

# Target 3 of the Global Biodiversity Framework

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This document was prepared in June 2024 to support preparations for the  
CBD COP16 in Cali, Colombia.

It is intended to be used as an introductory report, particularly for  
Indigenous Peoples, and is written from a human rights perspective.

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## What is Target 3?

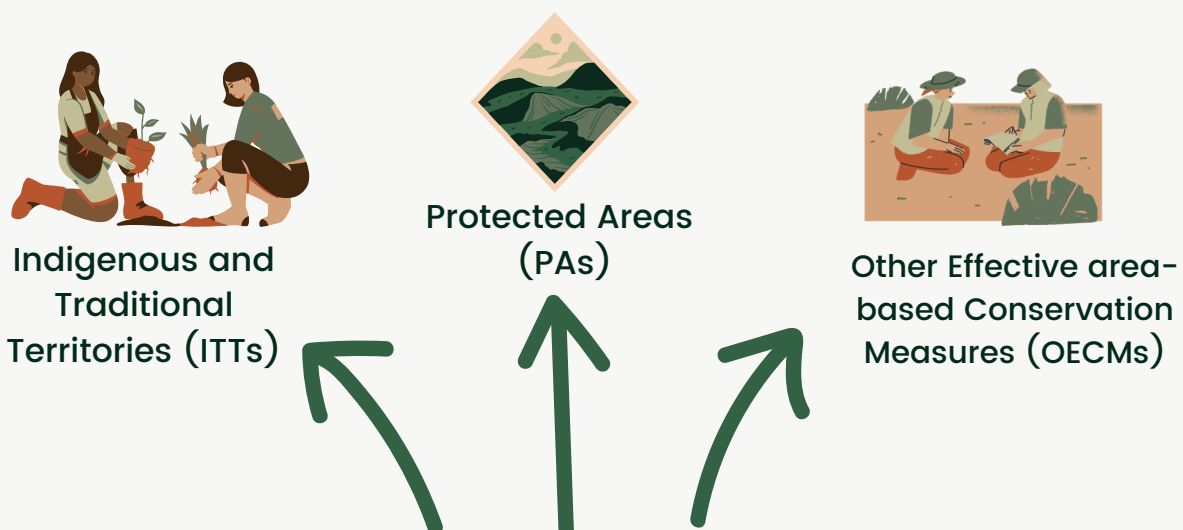
**Target 3 sets the ambitious goal of conserving 30% of the natural world by 2030, including lands, waters and oceans. And, most importantly, it is committed to doing so not only by recognizing the contributions of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, but by actively seeking to recognise, respect, protect and realise their rights.**

**What?** At least 30 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas, and of marine and coastal areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, are effectively conserved and managed”

**When?** By 2030

**How?** “Through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed protected area systems and other effective area-based conservation measures, recognizing indigenous and traditional territories where appropriate, and integrated into broader landscapes, seas and oceans, ensuring at the same time that any sustainable use, where appropriate in such areas, is fully consistent with conservation outcomes”

**But never without** “recognize and respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories.”



## Conservation Pathways



# How will Target 3 be achieved?

## Protected Areas (PAs)

Most large-scale conservation initiatives have been carried out conventionally through **Protected Areas (PA)**, understood as "**a geographically defined area that is designated or regulated and managed to achieve specific conservation objectives**" (Article 2, CBD). These may be declared and managed by governments, by private actors (trusts or companies) or by Indigenous Peoples and local communities, or by some combination of these (for example, joint management).

*When they are created by external agents without respecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, they can lead to evictions or violations of the rights of those who occupy, own or use these areas.*

## Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures

In 2010, the CBD COP adopted another conservation policy: **Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs)**, defined as "**a geographically defined area, other than a Protected Area, that is governed and managed in a way that achieve positive and sustained long-term results for the in situ conservation of biodiversity** with associated ecosystem functions and services and, where appropriate, **cultural, spiritual, socio-economic and other locally relevant values**".

*OECMs must show conservation results, even if that is not their purpose. Like PAs, these areas can be governed by a number of actors, including Indigenous Peoples and local communities.*



### Indigenous and Traditional Territories

In 2022, the CBD COP recognized in the GBF another "pathway" to conservation: **Indigenous and Traditional Territories (ITT)**. Although there is no agreed definition of "indigenous and traditional territories", they are understood as lands, territories and areas owned, occupied and/or used by Indigenous Peoples and local communities. In the context of Target 3, customary governance and management of these territories contribute to conservation outcomes.

*Recognizing Indigenous and traditional territories does not mean that they cannot also be recognized as protected areas (as in the Indigenous Protected Areas), or they could be identified, recognized and reported as OECMs (with free, prior and informed consent), or they can be recognized as contributors to Target 3 on their own terms, as indigenous or traditional territories.*



#### **ANYTHING ELSE YOU NEED TO KNOW?**

*Target 3 also confirms that all actions undertaken to reach 30% must be carried out "recognizing and respecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, including over their traditional territories."*

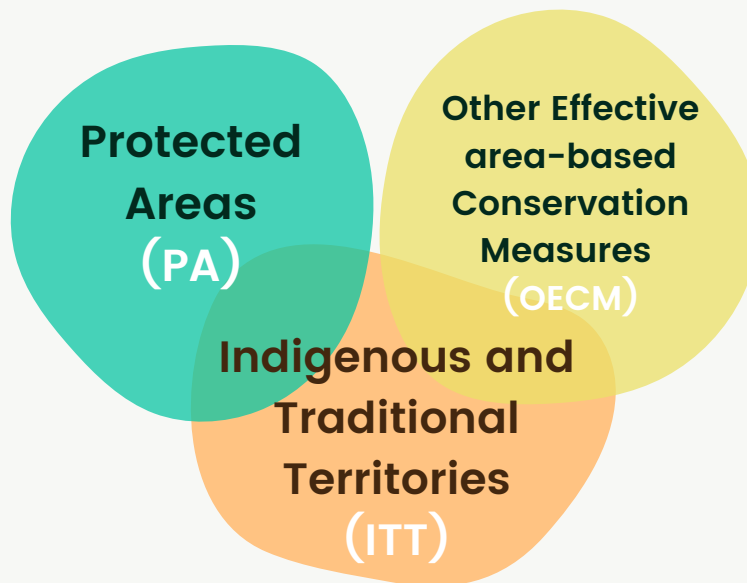


This commitment to recognizing and respecting rights must underpin conservation actions adopted in the three pathways described above. It also requires that Indigenous and traditional territories be recognized and counted towards the fulfilment of Target 3, both nationally and globally.



## Responses to Target 3

*It is vital that governments, conservation organisations and other actors understand and apply the new language of Target 3 to ensure that the PAs, the OECMs and the Indigenous and Traditional Territories can be counted towards reaching 30% of conserved and protected lands, waters and oceans.*



These actors should **recognize the contributions of Indigenous and Traditional Territories to the conservation of biodiversity, without necessarily having to be identified as PAs or OECMs or being subject to the environmental jurisdiction of the state.** The contributions of Indigenous and Traditional Territories (ITT) to biodiversity conservation should be recognized in a manner acceptable to affected peoples and communities in full respect for their rights guaranteed at the national and international levels.

However, **governments and other actors may use purely technical approaches, without fully recognising ITTs, and instead may focus on establishing PAs and recognizing OECMs without fully respecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples.** and rights differentiated from local communities. This could result in the creation of conservation areas without free, prior and informed consent, and without allowing Indigenous Peoples to participate effectively in the governance and management of these areas.



Governments and conservation organisations often rely on funding entities to create conserved and protected areas. **This means that those who provide financing can have a lot of influence in the implementation and management of the PAs or OECMs they finance. Therefore, they have the responsibility to comply with applicable standards and avoid funding conservation initiatives linked to human rights violations** and could even play an active role in ensuring that PAs and OECMs meet their objectives and obligations, as set out in Target 3.

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## Self-determined options

***Indigenous Peoples and local communities can participate in different ways, and on their own terms, in the three pathways of Target 3. Here are a few ideas:***

- **Protected Areas (PAs)**

Where national laws allow, Indigenous Peoples and local communities can work with governments and other actors to establish Indigenous or community-led or co-managed Protected Areas. This can result in PAs that are wholly owned and governed by Indigenous Peoples and local communities, or that have some level of shared authority and responsibility with government bodies.

- **Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs)**

Indigenous Peoples and local communities may choose to identify, report and monitor OECMs and existing conservation areas that they manage and own. This can be done without changing existing governance or management arrangements. It can also be done by establishing cooperative agreements with other actors, such as conservation organisations, to support ongoing conservation outcomes.



- **Indigenous and Traditional Territories (ITTs)**

These areas are the territories of Indigenous Peoples or local communities (embodying traditional lifestyles), where biodiversity is already being conserved through the ways of life and own laws of Indigenous Peoples or local communities.

**To be counted in Target 3, governments must recognize the contribution of Indigenous and Traditional Territories to the conservation of biodiversity, in accordance with the aspirations of the Indigenous Peoples or local communities themselves.** As noted above, this can be done through the PA and OECM frameworks, but where appropriate options are not considered, recognition may be a necessary alternative.

Depending on the circumstances of Indigenous Peoples and national legislation, the recognition of Indigenous and Traditional Territories could be an opportunity to obtain legal protection, property titles, carry out land demarcation, and more.

This will largely depend on national circumstances and the current or developing national legal framework. Achieving official recognition and titling of land and water through national policy can be difficult. Working initially with local authorities and other actors could be a way to gain recognition of their role in biodiversity conservation, which can then be incorporated into national policies, programs, initiatives and laws.