

KEY BIODIVERSITY AREAS

*Programme Strategic Plan
Summary 2018-2024*



FOREWORD

In 2016 the global conservation community agreed a method for identifying the most important sites on our planet for the persistence of biodiversity. These sites are called Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs), and I am delighted that a new partnership of conservation organisations has come together to identify, map and conserve KBAs.

Our species is unique in the history of all life on earth in the impacts that we are having on other life. It is increasingly urgent that we identify and conserve as much of what remains as we can. The identification of KBAs uses a standard approach, developed from worldwide consultations amongst scientists and conservationists, to agree on how we should identify the most important sites for biodiversity on the planet. Like the world database for species at risk of extinction (the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species), the World Database of KBAs will become the database of key sites that must be safeguarded to avoid further biodiversity loss. Together these two programmes will help define where we should invest in conservation to have maximum impact, as well as monitor how well we are doing at achieving that impact. This strategic plan for the KBA Programme will guide this most important piece of work to map where we should focus site conservation action on Earth. I am delighted to see the conservation community coming together to agree on this common purpose which will result in conservation action being focused in many of the sites I have had the privilege to visit over my lifetime. I wish them every success in achieving this.

Sir David Attenborough

Front Cover: Mallee Emu-wren (*Stipiturus mallee*, EN) in Hattah-Kulkyne National Park, Australia © Dean Ingwersen
Below: *Leptonia carnea*, VU, is endemic to northern coastal California © Christian Schwarz



PREFACE

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) brings together 196 countries - Parties to the Convention - to work together on safeguarding life on Earth – by achieving conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and guarantying access to genetic resources and benefit sharing from their utilisation. For 2020, Parties, together with partners, are focusing on delivering the adopted Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Target 11 encourages, among others, the expansion of protected area and other measures for effective area based conservation coverage to 17% for terrestrial and inland waters, and 10% for coastal and marine areas. Although there has been a significant response to this aspect of the Target, with progress observed in terms of coverage, there are still gaps on other aspects, including with regards to ecological representativeness and the coverage of key biodiversity areas. These gaps need to be filled if we are to completely achieve the Target by 2020.

There is currently a clarion call to expand protected areas and other effective area based conservation measures further. There is no doubt that we need to provide more space for nature, and conserve and sustainably use biodiversity in order to ensure our societies keep receiving the multiple benefits that ecosystem services provide (including livelihood benefits, food and water security, health, and buffering services to mitigate disaster and other risks). In expanding those areas, it is essential that we have a strong focus on sites that contribute significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity i.e. Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs).

The genuine gains from conservation will come from ensuring the conservation of areas of importance for biodiversity in critical locations where they remain threatened and unprotected. Therefore, as we consider a new global biodiversity framework for the post-2020 period, we need to identify not only how much of our planet has to be conserved but also where and what measures to apply to make this happen.

KBAs are sites to be properly managed if we are to ensure the global persistence of biodiversity in the long term. These areas contain the populations of species which, if conserved, would maximise their long-term survival. KBAs will inform the design of global conservation plans for the planet by guiding what and where governments, businesses, and civil society should focus on in their management efforts, in order to ensure sustainable development of each nation. They will also play a prominent role in the implementation of activities to achieve the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with its Sustainable Development Goals, as well as in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, as we work towards ensuring biodiversity conservation for the benefits of our societies at the local, national, and global levels.

I am very pleased and encouraged by the fact that so many international global conservation organisations have come together under the KBA Partnership to pursue a common agenda to identify, map, and secure KBA sites globally. KBA Partnership Strategic Plan will help guide not only the Partnership's work but will also inform the global community and will contribute to the CBD objectives.

Dr. Cristiana Paşca Palmer

*UN Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations
& Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity*

KEY BIODIVERSITY AREAS

Biodiversity is being lost at an alarming rate across the world's terrestrial, freshwater, and marine biomes, and evidence is mounting that the loss of genes, species, and ecosystems – a crisis in its own right -- jeopardises the delivery of services provided by biodiversity to human communities. Reversing this trend requires slowing and eventually stopping the destruction, degradation, and overexploitation of natural habitats together with restoring degraded habitats.

Knowing, with precision, the location of those places that contribute significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity is critical information for a wide range of end users across society, from national decision makers to private companies, as well as for use by international conventions and, ultimately, to direct conservation actions to halt further losses and address existing and emerging threats.

A *Global Standard for the Identification of Key Biodiversity Areas* (KBAs) establishes a consultative, science-based process for the identification of important sites for biodiversity worldwide. Sites qualify as global KBAs if they meet one or more of 11 criteria in five categories: threatened biodiversity; geographically restricted biodiversity; ecological integrity; biological processes; and, irreplaceability. The KBA criteria have quantitative thresholds and can be applied to species and ecosystems in terrestrial, inland water and marine environments. United by the global standard, twelve of the world's leading nature conservation organisations launched an ambitious new Key Biodiversity Areas partnership (www.keybiodiversityareas.org). This strategy will guide the work of the KBA Partnership and Programme from January 2018 – December 2024. There will be an external review of the KBA Programme in 2020.

Below: Etosha National Park, Namibia © Alison Woodley; Opposite page (clockwise from top): Golfodulcean Poison Frog (*Phylllobates vittatus*, EN), Osa Peninsula, Costa Rica © Robin Moore; *Geum peckii*, NT, a wetland species endemic to New Hampshire, USA and Nova Scotia, Canada © Arthur Haines / New England Wild Flower Society; African Wild Dog (*Lycaon pictus*, EN) in Moremi Game Reserve, Okavango Delta, Botswana © Alison Woodley; Scalloped hammerhead sharks (*Sphyrna lewini*), Cocos Island, Costa Rica © naturepl.com / Jeff Rotman / WWF



KBA PROGRAMME STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2024

The KBA Programme Strategic Plan consists of an overall vision for the future, a goal for the first six years, and seven key results that when achieved will contribute to the achievement of the goal. This document summarises these key components of the plan to identify, map and conserve the most important places on the planet for Nature.



VISION

The vision of the KBA Programme is “**a comprehensive network of sites that contribute significantly to the global persistence of biodiversity** is appropriately identified, correctly documented, effectively managed, sufficiently resourced and adequately safeguarded.”



GOAL

The goal of the KBA Programme is “to implement a programme to **develop and maintain an up-to-date, fully documented list of sites identified against the KBA Standard**, and to **communicate, promote and position this information** to enable the achievement of the KBA vision.”

Socotra, Yemen © Sarah May



RESULTS



Result 1 The KBA Secretariat and relevant KBA governance structures are fully functioning allowing experts, practitioners, end users and other stakeholders to participate fully and benefit from the KBA Programme

Result 2 Tools and guidance are widely available and used to facilitate KBA identification and manage KBA data

Result 3 Relevant national institutions and individuals have the capacity to identify and document KBAs following the KBA Standard

Result 4 The KBA approach is widely recognised and valued, and KBA information is effectively disseminated through relevant communication channels

Result 5 KBAs are widely used to inform plans, decisions, agreements and actions relating to the safeguard and conservation of biodiversity at local, national, and global scales

Result 6 Conservation of KBAs is promoted by the KBA Partnership and a system for monitoring KBAs is established

Result 7 The KBA Programme is adequately resourced and financially sustainable.

Egyptian Vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*, EN) © Sergey Dereliev Nature Photography



MILESTONES & TARGETS

Milestones and targets have been set for each of the results to measure progress towards achieving the outcomes of the strategic plan. These are summarised here with the means of measuring the progress towards achieving them.

Result 1. The KBA Secretariat and relevant KBA governance structures are fully functioning allowing experts, practitioners, end users and other stakeholders to participate fully and benefit from the KBA Programme

- 1.1 The KBA Secretariat and relevant KBA governance structures are fully operational by 2020.
- 1.2 The KBA Secretariat and relevant KBA governance structures are effective by 2024.
- 1.3 40 National Coordination Groups (NCG) have been established, and are coordinating National KBA programmes by 2024.

Result 2. Tools and guidance are widely available and used to facilitate KBA identification and manage KBA data

- 2.1 Specifications and design of the World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas™ (WDKBA) agreed by end 2018.
- 2.2 Interim KBA data template and guidance agreed and available for use by mid 2018.
- 2.3 The WDKBA contains the fields and functionality to apply the KBA criteria and manage the Required and Recommended Documentation by mid 2019.
- 2.4 The WDKBA contains the fields and functionality to facilitate the site Proposal, Review, Nomination and Confirmation process by 2020.
- 2.5 First draft of the KBA Guidelines available by mid-2018.
- 2.6 Research is conducted to better identify KBAs as well as highlight the importance of KBAs, with at least 10 influential research papers and reports produced by 2024.



Krka National Park, Croatia © Geert De Knijf

Result 3. Relevant national institutions and individuals have the capacity to identify and document KBAs following the KBA Standard

- 3.1 Training materials for KBA identification available online by 2019.
- 3.2 Training-of-trainers sessions held in each region by 2020.
- 3.3 Training provided to support national KBA identification held in 40 countries by the end of 2022.
- 3.4 Training materials reviewed and updated following initial testing by end 2021
- 3.5 Ten countries/territories per region have updated their KBA networks using the KBA Standard by 2020, and 20 by 2024.

Result 4. The KBA approach is widely recognised and valued, and KBA information is effectively disseminated through relevant communication channels

- 4.1 KBA branding guidelines adopted by end 2018.
- 4.2 KBA brand is widely used in all communication materials and channels of the KBA Programme.
- 4.3 KBA Communications strategy endorsed by KBA Committee by end-2018 and implemented from 2019.
- 4.4 KBA Website is developed to serve as an effective communication tool of the KBA Partnership and its structures by end 2019.

MILESTONES & TARGETS CONT.

Result 5. KBAs are widely used to inform plans, decisions, agreements and actions relating to the safeguard and conservation of biodiversity at local, national, and global scales

- 5.1 KBAs are promoted at >100 stakeholder meetings by 2020.
- 5.2 At least 30 active members in the Consultative Forum by 2020.
- 5.3 At least 5 strategic partners (e.g. Donors) have included the importance of KBA identification, monitoring, safeguard and/or appropriate conservation/management of KBAs in their policies or guidance by 2022.
- 5.4 At least 100 financial institutions and 250 companies access and use data on KBAs to inform and apply site safeguard policies.
- 5.5 The post-2020 strategic plan on biodiversity includes targets that aim to measure effective conservation of KBAs.
- 5.6 Ten global businesses operating in or sourcing from KBAs or adjacent areas effectively use the Guidelines on Business and KBAs by 2022.
- 5.7 50% of KBA network covered by protected areas and 90% covered by protected areas and Other Effective Area Based Conservation Measures (OECMs) by 2024.

Emirati leaf-toed gecko (*Asaccus caudivolvulus*) is restricted to a small coastal area of the United Arab Emirates © Johannes Els



Result 6. Conservation of KBAs is promoted by the KBA Partnership and a system for monitoring KBAs is established

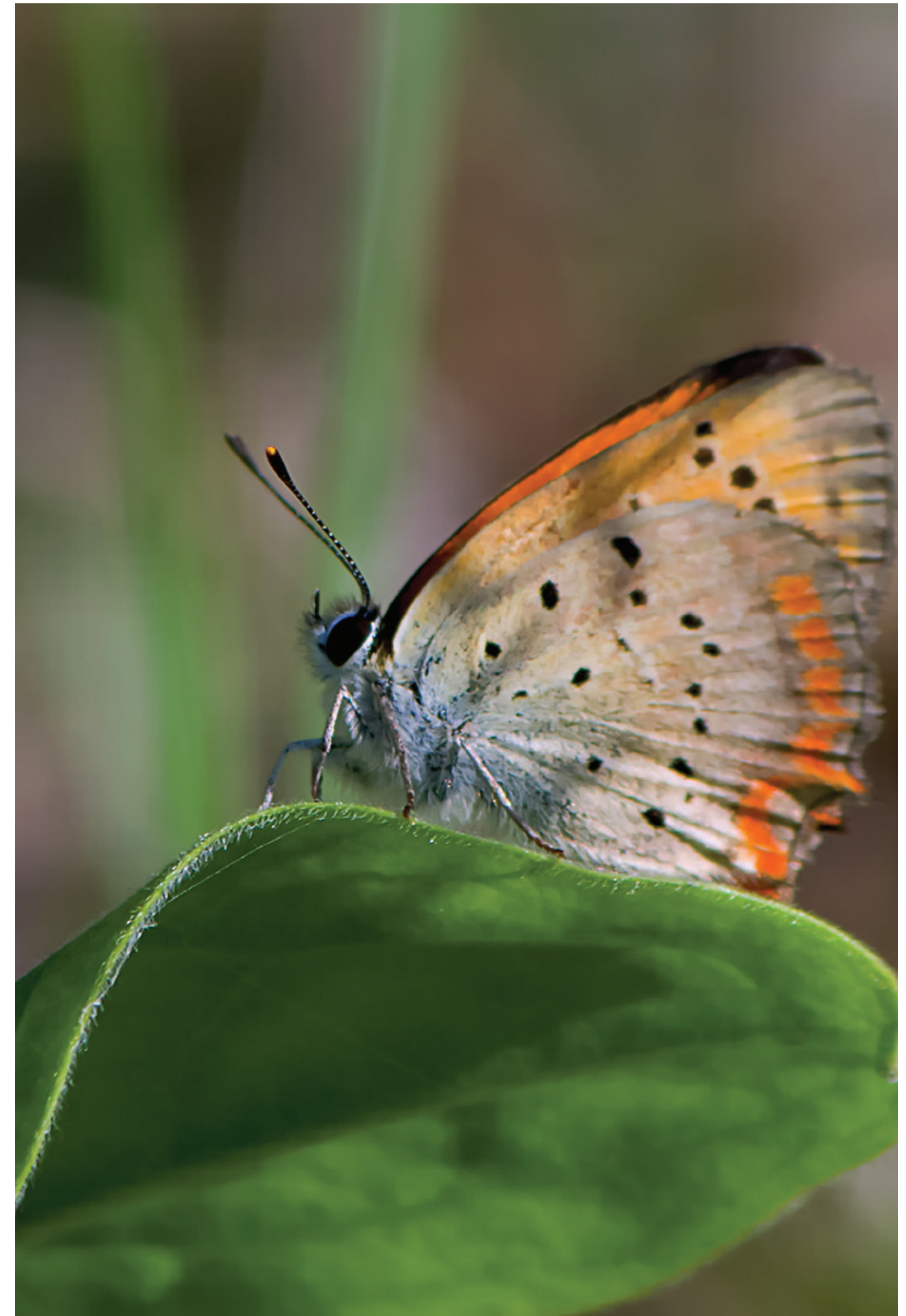
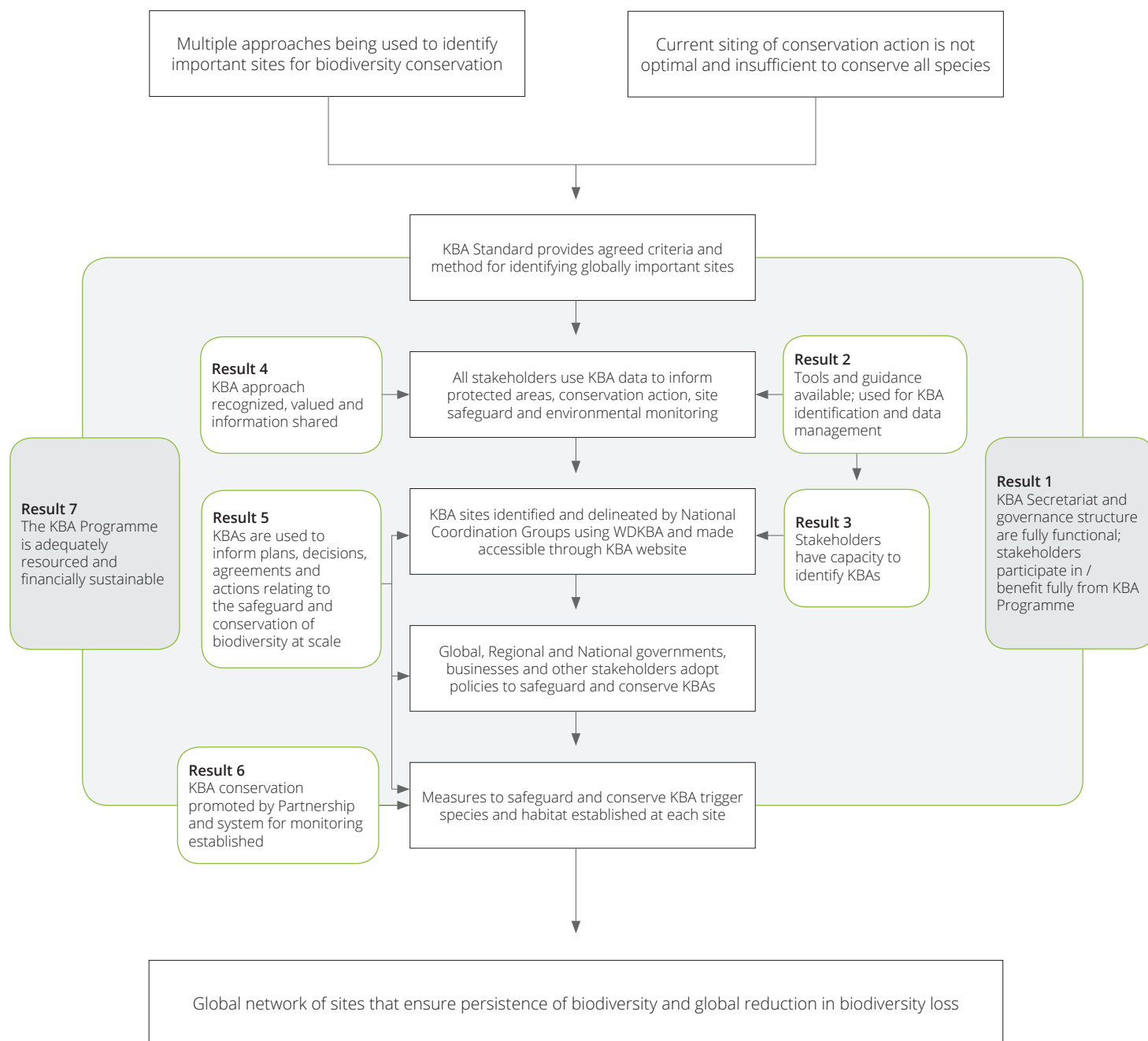
- 6.1 A protocol for reporting on the condition, pressures and responses at KBAs developed by 2019.
- 6.2 The WDKBA is developed to manage monitoring data and connect dynamically to existing Partner monitoring systems and datasets by 2021.
- 6.3 10% of KBAs have had their condition, pressures and responses assessed by 2024.
- 6.4 A system of using monitoring data to identify the most highly threatened KBAs established by 2021.
- 6.5 A mechanism for highlighting and coordinating responses to emerging threats at KBAs agreed by end 2018.
- 6.6 KBA Partners facilitating work of NCGs in 40 countries by 2024
- 6.7 KBA partners directly supporting conservation of 4,000 KBAs by 2024
- 6.8 System developed to update KBA status in WDKBA using monitoring data by end 2019

Result 7. The KBA Programme is adequately resourced and financially sustainable.

- 7.1 Fundraising strategy endorsed by KBA Committee by 2018..
- 7.2 At least five major joint funding proposals submitted by the KBA Partnership by 2024.
- 7.3 Approaches made to at least 10 companies regarding collaboration to fund KBA Programme priorities by 2020.
- 7.4 Ten major donors' programmes explicitly support the implementation of national KBA programmes by 2024.
- 7.5 All KBA Partners together support the full costs of the Secretariat and KBA database (as signed up to in the Partnership Agreement) through their own fundraising by end 2018.
- 7.6 Study examining the feasibility of a KBA Partnership Fund produced by 2020.
- 7.7 Sufficient funds raised to ensure the sustainable running of the KBA Programme including Secretariat, WDKBA, Website, Community, Regional Focal Points and Consultative Forum, by 2024.

THEORY OF CHANGE

The results of the KBA strategic plan, summarised above, aim to create changes in conservation practice based on the following theory of change. It starts from the current situation and shows how the results contribute to the key outcomes to achieve the overall goal.



Grecian copper (*Lycaena ottomana*, VU) © Katya

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

The KBA Partnership will enhance global conservation efforts by systematically mapping internationally important sites and ensuring that scarce resources are directed to safeguarding the most important places for nature. The impact of this vital conservation work will be enhanced by promoting targeted investment in conservation action at priority sites. The partnership invites other suitable organisations to join, and will work with governments, national and international agencies, and individuals to implement the global KBA programme in a transparent and inclusive way. For the first time the conservation community will be working together to map the most important sites on the planet for species and habitat conservation.

The World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas™ hosts data on global and regional KBAs, including Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas identified by the BirdLife International Partnership, Alliance for Zero Extinction sites, KBAs identified through hotspot ecosystem profiles supported by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF), and a number of other KBAs. It will be expanded and greatly improved under this strategic plan to enable submission of proposed KBAs by country National Coordination Groups and Regional Focal Points, automatic checking that proposed sites meet the criteria, and linkages with other databases that affect KBA determination and status (e.g. IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and the World Database of Protected Areas).

The KBA Partnership will mobilise the expertise, experience and resources of the partner organisations to:

- Identify and map the most important sites on Earth for biodiversity
- Engage governments, businesses, civil society, and local and indigenous communities in this global effort
- Monitor the health and conservation status of these important sites
- Collaborate to conserve, protect, and safeguard these important places, for today and for posterity.

Red Knots (*Calidris canutus*, NT) aggregate during migration © Mike Parr



FINANCING THE PLAN

Implementing this ambitious strategic plan will require resources. Firstly, the KBA Partnership is committed to supporting the KBA programme with USD \$1 million over five years from each partner, to support KBA identification and monitoring, establish and support the KBA Secretariat and Partnership, and promote the conservation of KBAs. Global conservation financing partners have also committed to supporting KBAs, notably the Global Environment Facility (GEF) which will only support Protected Area expansion if expansion is conducted in sites that are identified as KBAs. Businesses can also financially support the implementation of the plan through subscribing to the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool (IBAT), an online resource to help companies minimise their impacts on biodiversity at www.ibatforbusiness.org.

The KBA Partnership is inviting foundations, individuals and bi/multilateral donors, who want to support this strategy, to help map and conserve Earth's most important sites for Nature. We estimate that initial start-up costs to re-design the website and KBA database, update the existing data and ensure integration with other global databases such as the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and the World Database of Protected Areas will be of the order of \$3 million USD. Once this has been achieved operating costs for the KBA Secretariat and Programme will drop to an annual estimate of \$1 million USD. This would support KBA nomination, including training for National Coordination Groups, KBA validation, publicity, awareness raising at conservation fora and support to National Coordination Groups in fundraising for KBA identification and monitoring. Significantly more will be required to support the identification of KBAs around the World and their conservation. This will require the engagement of the conservation community, businesses and governments.

Anyone interested in supporting the implementation of this strategic plan should contact the Head of the KBA Secretariat at aplumtre@keybiodiversityareas.org.

More information can be found at www.keybiodiversityareas.org

Great Barrier Reef, Australia © GreensMPs



