



# Taking conservation connectivity to scale; strengthening resilience at landscape and seascape scales

Across the world, multiple drivers of change are causing the degradation, fragmentation and loss of natural habitats on land and in the world's oceans. As a result, important conservation areas for biodiversity and ecosystem services are becoming increasingly isolated within a matrix of human dominated landscapes and seascapes. This isolation can prevent the movement of organisms essential for the maintenance of biodiversity and disrupt ecological processes necessary for the provision of vital ecosystem services. Fragmentation and degradation also reduce options for adapting to global change, thereby undermining resilience of ecosystems and people.

## Addressing the challenge

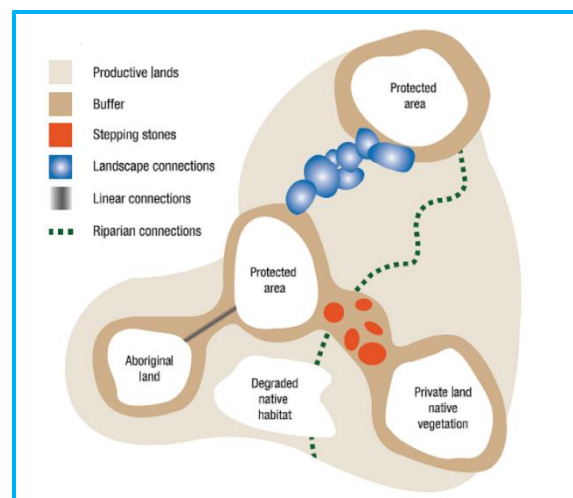
A new United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) initiative aims to tackle the problem of increasing habitat fragmentation through the development of a global connectivity conservation strategy that will support countries and regions to integrate connectivity conservation within their national land use and seascape planning.

To achieve this, the initiative seeks to build on on-going initiatives to promote an understanding of the priorities for connectivity and the use of connectivity as a conservation tool to strengthen the protection of biodiversity, enhance the provision of ecosystem services, and increase resilience to climate change.

## The scope of the project

Biodiversity and ecosystem services are distributed globally and do not align with geopolitical boundaries. However, connectivity initiatives that help conserve nature and maintain ecosystem functions can be very country/region specific. Furthermore, connectivity initiatives can vary greatly depending on spatial scale, the target species, habitat or ecosystem service.

The scope of this initiative is therefore global in the sense that it raises the prominence of connectivity conservation on the global agenda, with a view to scaling up the implementation of connectivity initiatives around the world. This project considers multiple types of connectivity (including corridors, stepping stones, migratory routes, flyways, transboundary protected areas and networks), implemented at different scales (local, national, regional, global), across terrestrial, marine and freshwater systems and beyond protected areas.



Adapted from the National Wildlife Corridors Plan (2012)

The initial project will be implemented in three phases.

### Phase 1

The project will collate information on existing connectivity initiatives at varying scales into a novel global information hub. This will include:

- a) A Connectivity Conservation Area (CCA) database. The database will contain basic attributes including spatial information on known connectivity initiatives and will be linked to the World Database on Protected Areas.
- b) A library of supporting materials containing information on: methods for modelling connectivity; best practice connectivity conservation management; and policy and legal instruments.

### Phase 2

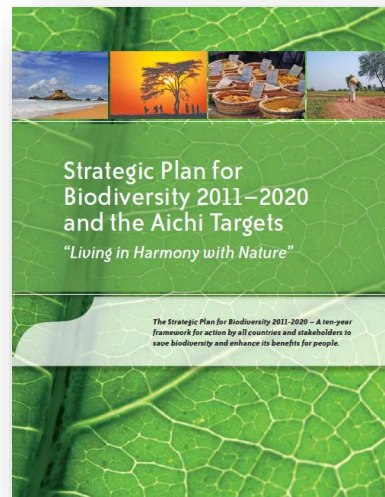
The global information hub will be used to:

- a) Conduct a global spatial analysis areas of potential connectivity at national and regional scales and identify gaps where future connectivity conservation efforts should be targeted.
- b) Inform the development of practical guidance materials that will support countries with implementation and upscaling of connectivity conservation (including the integration of protected areas and other conservation areas) in to the wider landscape and seascape.

### Phase 3

The practical guidance materials and the connectivity gaps analysis will be used to identify priority areas in which the implementation of connectivity initiatives can be piloted and up-scaled. Working together with various partners, this project will provide technical support and build capacity within the pilot areas to promote the establishment and maintenance of connectivity conservation areas.

Information from this initial project will form the basis of a long-term Global Connectivity Strategy.



### Additional information

The initiative is relevant to a number of Aichi Biodiversity Targets, including 11, 12, 14, and 15, and a range of targets within the Sustainable Development Goals.

This initiative will be implemented by the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre in collaboration with key partners.



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