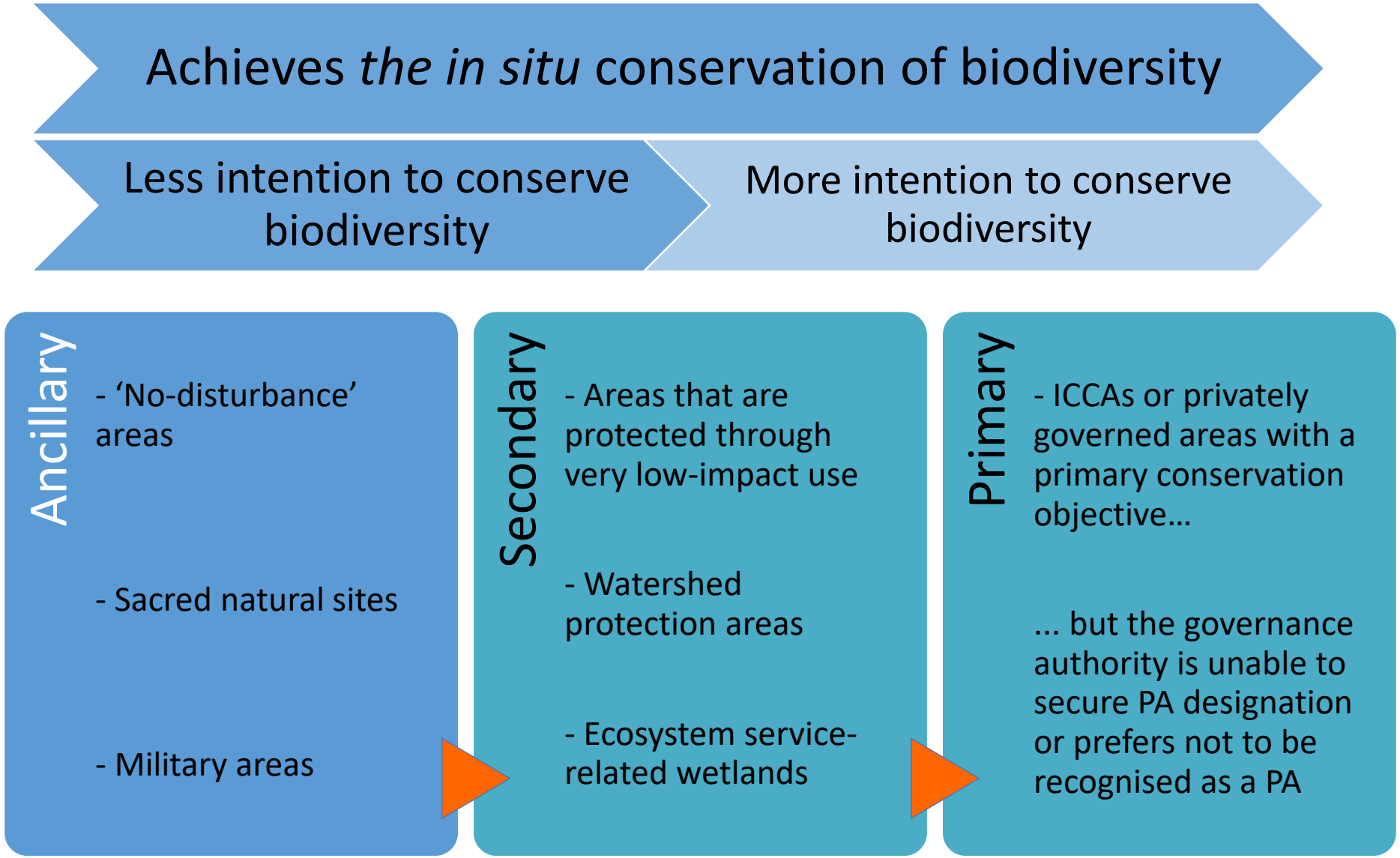
Secondary
- Areas that are protected through very low-impact use
- Watershed protection areas
- Ecosystem service-related wetlands
Primary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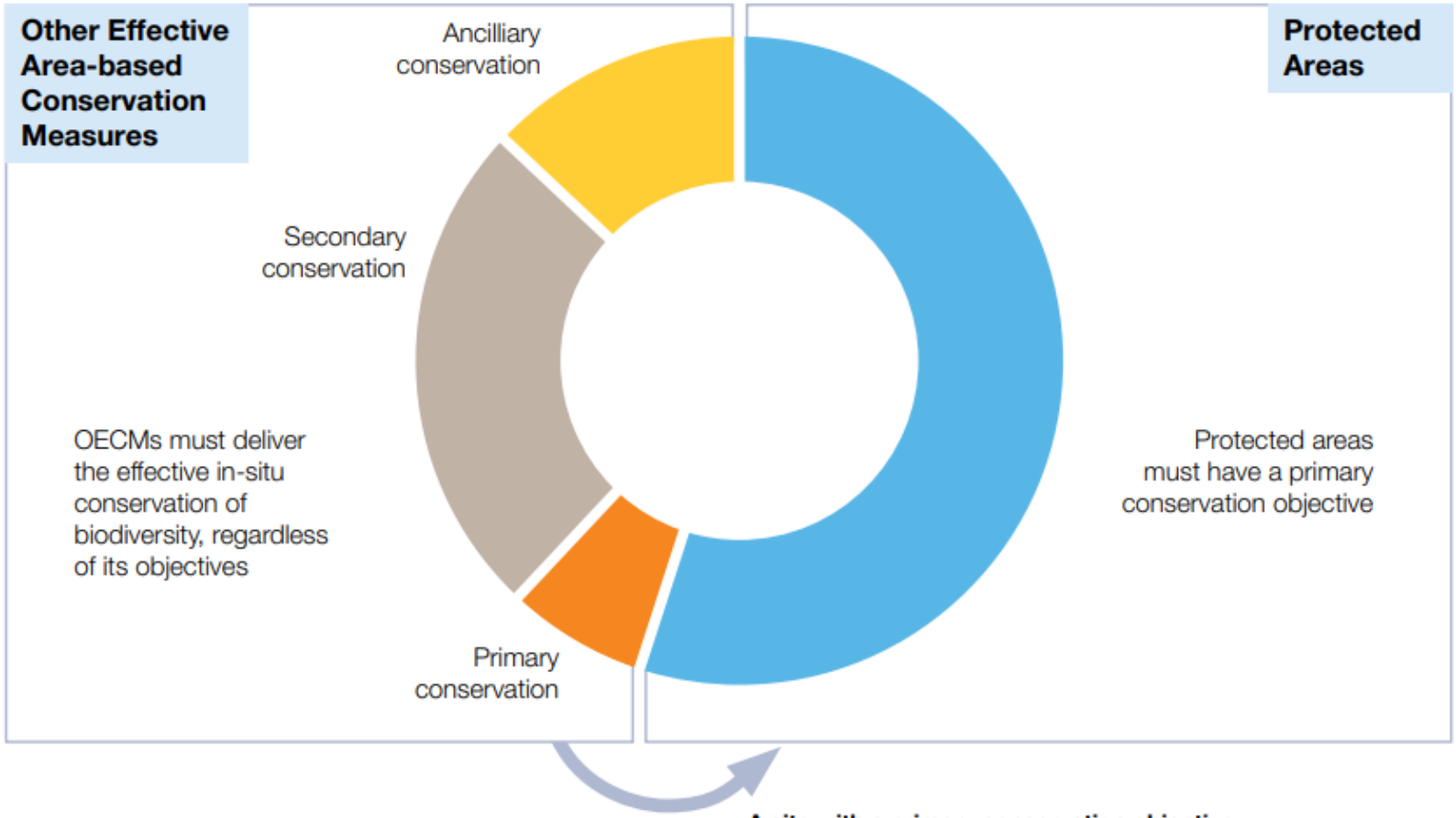
Ancillary
- 'No-disturbance' areas
- Sacred natural sites
- Military areas
Secondary
- Areas that are protected through very low-impact use
- Watershed protection areas
- Ecosystem service-related wetlands
Primary
- ICCAs or privately governed areas with a primary conservation objective…
... but the governance authority is unable to secure PA designation or prefers not to be recognised as a PA

Systems of PAs and OECMs



CBD Decision 14/8 contains comprehensive guidance and new tools are available

CBD Decision 14/8 Annex 3:
GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND COMMON CHARACTERISTICS

OECMs should have significant biodiversity values

OECMs have an important role in the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, contributing to effective conservation networks

Recognition of OECMs provides an opportunity to support *in situ* conservation of biodiversity over the long-term in marine, terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems under a range of governance and management regimes;

OECMs are comparable and complementary to effective protected areas in maintaining biodiversity outcomes and contribute to the coherence and connectivity of protected area networks

Opportunities for OECMs

- **Opportunity to recognise, engage and support a range of rights-holders and partners in local-to-global conservation efforts to secure positive and s sustained outcomes for biodiversity**
- **If within the territories of indigenous peoples and local communities, OECMs should be recognized with the free, prior and informed consent of IPs**
- **Designation of OECMs to expand and strengthen conservation networks & connectivity**
- ***But NB* OECMs are equivalent to effective PAs, not a lower class designation**
- **OECMs as solutions contributing to C storage, climate mitigation and building resilience to impacts of climate change**
- **Important contribution to Target 3 of new Global Biodiversity Framework.**
- **Report to WD-OECM at UNEP-WCMC**

IUCN - Examples of what might count as OECMs

Likely

- Some indigenous/community conserved areas
- Some coastal and marine areas protected from interference for reasons other than conservation, e.g. historic wrecks
- Some areas in production landscapes that are managed for conservation rather than exploitation
- Some watershed protection areas for cities
- Some Community Pastures with native grasslands
- Some sections of military reserves with access restrictions and conservation goals and management

Unlikely

- Urban parks and other formal gardens
- Temporary fishing closures in place only until an overfished area recovers
- Heavily grazed grassland or grassland replanted with monocultures or non-native species for livestock
- Large, landscape or seascape scale management policies targeting a limited number of biodiversity elements (e.g. fishing or hunting restrictions on individual species)
- Ocean areas or forest areas managed for large scale extraction
- Production forests managed for timber

Potential areas should be screened very carefully on a case-by-case basis.

MARINE FOCUS

All marine OECMs should produce the "conservation of ecosystems and natural habitats and the maintenance and recovery of viable populations of species in their natural surroundings" (CBD Article 2), not just a sustainable population of one/a few species.

IUCN recommends that there should be no vertical zoning for OECMs.

Marine OECMs

Locally managed marine areas that result in the long-term conservation of biodiversity

Permanent or long-term fisheries closures designed to protect complete ecosystems for stock recruitment

Areas designated to protect specialised ecosystems and effective against fishery and non-fishery threats .

Totally closed areas, such as war graves with sunken shipwrecks.

NOT Marine OECMs

Areas temporarily closed to the fishing of specific depleted commercial fish species

Where fisheries or other activities are habitat-damaging

Area closed only when vulnerable species are present at a vulnerable life stage (e.g., spawning aggregations)

BENEFITS OF OECMs

Conserve	**Conserve important ecosystems, habitats and wildlife corridors outside and between protected areas**
Support	**Support the recovery of threatened species**
Maintain	**Maintain ecosystem functions and secure ecosystem services, carbon storage, water,**
Enhance	**Enhance resilience against harmful activities and threats, including climate change (nature-based solutions)**
Retain and connect	**Retain and connect remnants of fragmented ecosystems, build conservation networks**
Contribute	**Contribute to ecologically representative and well-connected conservation networks, integrated within wider landscapes and seascapes (including KBAs and transboundary areas)**

Indonesia – Harapan Ecosystem Restoration Concession

- Important Biodiversity Values:
- KBA, 98,550 hectares tropical lowland rainforest,
- Governance: Private (NGO partnership)
- Management objective: Conservation
- Not a Protected Area
- Longterm: 99 year lease
- New legislation - Ecosystem Restoration Concession
- *see PARKS 24 Special Issue 61-67*

Key questions for OECMs

Is there important biodiversity in the area?

Is the area already a protected area?

Do those responsible for governance and management want the area to be assessed as an OECM?

Might area be better mapped to sustainable management Target 5, 10?

What kinds of support are needed to help maintain effective conservation of the important biodiversity values (legislation, other incentives, recognition of land and use rights, funding)

Resources

- IUCN/WCPA requested by CBD to provide guidance
- WCPA Technical Note 6 OECMs https://www.iucn.org/theme/protected-areas/resources/iucn-wcpa-technical-note-series
- Training materials – introduction to OECMs
- https://www.iucn.org/commissions/world-commission-protected-areas/our-work/oecms/oecm-training-materials
- Case studies – Special Issue of PARKS journal 24 https://www.parksjournal.com/
- Simple, user friendly assessment tool
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) under prep

Thank you