

Community: News and Updates

Issue 3: November 2019

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This is the third and final KBA Community Newsletter for 2019. While this does not represent all the KBA work being done globally, it provides a snapshot of impressive progress in the various regions. You are welcome to send any contributions for the first newsletter in 2020. This is your platform to share KBA news or updates from your region, country or local area. The KBA Community wishes you all a blessed December, and a prosperous 2020 filled with KBA, species and area-based conservation success stories.



Contents

GLOBAL	1
AFRICA.....	2
AMERICAS	6
ASIA-PACIFIC	9
CONTACT US	12

GLOBAL

The KBA Committee meet twice a year. The second KBA Committee meeting for 2019 took place in Cape Town, South Africa, from 18-20 September 2019. The intention for coming to South Africa to meet was to allow the members of the KBA Committee to engage in the KBA assessments currently taking place in South Africa (see below). Some of the issues discussed at the KBA committee included the redesign of the website and database which we hope to launch in early 2020; how KBAs could be used to influence the post 2020 global biodiversity framework; and discussions of getting KBA processes mainstreamed in global and country conservation planning processes. A motion has been accepted for the IUCN World Conservation Congress (June 2020 in Marseille) that would urge governments and the conservation community to develop or update spatial conservation plans, including KBA assessments, across multiple taxa that would be incorporated in country National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and guide future developments in each country. We also want to promote that the CBD adopts this as part of any revision to Aichi target 17.

AFRICA

In **SOUTH AFRICA**, the National Coordination Group (NCG) hosted the third stakeholder workshop for the current national KBA review. The review was commissioned by the NCG and is overseen by the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) and BirdLife South Africa, funded by SANBI and the WWF Nedbank Green Trust. This is the first national level review of KBAs in a megadiverse country, which includes eight taxa and ecosystems. This stakeholder workshop was privileged to also welcome the attendance of members from the KBA Committee, the KBA Standards and Appeals Committee, and the KBA Technical Working Group. This engagement has allowed for important guidance from these KBA structures, and for lesson sharing from the South African experience. The next phase of the project is to undertake the delineation of areas identified as qualifying as KBAs. This initial KBA review process is intended to be complete by March 2020.

As a country that has done one of the most extensive systematic conservation plans across multiple taxa, the KBA Partnership was interested to see if KBA assessments would add anything to the planning process. Preliminary results show that the systematic conservation planning, which had focused on conserving threatened species and representative parts of all ecosystems, was not capturing all geographically restricted species. The KBA approach, which aims to conserve across five overarching conservation goals (threatened elements, geographically restricted, ecological integrity, biological processes and irreplaceability), was clearly helpful in suggesting improvements to South Africa's conservation planning.

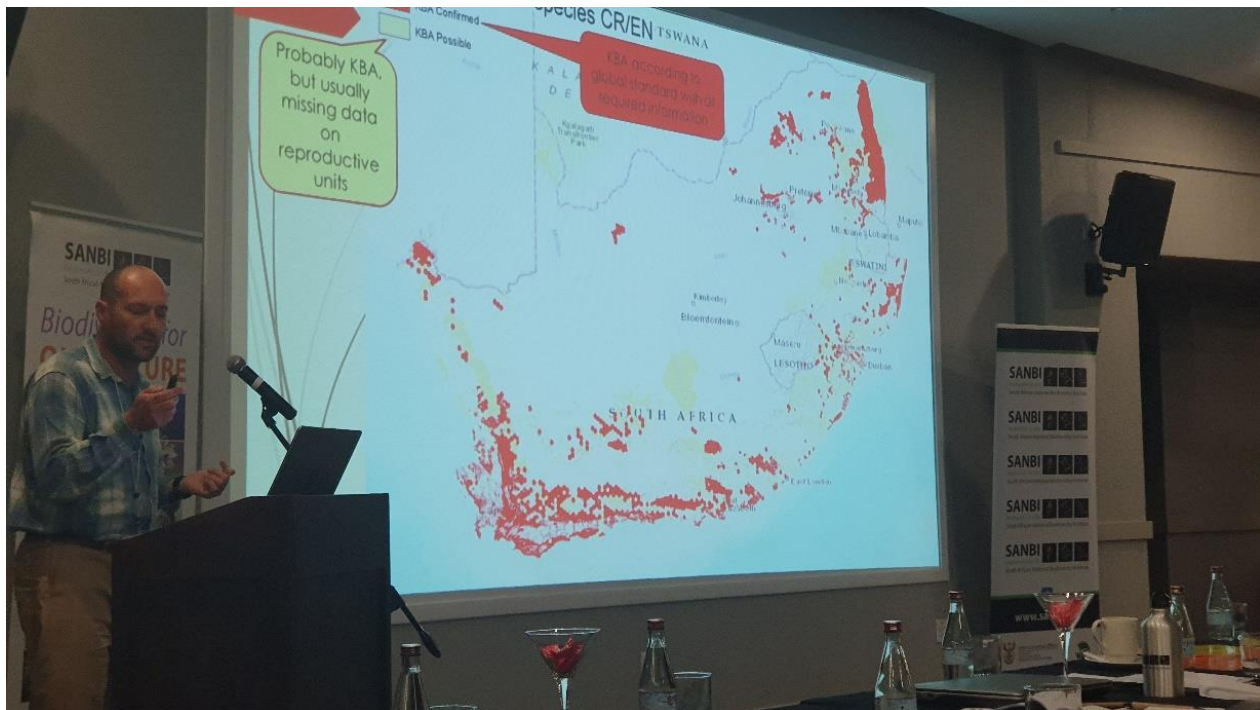


Photo 1: Dr Stephen Holness presenting the first draft map of the potential KBAs identified in South Africa. This presentation was made at the National Biodiversity Planning Forum in June 2019, which constituted the 2nd Stakeholder Engagement in this 18-month review process.



Photo 2: Dr Andy Plumtre providing an opening presentation on KBAs at the 3rd KBA Review Stakeholder Workshop which took place in Cape Town, September 2019.



Photo 3: Participants who attended the 3rd KBA Review Stakeholder Workshop representing the various taxa experts, NCG members, and KBA Committee, KBA Technical Working Group and KBA Standards and Appeal Committee.

Mozambique continues to review and identify KBAs after initial training was given in May 2019. Recently they hosted a delineation workshop which started to map where future KBAs and likely protected areas will be designated. The Government of Mozambique, through the National Directorate of Environment and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), funded by USAID (SPEED+ project) have been identifying and mapping KBAs in the country and various working

groups have been assessing potential KBA triggering elements in Mozambique. These groups focused on insects (Lepidoptera and Coleoptera), freshwater fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, marine biodiversity, plants and ecosystems. During this period, 75 endemic or near endemic species of Amphibians, Reptiles, Freshwater fish and butterflies were globally assessed under the Red List criteria by many national and regional specialists. The working groups have now gathered the data to proceed to the delineation process, which took place in Maputo on 14 and 15 November. Around 50 national and regional specialists and practitioners attended the workshop. Mozambique has also been creating its KBA National Coordination Group, which will also contribute to the uptake of Red Listing by the Government.

The workshops in Mozambique received good media coverage and TV interviews were also conducted.

Articles:

- <http://www.webmais.tv/artigo/mocambique-delimita-areas-chave-para-biodiversidade>
- http://www.webmais.tv/artigo/mocambique-regista-alguns-avancos-na-area-de-conservacao?fbclid=IwAR2YgxajXAZak2ONrXid3VodGLuEXQW_0hy28BLeOpGyw2Lt1UNnHAI5UT_U
- <https://www.cartamz.com/index.php/sociedade/item/3642-alerta-vermelho-trinta-e-cinco-especies-ameacadas-de-extincao-em-mocambique>
- <http://portaldogoverno.gov.mz/por/Imprensa/Noticias/Maputo-acolhe-Workshop-de-Avaliacao-Final-do-Projecto-COMBO>
- <https://www.rm.co.mz/rm.co.mz/index.php/sobre/item/7835-maputo-acolhe-workshop-de-avaliacao-final-do-projecto-combo.html>

TV:

- STV <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNmvH2QGrRE>
- Media Mais TV: <https://web.facebook.com/mediamaistv/videos/645260369339329/>



Photo 4: Participants attending a KBA delineation workshop in Mozambique.



Photo 5: Workshopping ideas and exchanging knowledge about various taxa at the KBA delineation workshop



Photo 6: Participants who attended the Mozambique KBA delineation Workshop representing the various taxa experts and NCG members.

In **Malawi** the IUCN Freshwater Biodiversity Unit and the Wildlife and Environmental Society of Malawi (WESM) are in the process of initiating the formation of a KBA NCG in Malawi, having completed an assessment of KBAs for Lake Malawi.

In **Kenya**, Nature Kenya, with support from BirdLife South Africa and SANBI, hosted an IUCN Red List training workshop for various Kenyan taxa experts in November. Red Listing is a precursor to identifying KBAs for threatened species. The workshop was a great success and a KBA training workshop is planned for Kenya in February.

Uganda has been working on formal submissions of the 46 KBAs identified in 2017, developing proposals using the KBA proposal process and proposal form.

<http://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/what-are-kbas>

AMERICAS

During the III **Latin American and Caribbean Congress on Protected Areas** (Lima, Peru – October 14-17), the Rainforest Trust and the KBA Secretariat organized a side event on “Key Biodiversity Areas: preserving vital sites for nature in Latin America and the Caribbean”. The side event which was attended by ~50 participants, introduced the KBA initiative, the Partnership, and explored the relationship between KBAs and Protected Areas in the region. Several KBA partners participated and presented their work in Latin America and the Caribbean:

- The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) presented their recent investments in the Cerrado, Tropical Andes and the forthcoming Caribbean profile;
- The IUCN shared their experience and preliminary results during the update of KBAs for plant and reptiles in the Tropical Andes;
- BirdLife International and its partner Aves Argentinas introduced the ongoing identification of KBAs in the Atlantic Forest, the monitoring of Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) and the KBA training of several partners in the Americas;
- SAVE-Brazil, on behalf of Americas Bird Conservancy, presented the recent update of the Alliance for Zero Extinction sites;
- Global Wildlife Conservation presented their work on the global Red List for amphibians and its utility to update KBAs under criterion A1e (AZE sites), as well as their current and future priorities for conservation; and
- Rainforest Trust displayed how KBAs and its criteria are considered in their investment strategy to identify priorities for site conservation.

In addition, both the IUCN and Rainforest Trust had additional presentations on KBAs during the Congress. The Lima Statement, the main outcome of the Congress for the 2020 World Conservation Congress, includes an indirect but relevant mention of KBAs in its intention of “encouraging a new agreement for nature and people, oriented to protect all critical sites for the

conservation of biodiversity by 2030, where at least 30% of all marine and terrestrial ecosystems are protected to ensure the survival of all species, based on the recommendations of science, mainly reinforcing management and governance [of protected areas]”.

In October, two additional events took place in **Uruguay**, organized by Aves Uruguay, with the support of the Americas Secretariat of BirdLife International; the launching of the KBA concept in the country and a workshop for KBA identification. More than 25 representatives from NGOs, Protected Area authorities from both Uruguay and neighbouring **Argentina**, the municipality of Rio Negro, two forestry enterprises and representatives of the local Birdwatchers’ Club attended the launch. A dozen experts from different institution and taxonomic groups (birds, mammals, plants, invertebrates, marine organisms) participated in the training workshop as well. In the next few months, Aves Uruguay is planning to start conducting a pilot project to apply the KBA criteria at a few selected sites where data is available on threatened and endemic species.

The update of the **Caribbean** KBAs, thanks to the CEPF profile (2018), are currently being incorporated on the KBA website. The recent updates for KBAs on plants and reptiles in the Tropical Andes (**Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia**) are currently being assessed. This will be available by early 2020. The KBA identification in the Atlantic Forest of Argentina is expected to be submitted to the secretariat by March 2020, and there are ongoing proposal processes for **Honduras** (limited to Green Island) and the **Falklands/Malvinas** (currently limited to the Sei Whale).

WCS is promoting the declaration of a new Critical Area for Bat Conservation (AICOM) in Madidi, **Bolivia**, reporting more than 100 bat species representing more than 72% of the nation’s overall bat diversity. Bolivia and Peru’s Greater Madidi-Tambopata Landscape is part one of the most important hotspots on the planet, the Tropical Andes (Williams et al. 2011). Within the Bolivian portion, Greater Madidi-Tambopata Landscape, there are more than a dozen IBAs that were proposed in 2008 by ARMONIA as a Birdlife International partner. Three IBAs are present inside Madidi: Polylepis Forests of Madidi (BO004), Lower Yungas of Madidi (BO030) and Upper Yungas of Madidi (BO016), while there are others nearby such as: Apolo (BO001), Lower Beni River – Tacana Region (BO003), Lower Yungas of Pilón Lajas (BO045), Beni Biological Station Biosphere Reserve (BO038), and Polylepis Forests of Mina Elba (BO010). These IBAs effectively now qualify as KBAs.

WCS has worked for 20 years towards the conservation of the Greater Madidi-Tambopata Landscape including the study of its outstanding biodiversity. During the last few years Madidi has been confirmed as one of the most diverse protected areas in the world and recent studies conducted by Bolivian researchers from WCS Bolivia through the Identidad Madidi initiative support this. The number of species of plants, butterflies and vertebrates reach more than 8,500 species, the highest number of species ever reported in a protected area.

As a result of the bat research carried out by researchers from the Alcide d’Orbigny Natural History Museum and WCS, 34 bat species were added to the official park list, including four new species for Bolivia, and at least two new species for science, contributing to an increase in the number of

bat species in Madidi Park to more than 100 species. This species richness represents 72.5% of bats registered in Bolivia to date.

Thanks to the extraordinary richness and diversity of bat species in Madidi Protected Area, in January of this year, the Identidad Madidi team, with the endorsement of the Program for the Conservation of Bats of Bolivia (PCMB), nominated Madidi to be recognized as an Area of Importance for the Conservation of Bats (AICOM) by the Latin America and Caribbean Network for the Conservation of Bats (RELCOM), and the proposal was officially accepted last March. Among the most threatened and ecologically important species of bats in Madidi are the nectar feeding bats *Anoura cultrata* and *Anoura fistulata*; the hairy-legged blood feeding bat *Diphylla ecaudata*; Koepcke’s hairy-nosed bat *Gardnerycteris koepckeeae*, previously considered endemic to Peru and classified as Critically Endangered (CR); and Dinell’s small evening bat, *Myotis dinellii*. Other bat species categorized as Vulnerable, according to the Red List of Vertebrates of Bolivia (Aguirre & Tarifa, 2009), are *Glyphonycteris daviesi*, *Trinycteris nicefori* and *Vampyrum spectrum*.



Photo 7: *Diphylla ecaudata* by Mileniusz Spanowicz_WCS



Photo 8: *Gardnerycteris koepckeeae* by Mileniusz Spanowicz_WCS

In **Canada**, the Canadian Key Biodiversity Areas initiative recently held the first regional workshop in Yukon Territory from November 5-6 2019. Several months of data mining, interpretation of data and planning for the assessment of species and sites was led by Yukon scientist Maria Leung. The workshop brought together government scientists and planners from both the Federal and Territorial governments, from conservation organizations, as well as representatives from several First Nations. During the workshop, 26 potential new KBAs were identified (with preliminary delineation completed), most under Criterion B1. Endemic plants and invertebrates triggered the majority of KBAs, along with a few endemic fish populations and potentially two caribou aggregations under Criterion D1. The workshop represented the first attempt to identify KBAs across a large region in Canada. The experience gained and increased capacity to apply the KBA Standard and Guidelines will facilitate similar exercises in other provinces over the coming months.



Photo 9: Members of the Canadian Key Biodiversity Areas initiative attending the first regional workshop in Yukon Territory from November 5 – 6 2019.

ASIA-PACIFIC

The Regional Focal Point, [Mike Crosby](#), has been focused on the BirdLife Asia Partnership's work on KBAs and IBAs (Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas). An update was completed of IBAs in Danger (<http://datazone.birdlife.org/site/ibasindanger>), sites that are under very high pressure and in need of immediate conservation action. Wild Bird Society of **Japan** (BirdLife in Japan) are updating their national inventory of Marine IBAs, with support from the BirdLife Secretariat.

Mike Crosby and Paul Insua-Cao (RSPB) continued to provide training to Burung Indonesia (BirdLife in Indonesia) in the application of the KBA criteria to a sample of sites in **Indonesia**. An innovative approach to waterbird conservation, the provision of artificial floating roosts, was successfully trialled by BirdLife Australia at KBAs in **South Korea** and **Australia** (<http://www.birdlife.org/worldwide/news/south-korea%E2%80%99s-artificial-floating-roosts-lifeline-migratory-shorebirds>).

Another important development for the conservation of migratory waterbirds in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway was the designation of China's Yellow Sea coastline as a new serial World Heritage Site, which will strengthen the protection of a suite of intertidal wetland KBAs in the flyway. (<http://www.birdlife.org/worldwide/news/yellow-sea-shorebird-habitats-secure-world-heritage-listing>).

China is in the midst of an ambitious process to map its biodiversity and ecosystem services to develop a spatial plan for conservation. With plans to establish several hundred new protected areas across the country based on this planning, it is an exciting time to be a conservation practitioner in the country. In late October, Andy Plumptre, Head of the KBA Secretariat, ran a training course for more than 60 participants from China in the application of the KBA Criteria. Organised by IUCN China in Beijing, the two days gave an overview of the importance of KBAs, the criteria, delineation of sites and proposal process with practical exercises to help trainees internalise the methods. The participants came from government departments, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, a government think tank, universities, conservation organisations and donor agencies. The KBA Secretariat and KBA Partners are working with those involved in developing the spatial plans to incorporate KBA identification within the spatial planning process.



Photo 10: Trainees working on practical exercises in groups in China.

Thus far, Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) has identified 551 IBAs in **India** and helps in monitoring them as part of India's National Biodiversity Target. The identification of KBAs is something the government wants to do and will be a huge exercise requiring the collaborative efforts of various organizations. Keeping this in mind, BNHS and the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) organized a consultative meeting on 29 July 2019 for the identification of KBAs. The meeting was attended by several scientific and expert institutions including the National Biodiversity Authority, Zoological Survey of India, Botanical Survey of India, National Botanical Research Institute, Mangrove Cell (Mumbai), National Centre for Sustainable Coastal Management, Sálim Ali Centre for Ornithology and Natural History, World Bank, WWF-India, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (UK), Wildlife Trust of India, IUCN and Aaranyak. A way forward was drafted, and the hope is that KBA information will provide a map for practical conservation and decision making. BNHS looks forward to building the capacity of other

institutions based on their own IBA experience and looks forward to working with the government and national institutions for this important assessment.



Photo 11: A KBA consultative meeting, jointly organized by BNHS and MoEFCC, in progress at MoEFCC in Delhi on 29 July 2019

CONTACT US

KBA COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES:

The current Chair and Regional Representatives of the KBA Community are:

Africa (and Chair) – Daniel Marnewick (chair.kba.community@keybiodiversityareas.org)

Americas – Alberto Yanosky (yanosky@guyra.org.py)

Europe & Central Asia – Irina Kostadinova (irina.kostadinova@bspb.org)

Asia-Pacific – Sheila Vergara (sgvergara@aseanbiodiversity.org)

KBA REGIONAL FOCAL POINTS:

Interim Regional Focal Points have been nominated for the following regions and should be contacted if you have queries about assessing Key Biodiversity Areas or want to nominate a KBA:

Africa (southern and western Africa) - Daniel Marnewick (Daniel Marnewick chair.kba.community@keybiodiversityareas.org); (eastern and central Africa) - Tim Davenport (tdavenport@wcs.org)

Asia - Mike Crosby (Mike.Crosby@birdlife.org)

Australasia and Pacific Islands - Mark O'Brien (Mark.O'Brien@birdlife.org)

Latin America and Caribbean- please correspond with both RFPs

David Diaz David Diaz (ddiaz@keybiodiversityareas.org)

Miguel Fernandez (Miguel_Fernandez@natureserve.org)

Mediterranean countries and eastern Europe - Marcos Valderrabano (Marcos.VALDERRABANO@iucn.org)

KBA SECRETARIAT

For other regions (North America and Europe) please contact the head of the KBA Secretariat, Andy Plumptre (aplumptre@keybiodiversityareas.org).