

COOK ISLANDS – Country Data Dossier for Protected Areas Summary Sheet

Estimated current PA coverage (Source: DOPA, see footnote on next page)

1.50% Terrestrial (4 km²)

0% Marine (14 km²)

Terrestrial and Marine Ecoregions

The Cook Islands has 2 terrestrial and 2 marine ecological regions.

Out of 2 terrestrial ecological regions:

- 1 ecological region (Cook Islands tropical moist forests) is a high priority candidate site for further protection.

Out of 2 marine ecological regions:

- 1 ecological region (Southern Cook/Austral Islands) is a high priority candidate site for further protection.
- 1 ecological region (Phoenix/Tokelau/Northern Cook Islands) is a priority candidate site for further protection.

STAR GEF-5 Allocation and Utilization

The Climate Change focal area has used more than its indicative allocation. However, the Cook Islands is fully flexible, so this excess will come from unused resources of the Biodiversity and/or Land Degradation focal areas, which will in turn reduce their available funds. Remaining funds available for programming, for Cook Islands, are 0.00. Allocation not utilized is 1 USD.

STAR GEF-6 Allocation and Utilization

Total Biodiversity GEF-6 Allocation is 2,169,796 USD. Allocation remaining to be programmed is 2,169,796 USD. For undertaking implementation of the identified actions above, countries can request the use of their GEF-6 allocations, as agreed upon in COP 11 decision XI/24 paragraphs 1 (a) (b) (g) and paragraph 3. Specifically, in BD1 “Improving Sustainability of Protected Areas Systems”, both Program 1 “Improving Financial Sustainability and Effective Management of the National Ecological Infrastructure” and Program 2 “Nature’s Last Stand: Expanding the Reach of the Global Protected Area Estate” as well as in BD2 “Reduce Threats to Globally Significant Biodiversity”, Program 3 “Preventing the Extinction of Known Threatened Species”.

COOK ISLANDS – Terrestrial and Marine Ecoregions, Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas, Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas in Danger, Alliance for Zero Extinction Sites, Overlaps between unprotected and partially protected IBAs and AZEs and candidates Ecoregions for further protection, Actions Identified in the PoWPA Action Plan, and GEF Allocations

Terrestrial and Marine Ecoregions¹ (all PAs) (4)

The Cook Islands has 2 terrestrial and 2 marine ecological regions.

Out of 2 terrestrial ecological regions:

- 1 ecological region (Cook Islands tropical moist forests) is a high priority candidate site for further protection as it covers 100% of Cook Islands and its worldwide protection is less than 10%.

Out of 2 marine ecological regions:

- 1 ecological region (Southern Cook/Austral Islands) is a high priority candidate site for further protection as its occurrence in the Cook Islands is more than 20% and their worldwide protection is less than 10%.
- 1 ecological region (Phoenix/Tokelau/Northern Cook Islands) is a priority candidate site for further protection as its occurrence in the Cook Islands is more than 20% and its protection in the Cook Islands is less than 10%.

Name	T/M	% in country	% protected in country	% protected worldwide	% country covered	Country contribution
Southern Cook/Austral Islands	M	63.43	0.22	0.14	52.27	100.00
Phoenix/Tokelau/Northern Cook Islands	M	42.29	0.07	33.80	47.73	0.09
Cook Islands tropical moist forests	T	100.00	1.76	1.76	85.14	100.00
Central Polynesian tropical moist forests	T	6.04	0.00	10.18	14.86	0.00

¹ The Joint Research Centre of the European Commission (JRC) has updated the Digital Observatory for Protected Areas which presents information on the coverage of terrestrial and marine ecological regions under existing protected areas using the 2014 World Database of Protected Areas in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Program World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC). http://dopa-explorer.jrc.ec.europa.eu/dopa_explorer/

Country data dossier for protected areas

Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs)²

There are no data for IBAs.

Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) in Danger³

There are no data for IBAs in danger.

Alliance for Zero Extinction Sites (AZEs)⁴

There are no data for AZEs.

Overlaps between unprotected and partially protected IBAs and candidates Ecoregions for further protection⁵

There are no data for overlaps between unprotected and partially protected IBAs and candidates Ecoregions for further protection.

Overlaps between unprotected and partially protected AZEs and candidates Ecoregions for further protection⁶

There are no data for overlaps between unprotected and partially protected AZEs and candidates Ecoregions for further protection.

² BirdLife International has coordinated the identification of over 12,000 Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) worldwide.

<http://www.birdlife.org/worldwide/programmes/important-bird-and-biodiversity-areas-ibas>; also see the database at <http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/country>

³ BirdLife International has coordinated the identification of Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) worldwide, and has recently highlighted a subset of 356 IBAs in Danger that face the most severe threats. <http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/info/ibaidites>

⁴ The Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE) has identified sites supporting the last remaining populations of one or more Endangered or Critically Endangered species (as listed on the IUCN Red List), thereby providing a tool to focus conservation efforts to prevent potential imminent global extinctions, consistent with Aichi Biodiversity Target 12. <http://www.zeroextinction.org/>; also see the database at <http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/info/siteprotection>

⁵ These data come from the superimposition of Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) identified by BirdLife International and terrestrial and marine ecological regions under existing protected areas recorded by the Digital Observatory for Protected Areas of the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission (JRC) using the 2014 World Database of Protected Areas in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Program World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC). http://dopa-explorer.jrc.ec.europa.eu/dopa_explorer/; <http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/country>.

⁶ These data come from the superimposition of Alliance for Zero Extinction sites (AZEs) and terrestrial and marine ecological regions under existing protected areas recorded by the Digital Observatory for Protected Areas of the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission (JRC) using the 2014 World Database of Protected Areas in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Program World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC). http://dopa-explorer.jrc.ec.europa.eu/dopa_explorer/; <http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/info/siteprotection>.

Actions Identified in the PoWPA Action Plan⁷

Action	Timeline
Formalization of the National Biodiversity Stakeholder Steering Committee	2012
Ecological Gap Assessment	2012 – 2013
Establishment of the Suvarrow National Park Authority	2013 – 2014
Strengthening of Suvarrow National Park Work Plan	2012 – 2013
Biodiversity Conservation Regulations	2013
Valuation Assessments	2012 – 2013
Financial Resource Trust Fund	2012 – 2013
Rarotonga Cloud Forest Reserve Park	2014 – 2015

STAR GEF-5 Allocation and Utilization (All amounts in US\$)⁸

The Climate Change focal area has used more than its indicative allocation. However, Cook Islands is fully flexible, so this excess will come from unused resources of the Biodiversity and/or Land Degradation focal areas, which will in turn reduce their available funds. Remaining funds available for programming, for Cook Islands, are 0.00.

Focal Area	STAR GEF-5 Indicative allocation	Allocation utilized	PIFs cleared by CEO awaiting approval	Allocations remaining to be programmed
Biodiversity	2,140,000	2,140,000	0	0
Climate Change	2,000,000	1,999,999	0	1
Land Degradation	500,000	500,000	0	0
Total	4,640,000	4,639,999	0	1

⁷ <http://www.cbd.int/protected/implementation/actionplans/>

⁸ https://www.thegef.org/gef/country_profile (accessed April, 15 2016)

STAR GEF-6 Allocation and Utilization (All amounts in US\$)⁹

Focal Area	Indicative allocation	Allocation utilized	PIFs cleared by CEO awaiting approval	Allocations remaining to be programmed
Climate Change	2,000,000	4,669,796	0	-2,669,796
Biodiversity	2,169,796	0	0	2,169,796
Land Degradation	500,000	0	0	500,000
Total	4,669,796	4,669,796	0	0

Paragraphs 1 (a), (b), and (g) and paragraph 3 of decision XI/24 on protected areas

1. *Invites Parties to:*

(a) In line with paragraph 1(c) of decision X/31, integrate national action plans for the programme of work into updated national biodiversity strategies and action plans, which, in line with paragraphs 3 (c) and (d) of decision X/2, should be adopted as policy instruments and used as a primary framework for implementation and as the basis for securing the necessary financial support, including from national budgets and from bilateral, multilateral and other sources;

(b) Consistent with national circumstances, undertake major efforts, with appropriate support, to achieve all elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11, and, in particular, to improve marine protected areas in all areas within their jurisdiction and to ensure that networks comprising both such marine protected areas and terrestrial protected areas are: representative (by completing ecological assessments and implementing the results); inclusive of areas important for biodiversity; managed effectively and equitably; connected and integrated into wider land- and seascapes; and inclusive of diversified types of governance for protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures;

(g) Align the protected area projects approved in the fourth, fifth and sixth replenishment periods of the Global Environment Facility, as well those supported by bilateral and other funding sources, with the actions identified in national action plans for the programme of work, so as to facilitate systematic monitoring and reporting on progress in achieving Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 and related Aichi Biodiversity Targets;

⁹ https://www.thegef.org/gef/country_profile (accessed April, 15 2016)

3. *Invites* the Global Environment Facility and its implementing agencies to facilitate the alignment of the development and implementation of protected area projects with the actions identified in national action plans for the programme of work, for example by clearly articulating the linkages with elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 in project documents, with a view to facilitating the systematic monitoring and reporting of the results of those projects as they contribute to achieving Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 and other related targets by Parties, and to maximize the contribution of such projects to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020;

Relevant GEF-6 Programmes under Biodiversity Focal area for seeking funding for PA projects

- BD1: Improving Sustainability of Protected Areas Systems
 - Program 1: Improving Financial Sustainability and Effective Management of the National Ecological Infrastructure
 - Program 2: Nature’s Last Stand: Expanding the Reach of the Global Protected Area Estate
- BD2: Reduce Threats to Globally Significant Biodiversity
 - Program 3: Preventing the Extinction of Known Threatened Species
- BD3: Sustainably Use Biodiversity
 - Program 6: Ridge to Reef+: Maintaining Integrity and Function of Globally Significant Coral Reef Ecosystems
- BD4: Mainstream Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use in to Production Landscapes/Seascapes and Sectors
 - Program 9: Managing the Human-Biodiversity Interface
 - Program 10: Integration of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services into Development and Finance Planning