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**PAPFOR: SUPPORT PROGRAMME FOR THE PRESERVATION OF FOREST ECOSYSTEMS IN WEST AFRICA**

Handbook for the IMET –conserved areas

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Handbook for the IMET –conserved areas

IMET-conserved areas: A tool for the assessment and improvement of management effectiveness and governance of conserved areas

**About BIOPAMA**

The Biodiversity and conserved areas Management Programme (BIOPAMA) aims to improve long-term conservation and sustainable use of natural resources in African, Caribbean, and Pacific countries, in conserved areas and surrounding communities. It is an initiative of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS), funded by the European Union’s 11e European Development Fund, and implemented jointly by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the European Commission’s Joint Research Centre. Building on the first five years of activities funded by the 10e European Development Fund, the second phase of BIOPAMA offers tools for data and information management, services to improve knowledge and capacity for conserved area planning and decision-making, and funding opportunities for specific local actions. [www.biopama.org/fr](http://www.biopama.org/fr)

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The Member States of the European Union have decided to pool their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, they have built an area of stability, democracy and sustainable development, while preserving cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is determined to share its achievements and values with countries and peoples beyond its borders. [www.europa.eu](http://www.europa.eu)

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The European Commission is the executive body of the European Union, the world’s largest donor of official development assistance and the world’s largest donor of humanitarian and development aid. As the European Commission’s in-house scientific service, the Joint Research Centre provides independent scientific and technical support for European Union policies, including policies and programmes on a global scale, in particular those with a focus on the OACPS. [www.ec.europa.eu](http://www.ec.europa.eu)

**About the PAPFor**

PAPFor (Support Programme for the Conservation of Forest Ecosystems in West Africa, the Programme d’Appui à la Préservation des Ecosystèmes Forestiers en Afrique de l’Ouest in French) aims to promote endogenous, sustainable and inclusive development of West Africa’s forests, responding to the challenges of climate change and biodiversity conservation. PAPFor aims to protect biodiversity and priority forest ecosystems effectively and efficiently in West Africa, contributing to climate resilience as well as food and water security in six transboundary forest landscapes in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Côte d’Ivoire and Nigeria. PAPFor is funded by the 11th European Development Fund under the supervision of CEDEAO and UEMOA, representing the beneficiary countries. The programme runs for 5 years (2019–2024). <https://visioterra.fr/PAPFor/en/>

**About Standard IMET and IMET-conserved areas**

The Integrated Management Effectiveness Tool (IMET) is a comprehensive approach to assessing and improving the effectiveness of protected area management. Since its launch in 2015, IMET has attracted strong interest from protected area managers, government agencies and funding partners around the world. IMET is now a widely recognised tool, endorsed by a growing number of protected area management authorities internationally, and serves as a cornerstone for the adoption of Green List standards. Recognising the growing importance of conservation measures (OECMs, LMMAs, ICCAs, Community Forests, etc.) with different models of management and governance, the PAPFor programme and BIOPAMA have pooled their resources to develop a special version of IMET – now called Standard IMET – specifically designed to support the governance and management of conserved areas. This IMET for conserved areas is called in this document IMET-conserved areas.

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# List of acronyms

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **ACP** | Africa, Caribbean and Pacific |
| **BIOPAMA** | Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Programme (Programme pour la biodiversité et la gestion des aires protégées) |
| **CARPE** | Regional Environment Programme for Central Africa |
| **CF** | Community Forests |
| **CITES** | Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora |
| **COMIT** | Coaching Manual for the IMET Tool |
| **COMPASS** | Community of Protected Areas Sustainability Standards |
| **DOPA** | Digital Observatory of Protected Areas |
| **DSS** | Decision Support System (DSS) |
| **EAGL** | Expert Assessment Group for the Green List |
| **GIS** | Geographic information system |
| **GLPCA** | Green List of Protected and conserved areas |
| **ICCA** | Indigenous and Community conserved areas |
| **IMET** | Integrated Management Effectiveness Tool |
| **IUCN** | International Union for Conservation of Nature |
| **LMMA** | Locally Managed Marine Area |
| **MAB** | UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme |
| **NGO** | Non-governmental organisation |
| **OACPS** | Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States |
| **OECM** | Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures |
| **PACO** | Regional Programme for Central and West Africa |
| **PAMETT** | Protected Area Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool |
| **RAPPAM** | Rapid Assessment and Prioritisation of Protected Areas Management |
| **REDD** | Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation |
| **SPAMI** | Specially Protected Areas of Mediterranean Importance (Aire spécialement protégée d’importance méditerranéenne) |
| **SWOT** | Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) |
| **WDPA** | World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA) |
| **ZICO** | Important Bird Area (IBA) |

# Introduction

This manual serves as a guide to use of a specialised version of the Integrated Management Effectiveness Tool (IMET) that aims at improving the management effectiveness of conserved areas (OECM, LMMAs, ICCAs, Community Forests, etc.).

* IMET is a decision-support tool designed to improve the management effectiveness of protected areas. One of its key characteristics is the enhancement of management analyses through embedded statistical analyses and visualization aids. More information on IMET is available on the IMET webpage and key founding documents (Bialowolski et al., 2023; Paolini and Rakotobe, 2023).
* An OECM is defined as “*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*” (CBD, 2018).
* The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) recognizes Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs) as *territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities*.
* LMMAs are marine areas that are managed and conserved by local communities or indigenous peoples. These areas are characterized by community-based governance and decision-making processes, where local knowledge and practices are integrated into conservation efforts.
* Community forestry refers to the management and conservation of forests and their resources by local communities. It involves the participation and collaboration of various stakeholders, including community members, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations. Community forestry often entails shifting control, authority, and responsibility for forest management to local communities, allowing them to make decisions based on their cultural and historical contexts. It aims to meet the basic needs of rural households and communities, provide environmental stability, generate income and employment, and promote sustainable resource use. Community forestry is regulated by specific legal frameworks that organize local community participation in forest management.

This IMET for conserved areas (called IMET-conserved areas) is therefore intended for conserved areas that do not fall under the definition of protected areas. It is important to notice that IMET-conserved areas is not designed to identify conserved areas for national or global reporting. Other IUCN guidelines are available for that purpose[[1]](#footnote-2). In that sense, it is possible that IMET-conserved areas being used in sites that were not yet officially designated as a Conserved Area by the national administration (such as community forests or locally managed marine areas). However, IMET-conserved areas can also contribute to the identification process of a potential conserved areas or even, in the establishment of a Conserved Area.

IMET-conserved areas was developed by the Programme d’Appui à la Préservation des Ecosystèmes Forestiers en Afrique de l’Ouest (PAPFor) and the Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Programme (BIOPAMA). IMET-conserved areas aims to improve biodiversity conservation and natural resources sustainable use in a particular conserved areas. It uses a planning-monitoring-evaluation process, encouraging reflection to move from the current state to a desired state. It also features a comprehensive analysis and data-driven decision-making approach for the target setting and the development of basic management and work plans. Although, it has been initially designed for community-based conserved areas, IMET-Conserved AREAS is applicable to several types of conserved areas.

This manual is particularly relevant for conservation professionals that are already familiar with the standard IMET and those who intend to conduct an assessment in the field. They are described as “IMET-Conserved areas coaches” in this manual. As in Standard IMET, coaches can significantly improve the quality of an IMET-conserved areas assessment by ensuring full participation of all stakeholders and guiding more thorough analyses. They can help to identify key management elements, prioritise actions, guide objectives and develop management and governance plans for and with the conserved areas communities.

The manual is divided into five main parts, each contributing to a holistic understanding and application of IMET-conserved areas:

1. **IMET-conserved areas Coaching Elements**: This part shows how coaching is a key element in improving the management and governance of protected areas in the conserved areas through training in IMET analysis.
2. **Preparation and organisation of an IMET-conserved areas assessment**: This part presents how to organise and conduct an IMET-conserved areas assessment.
3. **IMET-conserved areas Assessment:** This part provides a detailed presentation of the tool and its functionalities with the necessary steps to successfully conduct a comprehensive assessment of a Conserved area.
4. **Integrated analysis and planning:** This part explores the power of a seamless alignment between analysis and planning in the conservation, management and governance of the conserved areas.
5. **Natural resource management and governance:** This final part expands the scope of analysis and helps in searching for and exploring the mechanisms of natural resource governance. Drawing on existing literature, it enriches users’ understanding of the broader context.

The handbook introduces and explains the use of three interrelated modules:

1. **Context of intervention:** Facilitates data collection and stakeholder analysis to understand the conserved areas situation, identify stakeholders (direct and indirect users), key biodiversity elements and key ecosystem services elements associated with the conserved areas.
2. **Management assessment:** Supports the prioritisation of key biodiversity and ecosystem service elements for improved management and governance, based on in-depth contextual analysis and best practices for effective area-based conservation.
3. **Analysis report and planning:** Provides standardised reporting and baseline planning on status, management, and governance effectiveness of the conserved areas, using visualisations and analytical insights to guide future actions.

This manual is an important contribution to the process of developing a partnership between stakeholders in implementing the governance and management of a Conserved Area, creating a truly motivating climate and a common understanding of what needs to be achieved. Readers discover not only how the IMET – conserved areas works and how to use it for the analysis, evaluation, and planning. However, IMET-conserved areas is a multi-faceted tool designed for the improvement of

1. **Collecting data and gathering critical stakeholder insights**, including opinions from both direct and indirect users of the conserved areas.
2. **Identifying key elements of biodiversity and ecosystem services** provided by the conserved areas to its communities.
3. **Facilitating self-assessment** to identify management and governance priorities, crucial for shaping future planning efforts.
4. **Empowering conserved areas managers and communities** by providing a collective lens to identify strengths, address weaknesses, and anticipate potential threats.
5. **Acting as a catalyst for strategic improvement**, bridging the gap between intention and pragmatic implementation.
6. **Addressing a broader range of governance issues**, with an emphasis on identifying key stakeholders responsible for governance and those indirectly linked to the conserved areas' functioning.
7. **Utilizing a multi-dimensional assessment** that considers factors like geographical proximity, involvement in governance, and specific areas of involvement for stakeholder identification.
8. **Placing a greater emphasis on ecosystem services**, recognizing their importance for conserved areas stakeholders who rely on services like timber, food, grains, and fruits provided by the conserved areas.
9. **Acknowledging the need to balance** the provision of **ecosystem services** with **resource protection** within the conserved areas.

This manual equips the readers with tools, knowledge, and insights necessary to navigate the complex landscape of conserved areas management. The IMET-conserved areas is organised similarly to the standard IMET. It serves as a tool for assessing and analysing the effectiveness and supporting the planning of protected and conserved areas, but it also incorporates the principles of conserved areas. However, the IMET conserved areas retains the main objective of the Standard IMET:

* Assessment is accompanied by statistical analysis of the values. Data is organized and secured in a database. This feature not only facilitates robust analysis of the data, but also the ability to evaluate changes over time on a standardised basis.
* Ability to capture various elements of management, specific for different types of conserved areas; it allows to maintain the inclusive spirit of conserved areas, which recognises conservation achievements regardless of their formal designation.
* Adaptive and evolutionary management, systematically addressing full range of management and governance elements that may include non-conventional conservation approaches and evolve over time.
* Objectivity, with the conserved areas giving greater recognition to the cultural, social and spiritual values that contribute to effective conservation outcomes.
* Encouraging change by promoting best practice in the governance and management of ecosystem services, biodiversity and natural resources in general.

Throughout this manual, informative boxes and notes are available to clarify key concepts and provide practical tips and advice on how to conduct a Conserved Area analysis effectively. The appendices themselves act as a repository of knowledge, containing informative fact sheets and case-based exercises designed to enhance users’ analytical skills.

PART I: IMET-conserved areas Coaching Elements

Coaching support plays a crucial role in training initiatives aimed at improving management and governance in conserved areas (Other Effective Conservation Measures) protected areas in the context of IMET (Integrated Management Effectiveness Tool) analysis. Here are some key inputs and considerations for such coaching support.

# Coaching for conserved areas analysis

This section explores how coaching principles and approaches can be tailored to address the unique challenges and opportunities presented by conserved areas conservation analysis within the IMET tool.

## Defining the role of the conserved areas coach

The conserved areas coach is an expert in natural resource management and governance, biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management, specifically trained to guide conserved areas stakeholders in analysing and improving the effectiveness of their conservation efforts. These stakeholders can range from local communities to government agencies, NGOs or private landowners who manage areas that meet the conserved areas criteria. The primary aim of conserved areas coaching is to help stakeholders recognise and harness the conservation potential of these areas, bridging the gap between informal conservation initiatives and formal protected areas

## How conserved areas coaching differs from traditional coaching

While the fundamentals of coaching remain the same, conserved areas coaching presents different challenges and opportunities compared to coaching in traditional protected areas:

* ***Diverse*** ***stakeholders***: conserved areas often involve a wide range of stakeholders, including indigenous communities, private landowners and government agencies. Coaches need to navigate this diversity to promote collaborative, effective conservation efforts.
* ***Recognition and documentation***: conserved areas may not have official protected area status, making it crucial for coaches to guide stakeholders in recognising and documenting the ecological significance and importance of the ecosystem services provided by these areas.
* ***Adaptation strategies***: conserved areas often rely on flexible, adaptive management strategies. Coaches play a key role in helping stakeholders develop and implement these strategies, while ensuring that they are consistent with conservation objectives.
* ***Community engagement:*** conserved areas often involve local communities as custodians of conservation. Coaches facilitate community engagement and empowerment, emphasising the importance of local knowledge and practices for effective conservation.

# Key elements of coaching for conserved areas analysis

## Coaching in the context of conserved areas involves several key elements

* ***Assessment and recognition***: Coaches assist stakeholders in assessing areas that meet the criteria for conserved areas. This includes recognising the ecological importance of these areas as ecosystem services and key biodiversity elements, and understanding how they contribute to broader conservation goals and long-term benefits for stakeholders.
* ***Documentation and data collection***: Effective conserved areas coaching involves helping stakeholders to document the biodiversity and ecosystem services within these areas. This includes the use of scientific data and indigenous knowledge.
* ***Strategic planning***: Coaches guide stakeholders in developing strategic conservation plans tailored to the unique characteristics of conserved areas. These plans should incorporate adaptive management approaches.
* ***Community engagement***: conserved areas often require the active participation of local communities. Coaches facilitate community engagement processes, ensuring that conservation initiatives respect local traditions and are mutually beneficial.
* ***Monitoring and adaptive management***: Coaches emphasise the importance of ongoing monitoring and adaptive management within conserved areas. This involves helping stakeholders to establish simple monitoring protocols and mechanisms to respond to changing ecological conditions.
* ***Advocacy and partnerships***: conserved areas often benefit from advocacy efforts and partnerships. Coaches support stakeholders in advocating for recognition and support, while facilitating partnerships with relevant conservation organisations and agencies.
* ***Capacity building***: Building the capacity of stakeholders to independently manage and conserve conserved areas is a core element of coaching. This includes training in data collection, adaptive management, and conflict resolution.

Effective coaching support should be a dynamic and adaptive process that evolves with the needs and progress of conserved areas management teams as they work to improve conservation management and governance in IMET assessed areas.

## Specific coaching support to improve management and governance improvements in conserved areas conserved areas using IMET analysis

* ***Understanding the conserved areas and IMET***: This initial phase involves ensuring that all stakeholders, including conserved areas management teams and relevant authorities, have a full understanding of conserved areas and IMET. Coaches can provide introductory sessions or materials that explain the core concepts and objectives of conserved areas and how IMET is used as an assessment tool.
* ***Customized coaching***: Coaches need to conduct site assessments or diagnostics to understand the specific challenges, strengths and weaknesses of each conserved areas protected area. Tailored coaching plans can then be developed to address these unique circumstances.
* ***Technical expertise***: Coaches with technical expertise in conservation biology, environmental science and governance structures can provide in-depth guidance. They can help with the technical aspects of data collection, analysis and interpretation, ensuring that IMET assessments are accurate and meaningful.
* ***Stakeholder engagement***: Coaching should include strategies for building effective relationships with stakeholders. This may include training in stakeholder analysis, communication, negotiation and conflict resolution to ensure buy-in and cooperation from all parties.
* ***Data collection and analysis***: Coaches can help conserved areas management teams design and implement data collection protocols, select appropriate indicators, and conduct rigorous data analysis. They can also help teams interpret the results to inform management decisions.
* ***Governance structures***: Coaching in this area can focus on assessing and improving governance structures within conserved areas. This includes advice on developing governance plans, establishing clear roles and responsibilities, and implementing transparent decision-making processes.
* ***Capacity building***: Coaches can identify gaps in the capacity of conserved areas management teams and provide training in areas such as leadership, project management, team building and conflict resolution. Building these skills improves the team's ability to implement effective management and governance strategies.
* ***Adaptive Management***: Coaches can guide conserved areas management teams in adopting adaptive management principles. This includes helping teams to establish systems for continuous monitoring, learning from results and making necessary adjustments to management strategies.
* ***Legal and regulatory compliance***: Coaches can provide expertise on the legal and regulatory framework relevant to conserved areas management. This ensures that management practices comply with local, national and international laws.
* ***Conflict Resolution:*** Conflict resolution coaching equips teams to manage disputes and disagreements between stakeholders. Techniques may include negotiation, mediation and consensus-building strategies.
* ***Communication skills:*** Effective communication coaching helps conserved areas management teams communicate the importance of conservation efforts to various stakeholders. This includes training in public speaking, writing and engaging with diverse audiences.
* ***Resource mobilisation***: Coaches can help identify potential funding sources, write grant proposals and develop fundraising strategies. This will ensure that conserved areas management and governance efforts are adequately funded.
* ***Monitoring and evaluation***: Coaching should emphasise the importance of establishing robust monitoring and evaluation systems. This includes designing data collection protocols, establishing key performance indicators and regularly reviewing progress.
* ***Documentation and reporting***: Coaches can help teams to produce clear and concise reports on IMET assessments, management plans and governance activities. These documents serve as essential tools for accountability, reporting to stakeholders and attracting funding.
* ***Sustainability***: Coaching support should encourage conserved areas management teams to integrate their improvements into broader conservation strategies and initiatives. This will ensure that gains in management and governance are sustained over the long term.
* ***Peer learning***: Coaches can facilitate peer learning opportunities, such as workshops, conferences or online forums, where conserved areas management teams can share experiences, lessons learned and best practices. Peer learning fosters collaboration and the exchange of valuable knowledge among practitioners.

In summary, the BIOPAMA programme's conserved areas conservation analysis coaching embraces the principles of coaching while tailoring its approach to the unique characteristics and challenges of conserved areas. By helping stakeholders to identify, document and effectively manage these areas, conserved areas coaches contribute to the broader goals of biodiversity conservation and sustainable ecosystem management.

PART II: Preparation and organisation of an IMET-conserved areas assessment

This section presents how to organise and conduct an IMET-conserved areas assessment. An assessment consists of organizing an analysis with the conserved areas management entity and stakeholders.

# Installing IMET-conserved areas

IMET-conserved areas can be downloaded from the Internet as part of the IMET offline package. Once installed, it does not require an internet connection and can therefore be used even in most remote locations. IMET is constantly updated to eliminate PC installation issues and bugs. The latest version allows users to print an analysis report summarising the key findings of the assessment. The report also provides framework for carrying out analyses and making recommendations.

Link to download IMET: <https://rris.biopama.org/pame/tools>

The installation is supported by the Installation note IMET OFFLINE TOOL – Installation Notes. The note can be downloaded from this link: <https://rris.biopama.org/sites/default/files/imet/2021-06-15%20IMET%202-2_Installation_Note.pdf>

# Organising an assessment using IMET – conserved areas

The assessment is divided into three parts:

1. Collection of the conserved areas basic data informing the Intervention Context section (this first part is usually done in advance as a pre-filling)
2. Assessment of governance and management of the conserved areas
3. Analysis of results using visualisation elements and other support tools, elaboration of basic planning elements and operational recommendations.

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| --- |
| Box 1: Standard (A) and streamlined (B) indicative programme of an IMET-conserved areas assessment  **A - Standard indicative programme of an IMET-conserved areas assessment**    Estimated duration of an IMET conserved areas exercise refers to a complete analysis of a moderately complex conserved areas. Depending on factors such as type of governance-management, location and specific conservation objectives the duration may vary. For a relatively straightforward Conserved Area, IMET-conserved areas analysis can be performed within 3 days.  **B- indicative streamlined programme and its stages**    Estimated duration of an IMET conserved areas streamlined exercise assumes that analysis refers to moderately complex conserved areas. Depending on factors such as type of governance-management planned, location and specific conservation objectives, actual duration of the assessment may vary. On the other hand, for a relatively straightforward conserved areas, our experience is that the IMET-conserved areas streamlined analysis can be reduced to no more than 2 days.  *Legend:*   * *Comprehensive data collection, collection of existing information about the conserved areas to start the analysis* * *Data verification and validation, verification and validation of data collection by the managing entity and stakeholders* * *Data integration, validated data are integrated into the IMET-conserved areas tool* * *Preparation & structuring, based on the data and discussions with the managing entity or the most involved stakeholders, the conserved areas analysis has been organised, structured and planned.* * *Stakeholder insight, interviews and exchanges on conserved areas management and governance with all stakeholders related to the conserved areas* * *Data coding, structured information from interviews and exchanges integrated into IMET-conserved areas tool to allow statistical analysis and the preparation of tables to be analysed in the collective assessment* * *Collective evaluation, open meeting with all stakeholders, supported by the analysis tables on the evaluation of the management and governance of the conserved areas.* * *Strategic analysis and proposal, final analysis and planning of activities based on a result-oriented approach.* |

However, in the case of an initial analysis or support for the establishment of a Conserved Area, it may not be relevant to examine its management and governance framework, especially if it is in its infancy. In such a case, the focus should be on formulating proposals for establishing or improving governance and management structures. As a result, the IMET-conserved areas analysis can be streamlined and focused, particularly in section b) Assessment of the governance and management of the conserved areas, where the assessment of the governance and management of the conserved areas is limited to examination of the management context. In fact, the analysis of the management context makes it possible to determine the priorities and values of importance to be analysed in module c) – Analysis of results, to facilitate the development of basic planning elements and usable recommendations. Such an organisation of the IMET-conserved areas enables a proper formulation of preliminary intervention strategies in support of the conserved areas.

The modified analytical framework is shown in the diagram below. The natural consequence of incorporating the proposed modifications is the reduction of the overall turnaround time.

## Validation data knowledge and pre-filling

The first phase revolves around the comprehensive collection, management and use of data on the conserved areas and its associated stakeholders. Effective management of conserved areas requires a systematic approach to the organisation and use of existing information. This process involves identification of relevant data and retrieval of information necessary to propose informed decision-making and implementation of effective conservation strategies.

This phase can be divided into several key stages

1. Collection of available information from diverse sources
   1. Identify stakeholders involved in the management of conserved areas, from local communities and government agencies to NGOs and international partners.
   2. Collect information on governance and management structures of the conserved areas and other additional commitments related to natural resource and land management.
   3. Collect key data on biodiversity components, ecosystem services, threats and current management practices.
   4. Examine detailed maps of the conserved area(s) produced by participatory mapping or remote sensing techniques.
   5. Collect information from scientific studies, field surveys and contributions from the conserved areas community.
2. Data analysis and validation; data and information collected must be reviewed with conserved areas management authorities or resource persons to assess their quality and validity and to ensure the accuracy and reliability of information collected.
3. Integration of data in the IMET-conserved areas context section; various types of relevant data need to be integrated into the Intervention Context section of the IMET-conserved areas tool to provide a coherent and contextualised basis for subsequent evaluations.

The pre-filling phase, when data from previous assessments is available, can be used to complete a significant part of the indicators related to the intervention context, including CTX. 1 General Information about the conserved areas, CTX. 2 Areas, CTX. 3 Human, financial and material resources, CTX. 4 Key animals and plants species. It is important to note that this initial phase is primarily aimed at fostering understanding of the processes within the conserved areas, rather than data analysis and interpretation. Full validation and analysis of the pre-collected data takes place during stakeholder interviews and analysis, which ensure the reliability of the IMET-conserved areas exercise.

In summary, careful organisation of stakeholder knowledge and conserved areas data is essential prerequisite for an IMET-conserved areas exercise. Well-structured data framework of key elements of the conserved areas, its management practices and collaborative engagement enable managers and stakeholders to access and use a wide range of data during the IMET-conserved areas exercise. This phase is the starting point for the analysis. It facilitates the next level of informed decision-making and induce a positive change in management of the conserved areas.

## Create a new IMET-conserved areas (WDPA or non-WDPA) form

The pre-fill option also allows to create a new IMET-conserved areas form where one can enter the first conserved areas data collected. To start, one needs to navigate to the IMET-conserved areas home page. In the top right-hand corner, there is an option to generate IMET-conserved areas form. This can be done by selecting either a WDPA conserved areas (a Conserved Area that has already been added to the WDPA database) or a non-WDPA conserved areas (a Conserved Area that has not yet been added to the WDPA database) (see Figure ## for visual guidance).

Upon selection of WDPA conserved areas, the IMET tool incorporates in the specific form the database information provided to the WDPA by the national governing body responsible for the conserved areas. Conversely, if one selects a non-WDPA conserved areas, there will be a need to complete a specific form in accordance with the WDPA's requirements for adding new conserved areas to its database (see Figure ## for illustration).

Figure 1: Create a new IMET-CONSERVED AREAS non-WDPA, the database information provided to the WDPA

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# Assessment and analysis of the governance and management of a Conserved Area

The second part of this manual explains how to conduct an assessment using the IMET-conserved areas. The assessment session is typically divided into five parts:

* Organising the assessment and analysis,
* Interviews and interactions with each stakeholder individually,
* Data coding to present the results of interviews and interactions with specific stakeholders,
* Joint evaluation of the data coded in the context of intervention section and assessment of the effectiveness of management of the representatives of all the stakeholder categories,
* Analysis of results, formulation of basic planning items, evaluation of applicability of proposed solutions, and formulation or adaptation of operational recommendations.

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| **Some conditions to be checked before start of an assessment of governance and management of the conserved areas**   * Does the list of stakeholders include all actors involved in the management and administration of the conserved areas? * To what extent have the stakeholders been sufficiently informed about the assessment session? * Is the basic equipment available and functional (such as computers, video projector, electric generator, if needed)? * Does the IMET-conserved areas software work correctly on the computers to be used? * Is it clear how stakeholders will be managed during the workshop? * Are there any courtesy visits to be made, particularly if the assessment is to be carried out on site? * Other |

Figure 2: The standard and simplified planning elaboration modules



## Organising the assessment and analysis

This phase requires careful organisation to conduct interviews with all the stakeholder categories identified in the data knowledge and pre-filling phase. The process of gathering stakeholder information should be coordinated in collaboration with the conserved area’s management and governance staff, as well as relevant individuals. This involves assessing the potential for stakeholders to participate, either individually or in groups, and coordinating the logistics of interviews.

A fundamental aspect of effectively coordinating an IMET-conserved areas analysis relies on carefully identifying and defining intricate specifics associated with each stakeholder category. This includes factors such as quantifying numbers, delineating gender representation, measuring presence and elucidating the indicative roles these stakeholders play within the governance and management framework of the conserved areas. Availability of this information is paramount to the seamless organisation and conduct of the IMET-conserved areas analysis. However, it is important to emphasise that the team overseeing the IMET-conserved areas exercise must remain ready to flexibly adjust or refine its programme in response to the dynamic evolution of knowledge and other relevant factors. For example, it may turn out that a single stakeholder category is in fact composed of two significant subgroups, necessitating the creation of separate stakeholder groups, or conversely that two separate stakeholder categories may be linked by their common interest in a particular ecosystem service. Such potential complexities underscore the need for adaptability and fluidity in the approach taken during the IMET-conserved areas exercise.

It is important to recognise that the task of interviewing multiple stakeholder groups needs to be shared between several technicians. This will usually involve, after appropriate training, members of the management or support structure (e.g., NGOs), facilitators or technical communicators (those who maintain regular contact with the community), or specially trained staff, as in the case of rural or community censuses.

There are generally two options for conducting the stakeholder interview phase:

1. Invitation and on-site analysis: organisers of an IMET conserved areas assessment travel to meet and interview stakeholders in their locations. The organisers then review the data, code the information and facilitate feedback, evaluation and analysis sessions with all stakeholder representatives in a venue suitable for holding full meetings. This approach encourages in-depth exploration of governance and management issues but requires more time and resources.
2. Centralised Collaborative Sessions: Alternatively, stakeholders’ representatives are brought together in a common location to facilitate both the interview and analysis phases on an ongoing basis. This option reduces the time and resource requirements, although the level of detail may be lower than in the first approach.

## Interviews and interactions with each stakeholder category individually

The objectives of this phase are twofold, each serving a different purpose: (i) to complement and integrate data collected during the preliminary phase, covering aspects such as stakeholder categories or subcategories, as well as information on the conserved area; (ii) to collect detailed information on stakeholders, along with the collection of insights into their interactions and use of the ecosystem services facilitated by the conserved area.

The facets are subjected to a comprehensive analysis through the lens of two crucial dimensions within the intervention context:

* SA.1. Stakeholders involved in the management, or the level of impact generated by the stakeholders related to the use of the natural resources of the conserved areas.
* SA. 2. Stakeholder dependence on ecosystem services, or the extent to which stakeholders are dependent on ecosystem services.

About the first element (SA.1), this research looks at the complex dynamics between each stakeholder and the ecosystem services provided by the conserved area. This includes considerations such as the nature of stakeholder involvement, whether direct or indirect use, the degree of involvement and expertise (including traditional or indigenous knowledge) in the management of the conserved areas, and their commitment to the conservation of key ecological components. By focusing on this perspective, a deep understanding of each stakeholder’s interaction with the conserved area’s ecosystem services emerges. This approach facilitates the refinement of stakeholder interviews and allows for a more focused exploration of specific elements within the conserved areas.

About the second dimension (SA.2), the focus shifts to examining the interactions between stakeholders and conserved areas ecosystem services. This involves assessing dependency and use criteria (including aspects such as access and rivalry) and assessing the status of ecosystem services (both in terms of quality and quantity), while also identifying potential threats to them.

This stage serves as a critical bridge between preliminary data and a nuanced understanding of stakeholder interactions with ecosystem services. The two elements, each serving as a distinct analytical lens, together contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the intricate dynamics within the conserved areas framework. As a result, an in-depth examination of the different ecosystem services is achieved, providing valuable insights to be shared during the collaborative assessment and analysis phase.

## Data coding to present the stakeholder results of the interviews and interactions

In contrast to the conventional IMET process, the specialised stakeholders intervention requires the use of criteria derived from the IMET-conserved areas elements SA.1 and SA.2 of the Intervention Context. Evaluation of SA.1 and SA.2 is available in both PDF and Word formats. A copy has been provided at the end of this manual, but they are constantly updated with the IMET-conserved areas, so check the latest version of the IMET-conserved areas to make sure that you are using the correct forms. It must be emphasised that careful completion of these forms in clear and legible handwriting is of an utmost importance. This will ensure that the information collected can be seamlessly entered into the IMET-conserved areas tool.

The collected data is then transferred to the offline IMET-conserved areas tool. This step serves the purpose of collating the data and subjecting it to statistical analysis, a crucial stage that allows for a comprehensive assessment and review of the management and governance of the conserved areas from the perspective of the stakeholders group. In scenarios involving a significant number of stakeholders, this assessment can be carried out by their respective representatives (see the section of IMET-conserved areas evaluation).

## Joint evaluation of the data coded in the context of the intervention and the effectiveness of the management with the representatives of all the stakeholder categories.

This second module is completed during a workshop where all stakeholders involved in the conserved areas are brought together. Physical presence of all stakeholders can be replaced by representation of stakeholders or their nominated representatives in cases where there would be too many participants.

The requirements for a productive assessment meeting are detailed below:

* Each element of the intervention context has been carefully considered and a preliminary analysis has been carried out by the IMET-conserved areas coach(es).
* Advance notice has been effectively communicated to both the management and all stakeholders to secure their commitment to devote working days to active participation in the evaluation session.
* A suitable and conducive workspace was provided for the evaluation session, prioritising attributes such as quietness and providing options for air conditioning or ventilation where required.
* Essential equipment, including computers, video projectors and, if deemed necessary, a power generator, has been secured and is operational.
* Comprehensive arrangements have been coordinated to meet the needs of participants, including provisions for transport, meals, accommodation, and other essential amenities.

Ensuring meticulous preparation provides the foundation for a successful evaluation meeting, fostering an environment that not only encourages meaningful engagement, but also ensures that the analysis proceeds seamlessly and effectively.

## Analysis of the results, formulation of basic planning elements, checking the relevance of the proposed solutions, and formulation or adaptation of operational recommendations.

On completion of the IMET-conserved areas assessment of governance and management of the conserved area, the interpretation of the results becomes the focus.

It is important to emphasise that the Analysis report and planning module can serve two diverse purposes (1) as a sophisticated analysis and planning through a full IMET-conserved areas examination of the management assessment module, (2) as a starting point for the analysis and planning exercise (see box 2 and figure 1, the planning need the analysis of the management context element of the management assessment module).

The link between data analysis and integrated planning for a conserved area involves a careful review of governance and management priorities, assessment results presented in graphs, and insights gained from suggestions and notes made during the IMET-conserved areas process. Together, these components provide a concise overview of conservation efforts, simplifying the complex landscape of conserved areas management. By undertaking a comprehensive evaluation and analysis of these components with all stakeholders or their representatives, the effectiveness of management in achieving objectives and maintaining ecosystem services and associated biodiversity values can be improved. Identifying the causes of both successes and failures is crucial; without such analysis, attempts to improve the governance and management of the conserved areas would be ineffective.

Conducting this analysis in the presence of all stakeholders involved in governance and management is paramount. Facilitate dialogue to uncover the reasons for management outcomes, address discrepancies and suggest improvements by defining objectives, necessary corrections, key areas for improvement, opportunities and positive aspects. This process culminates in the production of a comprehensive planning and operational memorandum, a summary report or an influential advocacy document for decision-makers.

PART III: IMET-conserved areas Assessment

IMET conserved areas consists of three modules:

* Module 1: Intervention context
* Module 2: Management effectiveness assessment
* Module 3: Analysis report.

These modules are equivalent to the ones used in standard IMET, but specific elements are either simplified or thoroughly modified with respect to the standard IMET.

**Module 1: Intervention context**

This module collects basic information on the conserved area to:

* collect and update relevant information related to the site on the intervention context of the conserved areas.
* consolidate all the necessary information for the analysis of management effectiveness,

The following sections are included in the context of intervention:

* CTX 1. General information on the conserved area
* CTX 2. Surface area, limits and shape index, level of control over the conserved areas
* CTX 3. Human, financial, and material resources
* CTX 4. Key biodiversity elements
* SA 1. Stakeholders involvement in management or impact in the use of natural resources
* SA 2. Stakeholders’ analysis of ecosystem services.

**Module 2: Management effectiveness assessment**

IMET-conserved areas organises the management effectiveness analysis based on the protected area management cycle (Hockings et al., 2008), which covers six elements:

* Management context
* Planning
* Inputs
* Process (divided into six sub-elements):
* internal management systems and processes
* protection/management
* relations with stakeholders
* tourism management
* monitoring and research
* management of the effects of climate change and ecosystem services
* Outputs
* Outcomes

Each module offers visualisation aids in the form of graphs that synthetize management effectiveness assessment results of the conserved area. The visualisation aids intend to support the decision-making and should not be interpreted as the absolute state of the conserved area’s management and governance.

**Module 3: Analysis report**

This module summarizes the main information and the results of the IMET-conserved areas analysis. It combines the information from Module 1 (Intervention context) and Module 2 (management effectiveness assessment). The analysis report presents:

* general and key elements of the conserved areas as management entity, conserved areas stakeholders, key biodiversity elements,
* scores obtained in the management effectiveness assessment,
* the SWOT analysis, recommendations and operational priorities,
* a planning table and a road map with priorities in governance, management of ecosystem services and biodiversity, driving forces, and threats.

# Intervention context

The first module, 'Intervention Context', ensures an in-depth understanding of the situation in which the conserved area is functioning. Correct completion of this section can constitute a detailed site monograph. The module has six tabs.

At the end of each tab, a section entitled "Setting objectives" helps establish objectives related to the focus of the tab. Any identified problems or gaps (e.g., lack of information) can be embedded in this section, so that it can be used for improving governance and management, and more specifically for planning, resource (input) mobilisation, process phases, and for monitoring of management activities of the conserved areas. The table of objectives is organized by short or long term.

## General information about the conserved area (CTX1)

**CTX 1.0.1 Responsibility for filling the form: Management team and partners**

**CTX 1.0.2 Responsibility for filling the form: External support for analysis and management evaluation**

Questions CTX 1.0.1 and 1.0.2 identify the referents who compiled or provided the information, date of completion and duration of the IMET-conserved areas assessment.

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| ***Note:*** *See the link with CTX 1.2. The assessment participants depend on the governance typology, it would be expected that IMET-conserved areas is filled in with the partners involved in the conserved area's decision-making processes.* |

**CTX 1.1 - Basic data**

CTX 1.1 questions identify and report essential data on the conserved area and its membership to a larger-scale ecological units (biome and ecoregion). The information can also be used to make the necessary corrections to national, regional and global databases.

**CTX 1.2 - Governance and Management Entity**

CTX 1.2 questions aim:

* to specify the typology of governance according to the reference classification provided by the IUCN and, where appropriate, to highlight its specific features,
* to identify (if existing) the Management entity in charge of the management and governance of the conserved area.

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| ***Note:*** *the term "governance" in IMET-conserved areas should be understood as the decision-making process in the management of the conserved area. The term "partnership" refers only to the aspects of collaboration in management activities.* |

**CTX 1.3 Special designations (World Heritage, MAB, Ramsar Site, IBA, SPAMI, LMMA, etc.)**

CTX 1.3 specifies various classifications, labels, and criteria for the conserved area. Some of the information requested could be pre-filled with data available from relevant international institutions. The pre-filled information must be checked and amended by the conserved area managers in order to avoid errors.

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| ***Note:*** *It is necessary to check international sources when pre-filling. It may happen that some management team leaders do not know all the statuses of their conserved area.* |

**CTX 1.4 - Membership of a local management network (transboundary network, landscape network or other types of networks)**

CTX 1.4 specifies the membership of the conserved area to a conservation network. In addition to possible membership of official networks (e.g., transboundary conserved areas) or a landscape (e.g., the Central African Regional Environment Programme, or CARPE), it is important to note here the conserved area's membership of special national and international conservation networks. If the conserved area belongs to a protected and conservation network or system, the associated conserved areas must be specified.

**CTX 1.5 - Vision, mission, objectives**

CTX 1.5 highlights the vision, mission and long- term objectives of the conserved area, normally defined in the management plan. The objectives of the conserved area may be defined at a local level (e.g., maintenance of ecosystem services for the benefit of local populations), at a national level (e.g., protection of species, particular habitats or cultural values), or at an international level (e.g., protection of an endemic specie, with a contribution to the maintenance of a shared heritage).

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| ***Note:*** *If the vision, mission or goals are not clearly defined or are outdated, link to CTX 1.7. CTX 1.5 is not the time to define the vision, but it should be noted in CTX 1.7 that changes in conservation efforts will need to be considered. It is nevertheless possible to draft initial hypotheses concerning the revision of the vision, mission or objectives of the conserved area, which will be incorporated into the management instruments.* |

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| ***Note:*** *Another way of defining the vision: How do you see the conserved areas in 10-20 years' time?* |

**CTX 1.6 - References to the historical, political, legal and institutional, socio-economic and other specific contexts of the conserved areas**

CTX 1.6 highlights the most important aspects of the historical, socio-economic, political (at national or sub-national level), legal and institutional contexts which have (or have had) a significant positive or negative influence on the current context of intervention in the conserved area.

**CTX 1.7 - Setting objectives**

At the end of the section, short-term or long-term management objectives and any other relevant comments can be inserted based on aforementioned topics.

## Areas (CTX2)

**CTX 2.1 - Localisation**

CTX 2.1 allows to specify existing official geo-referenced boundaries, geographical location and the administrative location (province, region, etc.) of the conserved area. This information is important for accurately defining the georeferenced boundaries in view of possible land conflicts and for validating/modifying the references in the World Database on conserved areas (WDPA)14 (see next point).

**CTX 2.2 - Surface area of the conserved areas and conservation context**

CTX 2.2 provides a series of data points on the conserved areas surface area which are analysed according to the typology and networks to which the conserved area belongs. This section can bring to light size differences reported by different sources of information, which may be due to transmission errors, historical estimates compared with today's more accurate estimates, etc. This section also provides a clearer picture of the conserved area within a broader conservation landscape. When adequately filled, this section can help to update official surface area at national and international level (such as the World Database on Protected and conserved areas).

**CTX 2.3 - Setting objectives**

At the end of the section, short-term or long-term management objectives and any other relevant comments can be inserted based on aforementioned topics.

## Human, Financial and Material resources (CTX3)

**CTX 3.1.1 Relative involvement of staff and stakeholders in management**

**CTX 3.1.2 Composition and staff of Management Entity(s) (identified in CTX 1.2).**

**CTX 3.1.3 Composition and staff from partner organisations**

CTX 3.1.1, 3.1.2 and 3.1.3 identify human resources directly employed in the management of the conserved area. The list should include all staff regardless of who they are, or which organizations employ them: community, NGOs, private sector or other entity. The organisation and classification of conserved areas staff positions are taken from the planning documents or other documents.

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| ***Note:*** *The answer to the question "Is there an ideal size?" varies according to several criteria: the size of the area, threats, issues (status/threats), funding, etc.* |

**CTX 3.2.1 - Financial resources: Budget and management costs**

Item CTX 3.2.1 reports the total annual budget listed in the management or financial plan or the operating cost estimates from the operational plan/annual work plan with the annual budget available.

**CTX 3.3 - Availability of infrastructure, equipment and facilities**

Section CTX 3.3 uses a long and very detailed table to analyse the relationship between the need for and availability of infrastructure, equipment and other resources to manage the conserved area. Managers of the conserved area can use the table as an inventory of the most important material resources and to plan the construction of the necessary infrastructure. The evaluation grid plots the percentage of existing and required resources to facilitate analysis. For example, a value of 1 indicates that resources are fairly inadequate, and that availability covers between 31% and 60% of requirements.

**CTX 3.4 - Setting objectives**

At the end of the section, short-term or long-term management objectives and any other relevant comments can be inserted based on aforementioned topics.

## Animal, plants and habitats (CTX4)

This section identifies the most important conserved areas conservation elements. For this part, the Red List of Threatened Species and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) list of conserved species can help determine the biological values of the conserved area. See [www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org/) and [www.cites.org.](http://www.cites.org/)

**CTX 4.1 - Animal species (exploited, protected, disappearing, invasive)**

CTX 4.1 organises information about key and emblematic animals in the conserved area to better target conservation intervention, which is essential for achieving better conservation outcomes. Conserved area staff and communities should specify in this table emblematic animals as charismatic, umbrella, conflict and architect species as defined below

* flagship or charismatic species: used to generate interest and financial support for the conservation of all the wild species that share its habitats,
* an umbrella species, whose protection guarantees safety for biodiversity in general and for the tourism industry,
* a conflict species, which create human-wildlife conflicts and constitute an acute problem, to be minimised to reduce conflict between the parties in the same context of intervention,
* Architectural species, capable of modifying habitats to the advantage or detriment of plant and animal species on a local or wider scale, depending on the nature and extent of the impact.

However, species that require management efforts (ex: invasive) or possess significant cultural values for the indigenous peoples and local communities should also be listed here. After identifying the most important animal species, the table proposes to introduce

* Baseline population estimates,
* the description of the optimum status.

In frequent cases, this information is not readily available and not very reliable. However, the information should still be collected, and analysis should be done as this is a critical aspect of the management effectiveness of the conserved area.

**CTX 4.2 - Plant species (exploited, protected, disappearing, invasive)**

This section can follow the indications concerning the previous heading (CTX 4.1), even if the concepts of umbrella, conflict and architect species are not generally applicable for plant species.

**CTX 4.3 – Habitats main categories in the conserved areas**

Item CTX 4.3.1, related to ecosystems and habitats, can follow the indications of the previous headings (CTX 4.1 and 4.2). Based on parameters relating to their specificity, endemism or unique or irreplaceable character, managers must determine the most important habitats of the conserved area.

**CTX 4.4 - Setting objectives**

At the end of the section, short-term or long-term management objectives and any other relevant comments can be inserted in relation to the issues identified in the section.

## Stakeholders involved in the management or use of natural resources (SA1)

SA.1 is a new element that does not exist in the Standard IMET. It looks at the nature and degree of stakeholder involvement, whether direct or indirect use of natural resources and expertise (including traditional or indigenous knowledge) is applied in the management of the conserved areas. The analysis explores the involvement of the different stakeholder groups in the management and governance of the conserved areas.

Given various levels of stakeholders’ dependence of on the conserved areas ecosystem services, IMET-conserved areas makes a distinction between direct users and indirect users.

* ***Direct users*** of ecosystem services: an individual or group whose livelihoods and welfare directly depend on and benefit from the material goods and services provided by the conserved areas. They have an immediate and direct interaction with the ecosystem, using resources such as water, plants or wildlife for their livelihood, well-being or recreation.
* ***Indirect users*** of ecosystem services: an individual or group that do not have direct, personal interaction with the resources even though they may gain some benefits from the ecological functions and processes of the conserved areas (e.g., water quality, climate regulation). They may not directly consume or use these resources themselves although their well-being is enhanced by the services provided by the ecosystem.

The Stakeholder Analysis 1 (SA1) ranks direct and indirect users according to their level of involvement in the conserved areas management and governance. This classification is reported in SA2 for a more focused ecosystem services analysis.

Figure 3: Stakeholders involved in management or impacting the use of natural resources (SA1) – Table of identification and analysis

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**SA 1.2 - Setting objectives**

At the end of the section, short-term or long-term management objectives and any other relevant comments can be inserted.

## Stakeholders analysis of ecosystem services (SA 2)

**SA 2.1 - Stakeholders analysis of ecosystem services- Direct Users**

**SA 2.2 - Stakeholders analysis of ecosystem services** **- Indirect Users**

Item SA.2 is also a new element, which does not exist in the IMET standard. In SA 2, the examination focus shifts to the dynamic interactions between stakeholders and conserved areas ecosystem services. Based on the SA 1, the SA 2 is organized by the two categories of stakeholders: direct users and indirect users and identifies the ecosystem services that are important to them.

This includes assessing dependency and use factors, such as access and competition, and stakeholders’ perceptions of the quality and quantity of ecosystem services. The assessment also identifies potential threats to these services.

The outcomes of the SA 1 and SA 2 are as follows:

* A list of stakeholders ranked by the level of involvement in the conserved areas governance and management,
* A comprehensive inventory of all ecosystem services provided by the conserved areas and used by stakeholders,
* A ranking of the importance of conserved areas-provided ecosystem services.

The outcomes of the SA 1 and SA 2 and the list of the key biodiversity element from CTX4 are the key elements of analysis in the next step of management evaluation.

Figure 4: Stakeholders analysis of the ecosystem services (SA 2) – Table of synthesis

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**SA 2.3 - Setting objectives**

At the end of the section, short-term or long-term management objectives and any other relevant comments can be inserted.

# Management Effectiveness

This second module concerns the evaluation of the conserved areas governance and management effectiveness. Most of the questions invite judgement from key stakeholders, whose points of view may differ. The role of the coaches is to encourage open, honest discussion that considers different points of view and facts, so that the evaluation is as impartial as possible. As some questions may prove complex, stakeholders in the evaluation are invited to specify the most important aspects relating to these questions in the space dedicated to comments.

Figure 5: Management effectiveness

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Very often, the headings provide a pre-established list of items to be analysed. It is possible to select, exclude and complete the analysis fields with information specific to or necessary for the management of the conserved area analysed.

The Management Effectiveness module is structured as follows

1. **Management context**
   * C1 Designation Value and importance: Special designations
   * C2.1 Constraints or supports from stakeholders
   * C2.2 Integration of stakeholders' constraints or supports in management and governance
   * C3.1 conserved areas threat calculator
   * C3.1.1 conserved areas’ key biodiversity elements threats analysis
   * C3.1.2 conserved areas threats analysis
   * C3.2 - Threats integration
   * C4 - Key elements of the conserved areas
   * CX - Setting objectives
2. **Planning**
   * P1 Adequacy of legal and regulatory provisions
   * P2 Design and layout of the conserved areas
   * P3 Demarcation of the conserved areas
   * P4 Management plan
   * P5 Work plan
   * P6 Objectives of the conserved areas
   * PX - Setting objectives
3. **Inputs**
   * I1 -Basic information
   * I2 - Capacities of specific or combination of entities/stakeholders in the management and governance
   * I3 - Current budget
   * I4 - Securing the budget
   * I5 - Infrastructure, equipment and facilities
   * IX - Setting objectives
4. **Process**
   * PR1 - Staff skills/training
   * PR2 - HR policies and procedures
   * PR3 - Stakeholders, empowerment
   * PR4 - Budget and finance
   * PR5 - Maintenance of infrastructure
   * PR6 - Managing key elements
   * PR7 - Monitoring and research
   * PR8 - Resolving contentious issues
   * PR9 - Stakeholders’ collaboration
   * PR10 - Benefits to local communities
   * PR11 - Environmental education
   * PR12 - Tourism management
   * PRX - Setting objectives
5. **Outputs**
   * O/P1 - Implementation of the work/action plan
   * O/P2 - Area Control
6. **Outcomes**
   * O/C1 - Achievement of long-term objectives of the conserved areas management and governance
   * O/C2 - Effects on key conservation elements
   * O/C3 - Impacts on local communities

## Management context

**C1 Designation Value and importance: Special designations**

C1.1 assesses the extent to which the values and significance of the status(es) (local, national or international such as World Heritage or Ramsar site status) accorded to the conserved areas are integrated into the management. ***The main question is: Assess the extent to which the inclusion of designations enhances the management of conserved areas in terms of their values and importance?***

The importance of conserved areas designations must be based on the national or international classification and the (indicative and non-exhaustive) list of special statuses identified in section CTX 1.3 of the intervention context.

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| ***Note:*** *A value of 0 can be assigned where the conserved areas management does not include the values and importance of a status in the management. For example, the site is designated an Important Bird Area (IBA), but there is no integration of the values and importance of the designation into the management of the conserved areas. Note that this does not mean that the IBA designation is not important for the site, but that no management provision is considered.* |

**C2.1 Constraints or supports from stakeholders**

C2.1 assesses the constraints on, or support for, the conserved areas governance and management by the stakeholders identified in SA 1, as direct and indirect users. ***The main question is: What are the key constraints, conflicts, or supporting/complying factors from the political, institutional, and social environment that impact the management and governance of the conserved areas?***

The analysis is supported by the elements of C2.2 which help to identify decisions to prioritise actions to minimise stakeholder constraints or leverage stakeholder support in the governance and management of the conserved areas.

**C2.2 Integration of stakeholders' constraints or supports in management and governance**

C2.2 analyses the current level of integration of stakeholders’ constraints or support in management and priority actions. The analysis helps to identify planning interventions that minimise stakeholder constraints or leverage stakeholder support in the conserved areas governance and management. ***The main question is: Should conserved areas management prioritize minimizing constraints or maximizing stakeholder support, as assessed in C2.1?***

The analysis is facilitated by the positive and negative ranking, on a scale of +100 to -100, of all stakeholders identified as direct and indirect users analysed in section C2.1 and transferred to C2.2. Identifying the level of integration and prioritising stakeholder constraints or support strengthens the governance and management processes for the targeted ecosystem services and conservation elements of the conserved areas.

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| Box 2: Single or two separate ranking lists for prioritising management and governance elements  The approach of either creating a single ranking list (with combined information) or working with two separate ranking lists for prioritising management and governance elements has its merits. The choice depends largely on specific context and management objectives.   1. **Single combined ranking list**  * Advantages * Provides a holistic view, considering both management and governance elements (e.g., ecosystem services and biodiversity elements together). * Identifies potential synergies or conflicts between management and governance elements (e.g., ecosystem services and biodiversity elements together). * Facilitates decision making by providing a comprehensive assessment. * Considerations * May require more complex scoring system to fairly compare different elements. * Could mask nuanced differences in priorities between management and governance elements (e.g., ecosystem services and biodiversity).  1. **Two separate rankings list**  * Advantages * Allows focused analysis of management and governance elements separately (e.g., ecosystem services and biodiversity elements together). * Provides clarity in understanding priorities within each category. * May facilitate targeted management strategies based on specific objectives. * Considerations * Requires additional step of integrating rankings to make final decisions. * Potential challenges in cases where management and governance elements interact strongly (e.g., ecosystem services and biodiversity elements).   Ultimately, the choice will depend on the specific management and governance objectives and the degree of interdependence between the elements.  For our analysis, we find it easier to first develop separate rankings and then make an informed decision to prioritise one or other of the different elements (e.g., ecosystem services and biodiversity elements) based on a more comprehensive assessment of their importance and potential trade-offs. |

**C3 conserved areas threat calculator**

The indicators of C3 analysed the threats on the conserved areas. The term “threat” encompasses pressures, threats and vulnerabilities of the conserved areas. The table of analysis consists of 12 main threat categories and is called the Threats Calculator (from the Threats calculator model adapted for the standard IMET).

The threat calculator uses a comprehensive analysis of threats, using five different scoring categories to assess their potential impact:

1. **Impact/Severity**: the degree of negative impact a threat has on the ecological balance, biodiversity, ecosystem services and overall functioning of the conserved areas. It considers the severity of the damage caused, ranging from minor to catastrophic, and how it could disrupt the natural systems of the area. Impact/severity scale: 0 = minor, 1 = moderate, 2 = major, 3 = severe
2. **Scale/ Extent**: the spatial extent or range of the threat. It looks at the area that could be affected and the extent to which the threat could spread across the conserved areas, affecting different components of the ecosystem. Scale / Extent: 0 = localised <5%, 1 = sparse 5-15%, 2 = widespread 15-50, 3 = everywhere >50%.
3. **Duration/irreversibility**: the temporal aspect of the threat. It examines whether the threat is temporary or permanent and whether its effects can be reversed or are potentially irreversible, affecting the long-term health and sustainability of the conserved areas. Duration/irreversibility scale: 0 = short term < 5 years, 1 = medium term 5-20 years, 2 = very long term 20-100 years, 3 = permanent >100 years.
4. **Trend**: the evolution of the threat over time. It assesses whether the threat is increasing, decreasing or remaining stable. Understanding the trend provides an indication of whether the threat is likely to increase or decrease in importance. Trend scale: -2 = decreasing, -1 = slightly decreasing, 0 = no change, 1 = slightly increasing, 2 = increasing.
5. **Probability for the threat in future**. This category focuses on the likelihood of the threat occurring in the future. It considers various factors such as climate change, human activities or ecological changes to estimate the likelihood of the threat becoming more significant over time: 0 = very low, 1 = low, 2 = medium, 3 = high.

Using these five assessment categories, the Threat Calculator facilitates a comprehensive threat assessment and helps to formulate conservation strategies and targeted management measures to safeguard the ecological integrity of the protected area.

The conserved areas’ threat analysis is conducted in two different items:

1. in C3.1.1 of the conserved areas’ key biodiversity elements identified in CTX4.
2. in C3.1.2 of the conserved areas supported by an automated report derived from the data coded in the sections SA.2 where stakeholder individual analysis of threats concerning the ecosystem services delivered by the conserved area.

**C3.1.1 conserved areas key biodiversity elements threats analysis**

In Section 3.1.1 we use the in-depth analysis using the five different scoring categories pf the Threat Calculator to examine the kind of threats affecting the key components of biodiversity identified in CTX4. Although these elements of biodiversity contribute to ecosystem services, we have chosen not to analyse them from an ecosystem services perspective for some stakeholders (for example, recognising that wildlife is a source of food for people). Instead, our approach is to work with all stakeholders to highlight the threats to biodiversity and the importance of implementing targeted actions to mitigate the risks to these critical elements of the conserved areas. ***The main question is:*** ***Has the conserved areas effectively analysed the threats to key biodiversity components within its management and governance approach?***

This is a collaborative analysis of the key biodiversity elements between all stakeholders.

**C3.1.2 conserved areas threats analysis**

C3.1.2 consists of the in-depth analysis using the five different scoring categories to assess the potential impact of each of the 12 main threat categories. Each category is analysed in terms of (1) Impact/Severity, (2) Scale/ Extent, (3) Duration/irreversibility, (4) Trend, (5) Probability for the threat in future according to the specific magnitude. The analysis is supported by the identification of ecosystem services (from SA.2) and key biodiversity components (from C3.1.1) affected by the same category of threat. ***The main question is:*** ***Has the conserved areas effectively identified the significant threats to ecosystem services (provisioning, regulation, cultural and supporting) within its management and governance approach?***

Support indicates (a) the number of stakeholders who have identified the specific threat category and (b) the ecosystem services affected by the threats, with those affected by activities identified as illegal shown in red.

The analysis in C.3.1.1 and C3.1.2 will support the decision in C3.2 to prioritise actions to minimise the impact of threats in the governance and management of the conserved areas.

**C3.2 - Threats integration**

Item C3.2 analyses the current level of integration of threat management and the priority in future interventions. The analysis is used to plan interventions to minimise the effects of threats on the conserved areas. ***The main question is: Is there a need to prioritize threats for minimizing their impact on conserved areas management and governance, as determined through the assessment of threats in C3.1.1 and C3.1.2?***

The analysis is facilitated by the ranking, on a scale of 0 to -100, of all the threats analysed in sections C3.1.1 and C3.1.2 and transferred to C3.2. Identifying the level of integration and prioritising threats strengthens the governance and management processes of the conserved areas. The priority threats to manage are analysed in other sections of the IMET-conserved areas, as they require more detailed information for action planning.

**C4 - Key elements of the conserved areas**

Figure 6: C4 - Key elements of the Conserved Areas – Table example of importance and prioritisation of the ecosystem services

Une image contenant texte, capture d’écran, logiciel, conception

Description générée automatiquement

Item C4 is the main management context analysis, as it integrates all previous assessments to determine the current level of integration of ecosystem services and key biodiversity elements in management and the priority for future interventions. ***The main question is:*** ***Has the conserved areas effectively prioritized biodiversity and ecosystem services key elements in its management and governance, as assessed through a ranked list based on analyses from SA1, SA2 and C3.1.1?"***

The analysis is used to plan interventions to ensure the sustainability of the conserved areas ecosystem services and biodiversity. The analysis is facilitated by a ranking from most to least important, based on previous stakeholder assessments. To facilitate selection, ecosystem services and key biodiversity elements are presented in two separate lists. As with the other section, the priority elements to manage are analysed in other sections of the IMET-conserved areas, as they require more detailed information for action planning.

Figure 7: C4 - Key elements of the Conserved Areas – Table example of importance and prioritisation of the biodiversity elements

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**CX - Setting objectives**

At the end of the section there is the table of objectives organized to insert Objective as Short or Long term and Comments.

## Planning

Following context identification, the planning phase is the second stage. Clear objectives and desired outcomes for conservation, sustainable use and community engagement are established. The objectives serve as a guide for all subsequent actions. Notwithstanding the importance of planning and objectives, secondary aspects such as the adequacy of legal and regulatory provisions, the design and layout of the conserved areas and the demarcation of the conserved areas are also analysed to support the next aspects of the planning and objectives analysis. Strategies will be developed in line with the identified objectives, promoting a harmonious blend of environmental protection, resource management and community empowerment. The work plan, management plan and long-term objectives are carefully evaluated to fulfil the purpose of the conserved areas.

**P1 Adequacy of legal and regulatory provisions**

Indicator P1 assesses the effectiveness and adequacy of existing regulations to protect and conserve the values and natural resources inherent in the conserved areas, considering customary rights and natural resource management. ***The main question to be analysed is: Do existing legal and regulatory provisions sufficiently support the conservation and management of natural resources within the conserved areas?***

The assessment is strengthened by reference to a comprehensive list of existing laws and regulations that have an impact on the management of the conserved areas. Irrelevant regulations can be omitted by selecting N/A. Additional factors may be included depending on the specific characteristics of the conserved areas being assessed. The assessment identifies the adequacy or deficiencies of the current regulations with respect to management requirements, using the measurement scales provided.

**P2 Design and layout of the conserved areas**

The P2 assessment focuses on whether the size, shape and configuration of the conserved areas meets its intended purposes and protects its ecosystem services, biodiversity and natural processes, including ecological functions and watersheds. ***The main question to be analysed is: Is the design and configuration of the conserved areas conducive to sustainable governance and management of its key components?***

Supported by a comprehensive list of size- and shape-related elements, the analysis allows for customisation by selectively including or excluding the fields of analysis with indications that are specific to or necessary for the management of the protected area under review.

**P3 Demarcation of the conserved areas**

The section P3 deals with an assessment of the understanding and awareness of the boundaries of the conserved area to enable optimal management of the values. ***The main question is: To what extent are the delineation and adequacy of the conserved areas' boundary effectively contributing to the management?***

This review includes

* The degree of conspicuity in the demarcation of the conserved areas boundaries (A).
* The effectiveness of boundary delineation in facilitating conserved areas management (B).

The assessment may include the adequacy of natural boundaries. Flexibility is allowed in tailoring the analysis, including selection, exclusion and addition of pertinent details specific to the management of the conserved areas impacting the demarcation of the conserved areas.

**P4 Management plan**

Section P4 provides an in-depth analysis of the existence and use of the management plan in the context of the conserved area. ***The main questions are: Is there a functional management plan in place? Does it align with the practical requirements for implementation within the conserved areas?***

This assessment uses a two-stage approach. The first analysis focuses on the existence of the management plan, the print version, the explanation of the plan for stakeholder knowledge, the currency, the endorsement and the implementation of the management plan. The second looks at the clarity and applicability of the management plan.

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| ***Note:*** *In situations where the management plan is outdated, the initial analysis will highlight this concern. In the comments section, explain the reasons for the plan's obsolescence or any ongoing initiatives to update it.* |

The management plan is a key document that outlines the strategy and objectives for effective management. Its success depends on extensive stakeholder involvement and the formulation of objectives that achieve consensus and commitment from all parties concerned with the use and long-term survival of the designated area (adapted from IUCN/WDPA: Guidelines for the recognition and reporting of other effective area-based conservation measures, 2017).

**P5 Work plan**

Section P5 undertakes a detailed analysis of the existence and implementation of the work/action plan within the conserved area, whether on an annual or multiannual basis. ***The main questions are: Is a viable work plan established? Should one exist, does it align effectively with practical aspects of management of the conserved areas?***

As with the management plan, this assessment follows a two-step approach. The first analysis focuses on the existence of the work plan, the printed version, the explanation of the plan to stakeholders, the currency in which plans are made, the endorsement and the implementation of the work plan. The second looks at the clarity and applicability of the work plan.

The work plan sets out specific tasks to be carried out and enables progress towards the conserved areas outcomes to be tracked. It provides essential data for evaluating the success of the conserved areas in its conservation efforts, particularly the results achieved.

**P6 Objectives of the conserved areas**

Section P6 assesses the extent to which the conserved area is following objectives-based management approach to safeguarding its values. This approach prioritises proactive strategies aligned with predefined objectives or desired conservation conditions, distinguishing between outcomes and effects/impacts. Effects/impacts correspond to long-term goals that reflect the ultimate objectives, while outputs/results relate to short-term goals to achieve long-term objectives.

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| ***Note:***   * *Effects/impacts relate to the long-term objectives or visions articulated in the management plan. These objectives typically include specific statements about the core values of the conserved areas (e.g., ecosystem services or key species) or key management areas (e.g., tourism, education).* * *Outputs/results refer to short term quantifiable targets aimed at achieving the intended long-term objectives/conditions.* |

***The main question: Are the formulated objectives suitable for the conserved areas?***

This assessment is based on existing objectives from the management plan and the prevailing management context.

**PX - Setting objectives**

At the end of the section there is a table of objectives organized to insert Objective as Short or Long term and Comments.

## Inputs

Once the planning phase is underway, the analysis of resource allocation becomes important. Adequate resources, including funding, skilled personnel and technical assistance, are essential to the implementation of the strategies outlined. A judicious allocation of resources will ensure that activities are carried out efficiently and effectively. Whether it is funding of conservation efforts, employing local expertise, or providing technical tools, these resources are fundamental to the successful implementation of the conserved areas. Appropriate allocation enhances the feasibility of translating plans into tangible results, while allowing for adaptability to meet unforeseen challenges.

**I1 -Basic information**

Section I1 is dedicated to assessing the adequacy of baseline information in relation to the specific management needs of the conserved areas and the resulting decision obligations. ***The main question: Does the information available adequately and appropriately support the decision-making process of the conserved areas?***

The assessment process is streamlined by the automatic inclusion of key management and governance elements prioritised in Sections C1, C2.2, C3.2 and C4 of the Management Context. The paramount importance of data and information quality is reiterated, underlining its central role in facilitating effective analysis and management.

**I2 - Capacities of specific or combination of entities/stakeholders in the management and governance**

Section I2 focuses on comprehensive analysis of the adequacy of staffing levels and skills in relation to the specific governance and management requirements of the conserved areas. ***The main question is: Do the entity(ies) responsible for management and administration have the necessary capacity to effectively oversee and manage the conserved areas?***

The success of the conserved areas is inherently dependent on the presence of skilled, competent and committed staff in adequate numbers. Staffing requirements are intricately intertwined with the scale and typology of the conserved areas and the prevailing nature of the exploitation and threats it faces. This assessment process is streamlined by the automatic incorporation of the list of staff categories established and automatically reported by CTX 3.1.2 and the stakeholders automatically reported by SA.1 and SA.2, using predefined scales.

**I3 - Current budget**

Section I3 includes an assessment of the adequacy of financial resources with respect to the management needs of the conserved areas. The main question: Is the current budget sufficient to manage the conserved areas effectively?

This assessment is streamlined by an examination of the allocation of financial resources as explained in CTX 3.2. conserved areas should prepare their operating budgets on an annual or multi-year basis, with a clear focus on key planning documents to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness. The assessment includes an analysis of the proportion of the budget allocated to management needs, categorised within the specified scale.

**I4 - Securing the budget**

Heading I4 includes an assessment of the stability of the budget in relation to the conservation needs of the site. ***The main question: To what extent and over what period is the necessary budget secured to fully meet the basic management requirements of the conserved areas?***

Given the imperatives of conserved areas planning and management, the establishment of a secure and reliable budget is of paramount importance, particularly for initiatives of significant scale and long-term commitment. The assessment includes a comprehensive analysis of:

* Financial security, which refers to the reliability and certainty of the budget allocation.
* Period of funding certainty, which relates to the expected span (in years) during which budget certainty will be secured to meet upcoming conservation needs.

To make this assessment, it is essential to select the relevant category from the relative percentage scale and to specify the timeframe for future funding certainty (expressed in years).

**I5 - Infrastructure, equipment and facilities**

Section I5 undertakes a comprehensive assessment of the suitability of infrastructure, equipment and facilities to meet the various management requirements of the conserved areas. ***The main question: To what extent do the infrastructure, equipment and facilities of the conserved areas meet the critical management needs?***

This assessment process is seamlessly facilitated by the automated incorporation of results categorised by infrastructure, equipment and facilities within CTX 3.3. The presence of appropriate infrastructure, equipment and facilities plays a key role in enhancing and optimising the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the conserved areas. Infrastructure, equipment, and facilities are rigorously assessed along two essential dimensions:

* Adequacy: This assessment is based on results automatically calculated from the analysis of the intervention context in Section CTX 3.3.
* Priority: The priority of the infrastructure, equipment and facilities is assessed in relation to the critical management needs of the conserved areas.

**IX - Setting objectives**

At the end of the section a table of objectives allows to insert objective related to Inputs and categorize them as short or long term and provide comments.

## Process

During the implementation phase of the process, planned activities and interventions are carried out. These include habitat restoration, species protection, education, awareness raising, community benefits, enforcement and sustainable tourism management. Implementing conserved areas management and governance requires a multidisciplinary and participatory approach that integrates conservation science, sustainable development, community engagement, and adaptive management. Implementing processes into a Conserved Area involves a structured and adaptive approach to conserving biodiversity, managing natural resources and promoting sustainable development within a designated area.

These efforts contribute to the conservation of biodiversity, health of the ecosystems and the well-being of local communities within or adjacent to the conserved areas.

**PR1 - Staff skills/training**

PR1 analysis includes an in-depth review of the training programme framework. It is coupled with an assessment of impact on enhancing the skills of the various roles and functions of staff and stakeholders, in line with the specific management needs of the conserved area. ***The main question: To what extent does the specific entity or combination of entities responsible for the management and governance of the conserved areas implement a comprehensive training and capacity building programme that effectively addresses the needs of its members and is aligned with the achievement of the objectives of the conserved areas?***

This evaluation will include a review of

* The organisation of training initiatives.
* The scope and impact of staff and stakeholder capacity building efforts across different staff categories and functions (e.g., thematic managers, forest users).

Evaluate the adequacy of capacity building initiatives for members of the conserved areas management and governance unit(s). This assessment includes the entities identified in CTX 3.1.2 and SA 1 (direct users), and sheds light on the depth and impact of their capacity building efforts.

**PR2 - HR policies and procedures**

PR2 analyses the adequacy of human resource management policies, procedures and guidelines for recruitment, promotion and remuneration, performance, appraisal and training of staff, their duties and their code of conduct in relation to the management needs of the conserved areas. ***The main question: Has the specific conserved areas management and governance unit or combination of units adopted appropriate management policies to motivate and retain its human resources?***

The analysis is based on a list of essential conditions for human resources management appropriate to the needs of a conserved area. It is possible to select, exclude and complete the fields of analysis with indicators that are specific or necessary to the management of the conserved areas being analysed.

**PR3 - Stakeholders, empowerment**

PR3 analyses the conserved areas Stakeholder Empowerment Assessment which focuses on three core dimensions: Involvement, Responsibility, and Governance. The Involvement criterion examines stakeholder engagement, including representation, recognition of rights and consensus-based decision-making. The Responsibility dimension focuses on commitment to agreements, balanced cost-benefit sharing and effective governance for environmental, social, economic and cultural benefits. The Direction criterion assesses the coherence of the strategic vision, the legal framework and the promotion of conserved areas values.

***The main question: How do the three dimensions of stakeholder empowerment, namely Involvement, Responsibility and Direction, contribute to a more effective and impactful implementation of area-based conservation measures in the conserved areas context?***

This unified framework guides the conserved areas analysis, ensuring robust assessments of stakeholder involvement, responsibility sharing and overall strategic direction, facilitating effective and impactful conservation.

**PR4 - Budget and finance**

PR4 examines the effectiveness of financial management in allocating budget resources to meet the critical management needs of the conserved areas. ***The main question: Does financial management effectively direct budgetary and financial resources to meet the essential and prioritised management needs of the conserved areas?***

This assessment includes the foundations that foster a resilient financial ecosystem to support the success of the conserved areas. A sound financial framework is essential to enable sound budgeting and resource allocation. This depends on a sound management and work plan with clearly defined objectives. This assessment is based on a set of criteria that measure the level of financial management and its impact on the effectiveness of conserved areas management.

**PR5 - Maintenance of infrastructure**

PR5 assesses the level of maintenance effort on infrastructure, equipment and facilities against the management needs of the conserved areas. ***The main question: Is the conserved areas' commitment to the maintenance of infrastructure, equipment and facilities adequate?***

This assessment is streamlined by enumerating and assessing the adequacy of the infrastructure, equipment and facilities identified in CTX 3.3. The meticulous analysis focuses on measuring the level of maintenance against management requirements, categorised according to a set of criteria. Adequate maintenance of these elements is imperative, as poorly maintained assets not only succumb to wear and tear more quickly, but also waste resources and seriously undermine the conserved areas' potential to achieve its goals.

**PR6 - Managing key elements**

PR6 analyses the specific measures adopted by the conserved area to proactively manage ecosystem services, key elements of biodiversity (animals, plants, habitats), natural resources, threats and adaptation to climate change in the conserved areas. ***The main question: Does conserved areas management implement specific management actions for conserved area key elements?***

This assessment is based on the automatic inclusion of prioritised management and governance elements identified from the intervention context (SA 2) and prioritised in the management context (C1, C3.2 and C4). Active management involves actions that go beyond control, protection, monitoring and research to enhance the values of the conserved areas. To ensure sustainable management, stakeholders/management associations should include the management and conservation of ecosystem services, species and biodiversity, land cover restoration, hazard management, fire management, invasive species control and more, provided they are consistent with the key values of the area.

**PR7 - Monitoring and research**

PR7 assesses the adequacy of the combined research and monitoring systems to effectively capture trends in key elements of the conserved areas. The analysis’ focus is on strengthening the knowledge base that is essential for well-informed management and governance strategies that are critical for safeguarding the ecological dynamics of the conserved areas. Informed management decisions and proactive interventions require a deep understanding of evolving dynamics. ***The main question: Do current research and monitoring systems comprehensively meet the needs for monitoring key elements of the conserved areas, including biodiversity, ecosystem services, cultural values and natural resources and long-term ecological trends?***

This assessment analyses the adequacy of these systems in relation to management effort, threat level and scale.

**PR8 - Resolving contentious issues**

This evaluation focuses on the effectiveness of terrestrial control mechanisms within the conserved areas, with an emphasis on cooperation and problem solving. ***The main question: To what extent do control measures and actions against illegal activities ensure the long-term sustainability of the management of key conserved areas elements?***

The analyses cover numerous elements such as cooperation between forest-sea agents and sworn officers, the organisation, deployment frequency and stakeholder involvement of control units/groups, the equipment used such as GPS, communications and other aspects that enhance operational adaptability, etc. The analysis extends to addressing illegal activities and contentious issues through specific unit guidance, whistleblower systems, legal action and conflict resolution mechanisms. Collaborative partnerships with NGOs further underscore holistic management, emphasising sustainable practices and compliance with legal frameworks.

**PR9 - Stakeholders’ collaboration**

The analysis of the PR9 examines the extent of active participation and meaningful involvement of different stakeholders in the governance and management of the conserved areas. ***The main question: Are there measures in place to improve stakeholder cooperation in the governance and management of the conserved areas?***

This step of the analysis assesses how some or all the relevant stakeholders are involved in the governance of the conserved areas, assessing factors such as stakeholder representation in decision-making processes, frequency of consultation, engagement and incorporation of local knowledge and perspectives. The assessment aims to determine the degree of cooperation and effective stakeholder participation that contributes to the legitimacy and effectiveness of conserved areas governance.

**PR10 - Benefits to local communities**

PR10 assesses the relevance of ongoing initiatives and programmes within the conserved areas that aim to provide benefits or appropriate support to stakeholders, particularly to local communities as direct users. conserved areas should contribute to the sustainable development and economic well-being of stakeholders. ***The main question: Evaluation question: Does the conserved areas implement activities/programmes tailored to provide appropriate benefits/assistance to communities?***

The appropriateness of the activities and programmes advocated and supported by the conserved areas to provide appropriate benefits and support to local communities is assessed using pre-defined rating scales. This assessment uses a predefined list of common activities and programmes often undertaken by conserved areas for the benefit of local communities. These activities fall into two main categories: those that contribute to material well-being (such as production, businesses, jobs and infrastructure), and those that contribute to intangible well-being (including health, education, conflict resolution, and cultural services).

**PR11 - Environmental education**

PR11, which examines the appropriateness of various awareness-raising activities, focuses on environmental education and training initiatives. Environmental education plays a key role in facilitating a harmonious balance between the essential needs of individuals and the vital services provided by the natural environment. These services include provisioning, regulating, cultural and supporting functions that benefit stakeholders both within and beyond the geographical scope of the conserved areas. conserved areas initiatives are strategically designed to enhance human capacity for environmental stewardship and to address environmental crises and challenges, including the pressing issue of climate change. These activities aim to promote a deeper understanding of nature (knowledge) and the acquisition of skills for the sustainable management of natural resources. The evaluation of environmental education and awareness-raising activities within a governance and management conserved areas (Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures) includes a comprehensive analysis of their alignment with conservation and management objectives. ***The main question: Are the environmental education and awareness activities/programmes carried out by the conserved areas directly linked to the conservation and management objectives of the critical elements?***

The evaluation methodology involves reviewing a comprehensive list of common environmental education and awareness activities. This approach provides flexibility to tailor the analysis by including specific or essential programmes that meet the unique needs of the conserved areas analysed.

**PR12 - Tourism management**

In evaluating visitor management strategies within a Conserved Area, two key aspects are considered: the management of visitor facilities and services, and their impacts and effects on the conserved area. Together, these components contribute to the balance between environmental conservation and the promotion of sustainable tourism within the conserved areas. The first part of the analysis focuses on evaluating strategies to mitigate the impact of tourism activities to safeguard the intrinsic values of the conserved area. The second analyses the alignment of facilities and services with the objectives of tourism and environmental education within the conserved areas. These components are crucial to maintaining the delicate balance between environmental conservation and tourism promotion within the conserved areas. The unique historical, cultural and geographical context of the conserved areas, together with the involvement of multiple stakeholders, adds to the complexity of visitor management. The effectiveness of visitor management strategies is critical to ensuring that the values and significance of the conserved areas are maintained.

***The main question: To what extent does the conserved areas effectively manage visitor facilities, services and the impacts of environmental tourism, considering the multiple dimensions of sustainability and compatibility?***

This assessment uses a structured checklist of key criteria for promoting, managing and minimising the impacts of tourist visits. The approach is adaptable to the specific characteristics of the conserved areas under consideration.

**PRX - Setting objectives**

At the end of the section there is the table of objectives organized to insert Objective as Short or Long term and Comments.

## Outputs

Indicators related to the results (outputs) are identified by the acronym O/P, which stands for outputs. This choice has been made to avoid confusion between the products or results of short-term interventions (outputs) and the expected long-term changes (outcomes).

**O/P1 - Implementation of the work/action plan**

Evaluation of the work plan implementation to governance and management of the conserved areas involves a systematic analysis of the extent to which the annual or multi-annual work/action plan has been carried out. This assessment focuses on the key activities within the work plan and involves measuring the extent to which the priorities set out in the work/action plan have been achieved in the previous year (with reference to the relevant year in the comments if a multi-annual plan is used). The categories of activities, such as key elements management, control, environmental education, tourism management, etc., serve as the basis for the evaluation. Each activity represents actions carried out within these activity categories to achieve specific objectives. ***The main question: To what extent has the conserved areas successfully implemented the primary activities outlined in the work/action plan?***

Implementation refers to the execution of the annual or multi-year work/action plan related to conserved areas activities. The approach involves categorising activities and assessing their realisation based on predefined scales. In the absence of a work/action plan, the assessment can be based on the categories and activities found in the Process element. These categories include management and protection of key elements, stakeholder relations, tourism, monitoring and research. By undertaking this assessment, the conserved areas can gain insight into the actualisation of its planned activities and make informed decisions to improve its management and conservation efforts.

**O/P2 - Area Control**

Section O/P2 is used to assess the control and protection of the conserved areas. The assessment evaluates the control of the key elements prioritised in the management and governance of the conserved areas. The ability to ensure the control and collection of information on the key elements prioritised in the management and governance of the conserved areas prevents or minimises illegal activities or contentious issues.

***The main question: What is the current level of control over the management and governance of the key elements of the conserved areas?***

If the managers of the conserved areas know exactly the level of control over the conserved area surface, this value should be recorded. Otherwise, one of the four categories of the relative scale should be selected.

## Outcomes

Indicators associated with the Effects and Impacts element of the management cycle are identified by the acronym O/C, which stands for Outcomes. This designation has been chosen to avoid confusion between the short-term results (outputs) of interventions and the intended long-term objectives or outcomes. To improve clarity, the term 'long-term objectives' within the management cycle has been replaced by 'effects and impacts'. This change in nomenclature is consistent with IMET-conserved areas's focus on assessing management effectiveness by evaluating how organisational, management and governance interventions contribute to achieving expected effects and impacts. Importantly, it is essential to establish the alignment between estimated effects/impacts and other facets of the management cycle. This includes identifying key elements of the management context, planning considerations, input availability, process performance and results achieved against business plans. This holistic measurement ensures a comprehensive assessment of management effectiveness and the overall success of the strategies implemented. By assessing the synergy between estimated effects/impacts and other elements of the management cycle, the evaluation process becomes a robust tool for measuring management effectiveness and aligning strategic efforts with long-term conservation goals.

The O/C1 indicator (Achievement of long-term conservation objectives of the management plan) includes an estimate of the percentage of long-term objectives achieved. A comprehensive assessment of management effectiveness, carried out iteratively over time, provides informed insights into the achievement of long-term objectives and desired states.

**O/C1 - Achievement of long-term objectives of the conserved areas management and governance**

Section O/C1 is an important element of the evaluation because it assesses the effectiveness in achieving of the conserved areas’ long-term objectives or expected conditions. ***The main question: To what extent has the conserved areas been successful in achieving its key management and governance plan objectives?***

The approach is to list the primary long-term objectives or exceptional conditions outlined in the management plan and assess the percentage of achievement through the effects and impacts of the conserved areas' management initiatives. This evaluation recognises the importance of understandable objectives for effective governance and management via the measurable results. The evaluation process reflects the vital link between strategic vision, actionable goals and effective management, ultimately shaping the trajectory of conservation efforts.

**O/C2 - Effects on key conservation elements**

Section O/C2 also assesses both the status and trends of the key conservation elements within the conserved areas. The primary objective of the conserved areas is positive, sustainable in-situ conservation of biodiversity. The assessment seeks to know whether management and governance are positively or negatively affecting the key conservation elements of the conserved areas. The process is streamlined by transferring prioritised management and governance elements from relevant sections, including CTX 4 (Key Animal and Plant Species), C2.2 (Stakeholder Constraints or Supports), C3.2 (Threats) and C4 (Key Elements - Ecosystem Services). ***The main question:*** ***Does management and governance have a positive or negative impact on the key conservation elements of the conserved areas?***

A comprehensive analysis comprises the assessments of direct users and indirect users. This examination reveals the insights as well as discrepancies in recommendations for improvement for the key elements of the conserved areas. To ensure a consistent assessment, a collaborative analysis between stakeholders or their representatives is facilitated by a dual assessment - both direct and indirect users. A statistical formula determines the weighted value (Effect column). The availability of information (high, medium, low) helps to refine the estimates of status and trend for each key element of the conserved areas. The comparison of results between direct and indirect data can be detailed in the comments section.

It should be noted that the status and trends of the key conservation elements refer to the value assessed at the time of the assessment. According to these criteria, the conservation status of the conserved areas' key elements may have a negative value but still show a positive trend, and vice versa.

**O/C3 - Impacts on local communities**

Section O/C3\*\* assesses how the management and governance of the conserved areas affects local stakeholders and communities. The assessment process encompasses multiple dimensions of quality of life, influencing both material and intangible aspects, and emphasises the importance of good governance in enhancing the overall well-being of local stakeholders, considering the potential impacts of environmental change and changes in resource availability. This includes examining how these activities affect factors such as consumption patterns, income, wealth, quality of life, health, and social and cultural relationships. ***The main question: Does the management of the conserved areas have a positive or negative impact on the quality of life of local stakeholders?***

By carefully evaluating these impacts, the assessment helps to determine whether management practices contribute positively or negatively to the holistic quality of life of local communities. The assessment involves evaluating these activities against established positive and negative criteria.

# Analysis report

**Analysis report description**

Analysis of the results involves careful observation of the scores obtained during the assessment in the various forms and summaries provided by the graphs. The scores awarded give an immediate overview of the conservation efforts, while simplifying the complex issues involved in the management of conserved areas. However, as well as providing an overall vision, it is sometimes necessary to go back to the data to better identify potential management issues that can be considered or even resolved. Simply looking at the IMET overall scores assigned to the different elements of the assessment to make decisions can lead to misinterpretations and wrong decisions in the management of a protected area.

Assessment of the six elements of the IUCN World Commission on conserved and protected areas framework provides information on the extent to which management is achieving its objectives and how effectively the conserved areas is conserving its ecosystem services and biodiversity and other intrinsic values. An important part of the analysis is to identify the extent to which the desired outcomes are being achieved because of management activities or because of other factors for which managers and stakeholders are (or are not) responsible. For example, it is possible that the ecosystem services and biodiversity of a well-managed conserved areas are steadily declining or under severe threat of extinction (e.g., due to climate change), while other conserved areas that are not managed very effectively may be able to maintain their values. It is important to understand the causes of management successes and failures: without this analysis, any attempt to improve management would be ineffective.

The initial assessment of a protected area with IMET-conserved areas allows the baseline level of important elements for conservation and management effectiveness analysis to be established. A better assessment of governance and management effectiveness can be made by comparing the context and current management situation of the conserved areas with the previously collected information. Repeating the IMETs-conserved areas over time will encourage the collection and organisation of information, leading to a gradual improvement in the assessment of management effectiveness.

The Analysis Report module is structured as follow

1. **General elements of the conserved areas**
2. **Key elements of conserved areas**
   * Management Entity
   * Stakeholders users and managing the conserved areas
   * Ecosystem services identified by the stakeholder for their governance and management
   * Key biodiversity elements of the conserved areas
3. **Evaluation of the conserved areas management cycle elements**
4. **Management effectiveness analysis (analysis + swot analysis)**
5. **General planning**
6. **Table of planning**
7. **Key questions**

## General elements of the conserved areas

What are the general elements of the conserved areas?

The first part of the analysis report provides basic information on the conserved areas being assessed:

* Definition (corresponds to the CBD definition of a Conserved Area)
* Country name
* Name as provided by the operator
* Name in original language and international language
* Name of designation (e.g. reserve, sanctuary, park, etc.)
* Type of designation (national, regional, international)
* Type (terrestrial, marine, coastal)
* Surface
* Status (proposed, listed, adopted, designated, established)
* Year of the enactment

Figure 8: Analysis report – Table of the general elements of the Conserved Areas

Une image contenant texte, capture d’écran, logiciel, nombre

Description générée automatiquement

## Key elements of the conserved areas

What are the key elements of the conserved areas?

This section is a key part of the analysis report as it identifies natural resources and ecosystem functions that are considered as the most important in the conserved areas, as assessed by each stakeholder or their representatives. It helps identify the importance and priority of the intervention, by listing the key elements according to their importance and the level of commitment

* + **Management Entity**, imported from CTX 1.2 Governance and Management Entity the key element of the typology and organisation of the structures that manage the conserved areas
  + **Stakeholders users and managing the conserved areas**, imported from SA.2, is the ranking of the stakeholder involvement dived into direct users and indirect user.

Figure 9: Analysis report – Table of key elements of the Conserved Areas

Une image contenant texte, capture d’écran, Police, nombre

Description générée automatiquement

* + **Ecosystem services identified by the stakeholder for their governance and management**, imported from SA.2 are the ranked lists in order of importance of the ecosystem services by the stakeholders

Figure 10: Analysis report – Table of the importance of the ecosystem services identified by stakeholders

Une image contenant texte, capture d’écran, Police, nombre

Description générée automatiquement

* + **Key biodiversity elements of conserved areas**, imported to O/C2 demonstrates the status of the key biodiversity elements from the collaborative analysis between stakeholders or their representatives.

Figure 11: Analysis report – Table of the importance of the key biodiversity elements

Une image contenant texte, capture d’écran, nombre, Police

Description générée automatiquement

## Evaluation of the conserved areas management cycle elements

What are the conserved areas management effectiveness scores?

The IMET-conserved areas results show which management efforts are yielding an impact on reducing threats and enhancing biodiversity and ecosystem services. This section prepares the management effectiveness analysis of the next section by showing all management effectiveness values in different visualisations.

## Governance and Management effectiveness analysis (analysis + swot analysis)

What conclusions and indications can be drawn about the management effectiveness of the conserved areas?

This section provides an in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of the conserved areas management, with a description of each element and a concluding SWOT analysis. Each element can be analysed across several dimensions, focusing on priorities and identifying elements for improvement. Using the SWOT analysis, which is the simplest way of schematising the elements for planning, the section prepares the next sections on overall planning.

## General planning

What are the conserved areas management/governance priorities?

This section presents the priorities for ecosystem services, key biodiversity components and threats. The priorities were identified during the collective stakeholder meeting and analysis of the management and governance context sections C3.2 and C4. The prioritisation of the key elements of the conserved areas provides guidance for the planning presented in the next section.

Figure 12: Analysis report – General Planning

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Description générée automatiquement

## Table of planning

The planning table is based on the DPSIR (Drivers, Pressures, State, Impact, and Response) framework, a widely used approach for analysing and solving problems of interaction between society and the environment. It is a simplified way to manage and govern the conserved areas with a result-oriented approach with all stakeholders.

Figure : Analysis report – Table of planning

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | | |
| **1er Step: Past situation and threats and driving forces** | **2nd Step: Impact of threats and drivers and current situation** | **3rd Step: identify responses and expected conditions** |

In the adapted version of the IMET-conserved areas, a logical analysis of three steps is proposed

1. describing and analysing the past situation, identifying the threats and driving forces that directly and indirectly affect the management of natural resources – governance,
2. capturing the impact of threats and drivers and present the current situation,
3. identifying responses in relation to expected conditions.

The table of planning is the most straightforward way to work together with the stakeholders to manage and govern the conserved areas according to a result-oriented approach.

### Possible road map - Management plan midterm and long term

This section contains a table to help develop a logical sequence of actions and strategies for both the short /mid-term and long-term management of conserved areas priorities. This roadmap, with its different stages, details the progression of activities and outputs over time to address challenges and achieve changes and outcomes. Finally, it provides a systematic framework for the effective implementation of the strategies and activities of a management plan following a result-oriented approach.

## Key questions

This section highlights the importance of developing a comprehensive financial plan to cover the implementation of the management or work plan to achieve the expected outcomes. This plan serves as a basis for effectively presenting funding proposals to potential donors and partners involved in conserved areas management and governance. It will also help to identify the different forms of support required by the different stakeholders to facilitate the sustainable use of ecosystem services and conservation of biodiversity values of the conserved areas.

Part IV: Integrated analysis and planning

This chapter explores the power of a seamless alignment between analysis and planning in the conservation, management and governance of the conserved areas.

# Analysis and Planning

## Analysis and planning integration

Consistent alignment between analysis and planning enables real-time adjustments thereby improving decision making, promoting and encouraging efficient resource allocation. This integration of analysis and planning reduces the complexity of management and governance work, minimises data management and encourages collaborative stakeholder engagement, ultimately improving the overall effectiveness of conservation governance and management.

Remember that considering planning within the IMET-conserved areas tool, two options emerge:

1. **Comprehensive Analysis and Planning:** This involves a thorough analysis of all IMET-conserved areas management and governance elements prior to planning. It ensures a comprehensive understanding of the intricacies of the conserved areas and closely aligns planning strategies with the results of the analysis, thereby optimising management approaches.
2. **Focused Initial Analysis and Planning:** Planning can also begin without a full management and governance analysis, which is particularly relevant for newly established or emerging conserved areas. In this case, priority is given to developing initial intervention strategies that focus primarily on the conserved areas conservation priorities and the establishment of governance and management structures. The full analysis will be carried out at a later stage to further refine the approach.

Ultimately, the approach chosen will depend on the maturity and specific needs of the conserved areas, with the former option prioritising data-driven insights and the latter addressing immediate governance and management needs.

The merged framework that integrates analysis and planning within the IMET-conserved areas is as follows:

1. Initial assessment and understanding of the context
   * analyse relevant data on the context, objectives and status of the conserved areas,
   * understand the management and governance framework, considering its maturity.
2. Preliminary prioritisation
   * identify the key priorities and objectives of the conserved areas values for an in-depth analysis and planning objectives,
   * determine whether **A. Comprehensive Analysis and Planning**, or **B. Focused Initial Analysis and Planning** is more appropriate, depending on the stage of the conserved areas.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. ***Comprehensive Analysis and Planning***    * Conduct a comprehensive analysis of all elements of IMET-conserved areas management and governance,    * Evaluate data to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats,    * Analyse governance and management structures, practices and conservation outcomes,    * Derive data-driven insights to inform planning strategies,    * Develop short, medium, and long-term strategies to deliver essential services and achievable targets. | 1. ***Focused Initial Analysis and Planning***    * Address urgent short- and medium-term planning needs while awaiting more robust opportunities for planning,    * Propose a viable and practical governance and management structure and organisation that meets the immediate needs and objectives, while ensuring that the values and importance of the conserved areas are preserved,    * Develop a well thought out short- and medium-term strategy to deliver essential services and achievable targets. |

Whether you choose the comprehensive (option A) or the initial (option B) analysis and planning approach, it's important to remember that combining these processes will require you to

* incorporate the results of the analysis into your planning strategies.
* verify that your planning decisions are based on the results of the analysis.

The ultimate outcome of the two analysis and planning joined approaches involves the scrutiny of governance and management aspects, coupled with the creation of streamlined planning to the enhancement of the conserved areas’ ecosystem services and biodiversity. Naturally, these two methodologies share commonalities within the procedures, given their shared end goals. Subsequent chapters will outline the selected procedures of action – Option A or Option B – while distinctly highlighting the techniques and stages inherent to each approach.

|  |
| --- |
| ***Note****: There are two Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) available that focus on the use and analysis of IMET, which can provide valuable assistance in effectively using and questioning data from the IMET-conserved areas. While both MOOCs focus on the use of the IMET standard, they are of significant value also for IMET-conserved areas. The MOOCs provide comprehensive guidance in the use of IMET-conserved areas due to the common logic of data collection, visualisation techniques, support for statistical calculations and results-oriented methodology. These educational resources are available on ERAIFT web page or on demand.* |

## Comprehensive Analysis and Planning (Option A)

In the hypothesis where conserved areas already have well-established management and governance structures the Comprehensive Analysis and Planning can be adopted. This analysis and planning approach for a Conserved Area ensures a comprehensive understanding of management and governance, fostering well-informed decisions for enhanced effectiveness.

1. **Review of analysis process**, briefly reviewing the filling process leading to the final assessment results.
2. **Visualisation of assessment results**, use visualisation tools such as radar and histograms to make the data and scores easier to understand, compare and analyse.
3. **Overall analysis**, (a) study the full radar visualisation to gain an initial broad understanding, (b) evaluate whether the values of the different components of the management cycle are aligned or significantly different, (c) identify points of convergence and divergence, assessing both positive and negative aspects of the analysis.
4. **Alignment of information**, undertake a comparison of the information available across different modules Intervention context, Management context and the section Effects/Impact; this step aims to verify the alignment of management activities toward the core values of the conserved areas.
5. **Specific analysis**, dive further into evaluating crucial assessment components, including information gaps, positive and negative scores, management effectiveness assessments scores, apparent score inconsistency, balance between the groups of elements management context-planning-inputs and process-outputs-effects/impacts.
6. **Causal Analysis**, (a) engage in meaningful discussions with the stakeholders or their representatives to comprehend the underlying reasons behind both successful and unsuccessful management effectiveness elements and specific activities, (b) investigate the causes contributing to any perceived inconsistency in scores.
7. **Enhancement suggestions**, provide recommendations for improvement on key elements of the conserved areas to (a) correct management activities, refine results, achieve objectives, (b) highlight strengths and commendable aspects, (c) highlight potential areas for improvement.
8. **Operational notes**, conclude the analysis by composing a concise operational note, a summarized report to record the analysis and proposals for improvement

It is important to underscore that while adjustments might be warranted to rectify errors or discrepancies between scores, it is unprofessional to change ratings to improve scores. Changes are permissible only in cases where genuine errors arise post IMET completion. In such instances, specific sections must be reevaluated based on new considerations.

This structured process ensures a comprehensive understanding of the IMET-conserved areas management evaluation and fosters well-informed decision-making and progress in management effectiveness.

## Focused Initial Analysis and Planning (Option B)

In scenarios where conserved areas are newly established or emerging, a focused approach to analysis and planning can be adopted. This approach allows planning to begin without a full management and governance analysis, prioritising immediate conservation objectives and proposing basic governance and management structures. This option is particularly important to ensure timely intervention and strategic establishment of governance and management activities.

1. **Preliminary assessment**: Begin with an overview of the conserved areas' fundamental key components and elements to establish (a) a preliminary assessment framework of the values and importance of the conserved areas for the stakeholders (b) the existing structures on the conserved areas natural resources management.
2. **Review of the focused analysis**, briefly reviewing the filling process leading to the results in the Analysis report concerning the stakeholders, ecosystem services and key biodiversity elements and the ranking and priorities established in the management context.
3. **Limited data analysis**: Undertake a limited analysis of available data, focusing on areas directly related to the identified conservation priorities and management structures.
4. **Immediate intervention strategies for targeting conserved areas’ core values and priorities**: Devote initial efforts to formulating objectives that address immediate conservation needs of ecosystem services and key biodiversity elements.
5. **Management and Governance Suggestions**, making constructive suggestions to (a) improve activities, enhance results, achieve objectives, (b) highlight the commendable strengths of the stakeholders and noteworthy attributes of key elements within the conserved areas.
6. **Stakeholder engagement**: Initiate stakeholder engagement to build knowledge and awareness, validate intervention strategies and ensure alignment with broader conservation objectives and the governance and management measures.
7. **Governance and structural framework**: Establish essential governance and management structures that will serve as the basis for future assessments and decision-making, to accomplish the previous target.
8. **Operational notes**, conclude the analysis by writing a concise operational note, a summary report to record the analysis and proposals and to be used for potential partners support.

It is important to emphasise that while this approach allows for flexibility and rapid response, it is a transition to comprehensive analysis and planning as the conserved areas matures.

### Continuous improvement through ongoing analysis

Both Option A and Option B are valuable approaches, carefully tailored to fit the specific situation of the conserved areas. This ensures that management and governance methods are highly effective and consistent across the diverse area over time.

It's important to remember that regularly analysing how the conserved areas is managed and governed is crucial to adaptively protect its values over time. In this light, it's strongly recommended that:

1. **Ongoing analysis**, as the conserved areas evolves, conduct regular analyses to improve strategies, check progress, and smartly deal with new challenges.
2. **Stay adaptable and evolve**, always be attentive by looking over and adjusting the analysis method, this should be guided by a growing understanding of the complex workings of the conserved areas.
3. **Growth and informed evolution**, as the conserved areas gets more complex, think about moving to a complete analysis and planning method and use collected data to gain a comprehensive understanding of the conserved area.

Figure 14: Example of planning



Part V: Natural resource management and governance

# Establishing effective natural resource management and governance with local stakeholders

The IMET conserved areas approach aims to empower local communities in managing various landscapes (e.g., forests, savannahs) and seascapes (e.g., fishing areas, marine conservation areas). The approaches combine data collection, informed governance strategies, and effective management practices. By bringing together stakeholder engagement, informed analysis, and strategic planning, IMET conserved areas lays the foundation for adaptive, efficient, and inclusive resource management.

A crucial aspect of the IMET-conserved areas analysis is achieving collaboration with stakeholders. This means working closely with people who care about the environment because they strongly depend on natural resources. The analysis' success hinges on building understanding, fostering cooperation, and creating a shared vision among stakeholders. This collaboration ensures that everyone is on the same page when it comes to managing natural resources and the environment. In other terms, IMET conserved areas is like a big puzzle where each piece represents a stakeholder. When these pieces fit together well, it results in better resource management. IMET-conserved areas helps people work together, understand each other's perspectives, and come up with a plan that benefits everyone and the environment.

However, to make IMET-conserved areas work effectively, skilled coaches are needed. These coaches interact with stakeholders to help them collaborate on managing resources and the environment. This chapter provides a basic understanding of how to approach the complex and lengthy process of expanding goals and motivations of the stakeholders. This involves including not only economic resource efficiency but also environmental sustainability and aspects of fairness and involvement in the governance and management of a Conserved Area.

## Stakeholders engagement on IMET conserved areas analysis

Effective management and governance of natural resources depends on meaningful stakeholder engagement. To make good use of the IMET conserved areas, it is essential to establish a solid framework for collaboration with the stakeholders and to follow a logical progression from the presentation of the analysis to the description of the steps in the approach to the expected outcomes. This pathway includes stakeholder identification, comprehensive understanding of the conserved areas landscape with the full support of the stakeholders, stakeholder consultation, analysis and implementation of strategies to ensure sustainable use and conservation of resources in agreement with the stakeholders.

However, IMET conserved areas depends on good stakeholder interaction and engagement techniques to gain a comprehensive understanding of the conserved areas land or seascape. Therefore, it is highly recommended that the IMET-conserved areas process is facilitated by professionals with expertise in stakeholder relations. Alternatively, the coaches responsible for conducting the IMET-conserved areas analysis should be equipped with the necessary stakeholder engagement skills prior to the analysis. This will ensure a seamless and successful implementation of the IMET-conserved areas analysis.

To ensure effective stakeholder engagement in IMET conserved areas exercise, the list of key steps presented below should be followed.

**Stakeholder identification and segmentation**

This step involves identifying and segmenting stakeholders. Stakeholders can range from local communities and indigenous groups, to disadvantaged groups and minorities to government agencies, non-governmental organisations and private or public economic operators dependent on the conserved areas resources. Each stakeholder group brings different perspectives, interests and contributions to the table. Segmenting them helps to develop targeted engagement strategies that address their specific needs and concerns. This step is achieved with the section SA.1 and SA.2 of the module Context of intervention which cover several aspects:

1. **Stakeholder mapping**, begin by listing all potential stakeholders with a stake in the conserved areas, this could include local communities, indigenous groups, government agencies, NGOs, businesses, academic institutions and others.
2. **Categorise,** creategroup stakeholders based on common characteristics or interests, this could be done by considering their roles, interests, level of influence or dependence on conserved areas resources.
3. **Involvement ranking**, determine the level of involvement of each stakeholder group in relation to the conserved areas. The assign involvement rankings are based on factors such as their dependence on resources, direct or indirect users, living in or near, potential impact and level of expertise, as well as their potential to contribute to the objectives of the conserved areas.
4. **Interaction with the conserved areas resources**, evaluate how each stakeholder group interacts with the conserved areas, consider their interaction as dependence, access, rivalry, estimation of the resources, etc.
5. **Identify the specific needs**, concerns the dependence and logically the expectations of each stakeholder group on the conserved areas management and governance, this will help tailor engagement strategies to address their unique perspectives.

**Understanding the conserved areas social landscape**

The foundation of any successful stakeholder engagement strategy is a thorough analysis of the natural resource context. This analysis includes identifying the conserved areas, assessing biodiversity hotspots and key elements, identifying key natural resources and ecosystem services and measuring existing use patterns. By understanding the intricacies of the conserved areas social landscape, it becomes possible to tailor management and governance strategies that are contextually relevant. This step is achieved with the sections CTX1, CTX2, CTX4 and section SA.2 of the module Context of intervention.

**Inclusivity and alignment to build a shared vision**

Once stakeholders have been identified and basic knowledge of the conserved areas social landscape and resources has been acquired, the key task is to create a shared vision. This involves fostering a common understanding of the value of the resource, the challenges it faces, and working together to identify desirable outcomes based on joint management and governance efforts. This step is essential to minimise conflict and promote coherent decision-making. It should also be clear from the IMET-conserved areas analysis that regular consultations, workshops and dialogues play a crucial role in aligning stakeholders around common goals. This step is achieved with the element Management context of the module Management evaluation in the module Analysis report.

## Stakeholders engagement over time

Stakeholder involvement in the management and governance of the conserved areas is an ongoing and dynamic process. Initially, stakeholders are identified, categorised and prioritised. As the conserved areas evolves, engagement strategies will be adjusted to reflect stakeholder needs and concerns. Regular communication and feedback mechanisms are established to ensure ongoing collaboration. Consensus building among stakeholders promotes shared goals and strategies. This continuous, evolving engagement over time ensures a holistic approach to effective conserved areas management, fostering understanding, cooperation and sustainable outcomes.

To ensure effective stakeholder engagement in conserved areas management and governance over time, these key steps can be outlined:

**Collaborative Strategies**

1. ***Stakeholder consultation*** – Maintain an ongoing process of stakeholder consultation to gather insights and concerns, involving those directly affected by resource management.
2. ***Inclusive planning*** - Design management plans collaboratively to address the diverse needs of stakeholders, ensuring fairness and representation.
3. ***Clear roles and responsibilities*** - Define each stakeholder's role within the framework to promote accountability and alignment with common goals.
4. ***Adaptive management*** - Embrace the principles of adaptive management to allow for adjustments based on changing circumstances, regularly evaluating and adjusting strategies.
5. ***Capacity building*** - Empower stakeholders through training and knowledge sharing, enabling them to actively contribute to decision-making and management.
6. ***Conflict resolution mechanisms*** - Develop mechanisms to address conflicts and disagreements constructively and maintain a cooperative atmosphere.

**Implementation and continuous improvement**

1. ***Communication channels*** - Select effective communication methods, such as community meetings or digital platforms, to keep stakeholders informed and engaged.
2. ***Engagement strategy*** - Tailor engagement strategies to specific stakeholder groups and encourage regular consultation and joint decision-making.
3. ***Feedback mechanisms*** - Establish feedback mechanisms to ensure stakeholders' voices are heard and influence management and governance processes.
4. ***Consensus building*** - Encourage collaboration among stakeholders to develop common goals and priorities and align efforts for effective resource management.
5. ***Ongoing Review*** *-* Regularly review and update the effectiveness of conserved areas management and governance to ensure that
   * stakeholder identification and segmentation as the conserved areas evolves, considering new stakeholders
   * evolution of the conserved areas landscape and natural resources in terms of conditions, trends, threats, etc.
   * inclusiveness and alignment as a shared vision in the long-term governance and management of the conserved areas.

In conclusion, the establishment of effective stakeholder engagement follows a logical path which begins with a stakeholder consultation, leading to inclusive planning, clear role definition, adaptive strategies, capacity building and conflict resolution. As collaborative strategies are implemented, continuous monitoring and evaluation guide improvements. This holistic approach, based on collaboration and analysis, aims to harmonise resource use and conservation objectives. Through active participation, communication and shared responsibility, stakeholders become an integral part of securing the future of natural resources.

1. IUCN-WCPA Task Force on OECMs, (2019). *Recognising and reporting other effective area-based conservation measures.* Gland, Switzerland: IUCN.

   Jonas, H. D., MacKinnon, K., Marnewick, D. and Wood, P. (2023). *Site-level tool for identifying other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs).* First edition. IUCN WCPA Technical Report Series No. 6. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)