

Transcript of the Video

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Hello, I am Maher Mahjoub, I am Programme Officer at the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. I am going to talk to you about the subject of protected areas. And to start with, what is a protected area?

The IUCN, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature defined a protected area in 2008 as follows. It is a geographically clearly defined area that is recognised, dedicated and managed by any means, effective, legal or otherwise, to ensure the long-term conservation of nature and its associated ecosystem services and cultural values. Protected areas may be established in terrestrial, coastal or marine environments. Protected areas contribute to the conservation of species. Either of an ecosystem or of a whole formed by natural and cultural components.

The importance of protected areas. Protected areas are an important pillar of biodiversity conservation strategies at the country level. They also contribute to the development of human and social activities. By ensuring the provision of many ecosystem services, be it locally, globally, through food, drinking water or medicines. Protected areas are also internationally recognised as an important natural tool in the fight against climate change. From a creation and management point of view, protected areas can be under the responsibility of States, NGOs, indigenous peoples or private entities.

The creation of protected areas began long ago. Among the first national parks created in the world was Yellowstone National Park in the United States, established in 1872. The Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo, created in 1925, is also cited as an example.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature - in addition to the definition - has established 7 categories for the management of protected areas. These management categories differ according to the management objectives assigned to each protected area. The 7 management categories are as follows. Integral nature reserve. Wilderness areas. National park, natural monument. Habitat or species management area. Protected terrestrial or marine landscapes and finally, protected resource management areas. You can see that as you go from the first category to the last, the degree, the level of protection established at the level of the protected area decreases. Going from integral protection to shared management in category 6.

Statistics on protected areas. The World Database on Protected Areas, which collects data from countries for the Global Report on the State and Status of the World's Protected Areas, indicates that as of November 2020 there are just over 260,000 protected areas in the world. Of course, these are protected areas in terrestrial, coastal and marine environments. 8% of this figure of protected areas have conducted an assessment of management effectiveness. In other words, just over 20,000, which is a very, very low figure.

The Aichi objective 11 of the Convention on Biological Diversity states that by 2020, at least 17% of terrestrial and inland water areas and 10% of marine and coastal areas, including areas of particular importance for biological diversity and ecosystem services, are conserved. On average of what? Through ecologically representative and well-connected networks - of what? - of protected areas. This means that the international community, through the Convention on Biological Diversity, recommends and calls on countries to double

their efforts to reach 17% of protected areas in terrestrial areas and 10% of protected areas in coastal and marine areas. It should be recalled that since the signing of the Convention on Biological Diversity in 1993, 160 member countries have almost doubled the surface area and size of their protected areas. Which is very, very good.

I had indicated the importance of effective management of protected areas because protected areas should not only be created. But also establish management plans and ensure that these management plans are executed and implemented. And for this purpose, the International Union for Conservation of Nature has developed in 2014 the 'green list' programme of protected areas. The objective of this programme is to help countries to reach international standards for the management and management effectiveness of protected areas. This standard has four evaluation components. An evaluation on the planning of the protected area. Another on effective management. A third component on equitable governance. A fourth component on successful conservation. For these four components, there are 17 criteria and 50 indicators to be assessed at site level, which may be relevant for the green list of protected areas. As of November 2020, 108 protected areas in the world have managed to get the IUCN Green List label. Protected areas are a national and international heritage. And the international community must redouble its efforts to reach the commitments of 17% on land and 10% on the sea. Until the end of 2020, it should be remembered that the global biodiversity framework for the post-2020 period will indicate a more ambitious target of 30% terrestrial and 30% marine protected areas that must be achieved by the countries that are contracting parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Thank you