

ESTABLISHING PROTECTED AREAS



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Protected Areas

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) defines a protected area as:

“A clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated, and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values.”



Essence of Establishing Protected Areas

The core essence of protected areas is preserving habitats and protecting species. By safeguarding natural environments from activities like deforestation, poaching, and pollution, these areas provide safe habitats where plants and animals can survive, reproduce, and maintain biodiversity, ensuring ecosystem stability over time.



Establishment and Classification of Protected Areas

Protected areas can be established in a variety of ways, but the most common mechanisms are these:

- Government action, usually at a national level, but often on regional or local levels as well.
- Land purchases by private individuals and conservation organizations.
- Actions of indigenous peoples and traditional societies.
- Development of biological field stations (which combine biodiversity protection and research with conservation education) by universities and other research organizations.

Main Protected-area Networks

- **TPAs (Terrestrial Protected Areas)**

These are land-based regions ((forests, grasslands, deserts, mountains), legally designated to conserve nature, ecosystems, wildlife, and other resources.

- **MPAs (Marine Protected Areas)**

Marine Protected Areas are sections of oceans or seas where human activities are restricted or managed to protect marine ecosystems, biodiversity, and habitats such as coral reefs, fish populations, and seagrass beds.

TABLE 15.1 IUCN Protected Area Designations I–VI

Category	Description
Ia Strict nature reserves	Managed mainly for scientific research and monitoring; areas of land and/or sea possessing some outstanding or representative ecosystems, geological or physiological features, and/or species
Ib Wilderness areas	Managed mainly for wilderness protection; large areas of unmodified or slightly modified land and/or sea retaining their natural character and influence, without permanent or significant habitation, which are protected and managed so as to preserve their natural condition
II National parks	Managed mainly for ecosystem protection and recreation; natural areas of land and/or sea designated to (1) protect the ecological integrity of one or more ecosystems for present and future generations; (2) exclude exploitation or occupation inimical to the purposes of designation of the area; and (3) provide a foundation for spiritual, scientific, educational, recreational, and visitor opportunities, all of which must be environmentally and culturally compatible
III Natural monuments	Managed mainly for conservation of specific natural features; areas containing one or more-specific natural or natural/cultural features of outstanding or unique value because of inherent rarity, representative or aesthetic qualities, or cultural significance
IV Habitat/species management areas	Managed mainly for conservation through management intervention; areas of land and/or sea subject to active intervention for management purposes so as to ensure the maintenance of habitats and/or to meet the requirements of specific species
V Protected landscapes and seascapes	Managed mainly for landscape/seascape conservation and recreation; areas of land, with coast and sea as appropriate, where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant aesthetic, ecological, and/or cultural value, and often with high biological diversity
VI Managed-resource protected areas	Managed mainly for the sustainable use of natural ecosystems; areas containing predominantly unmodified natural systems, managed to ensure long-term protection and maintenance of biological diversity, while also providing a sustainable flow of natural products and services to meet community needs

Source: After www.iucn.org.

Conservation Priorities

THE SPECIES APPROACH

One approach to establishing conservation priorities involves protecting particular species and, in doing so, protecting an entire biological community.

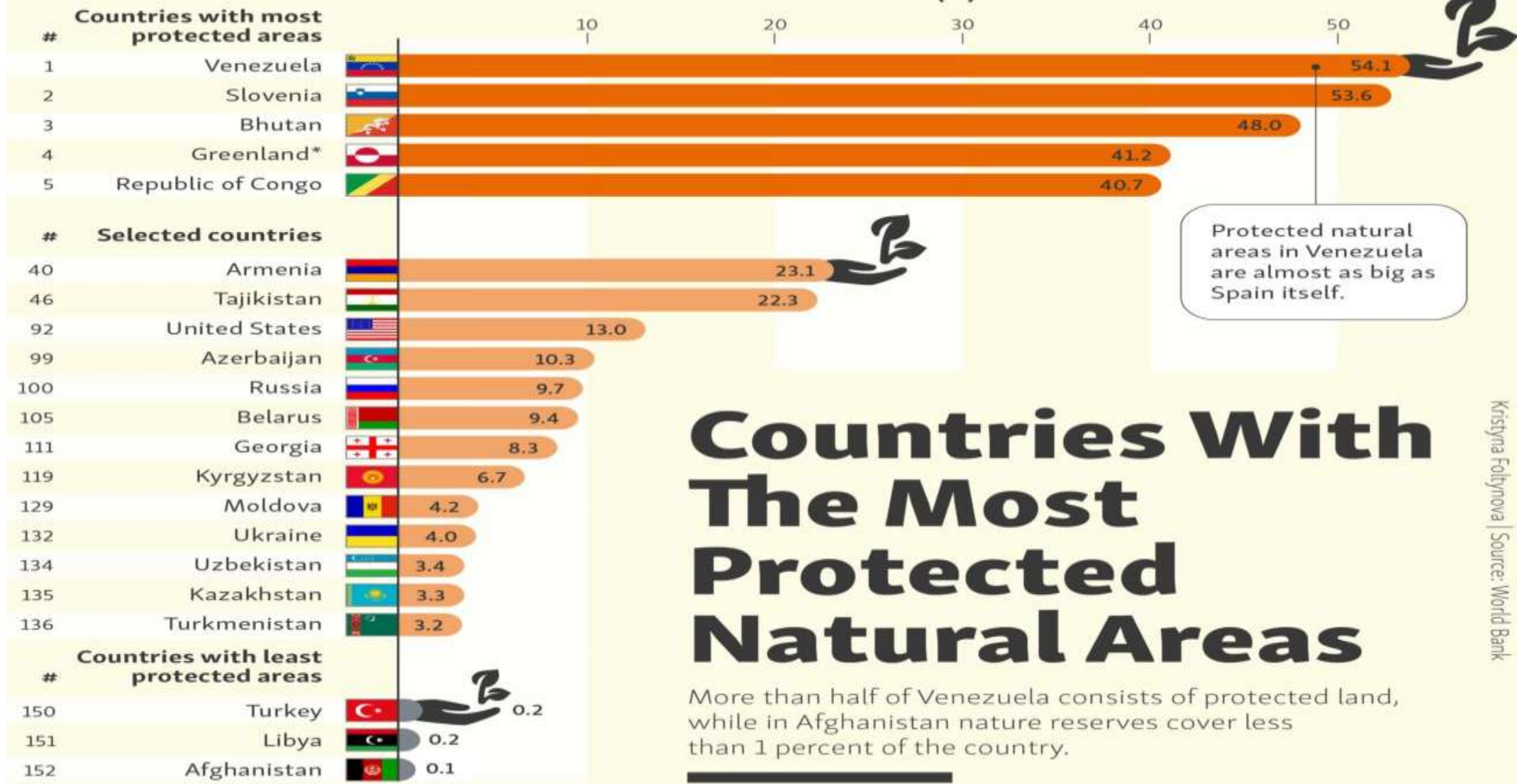
THE ECOSYSTEM APPROACH

A number of conservationists have argued that ecosystems and the biological communities that they contain, rather than species, should be targeted for conservation (Tallis and Polasky 2009).

THE HOTSPOT APPROACH

Certain organisms can be used as biodiversity indicators to guide protection efforts when specific data about whole ecosystems are unavailable.

Protected areas as a share of total land area (%)



Protected natural areas in Venezuela are almost as big as Spain itself.

Countries With The Most Protected Natural Areas

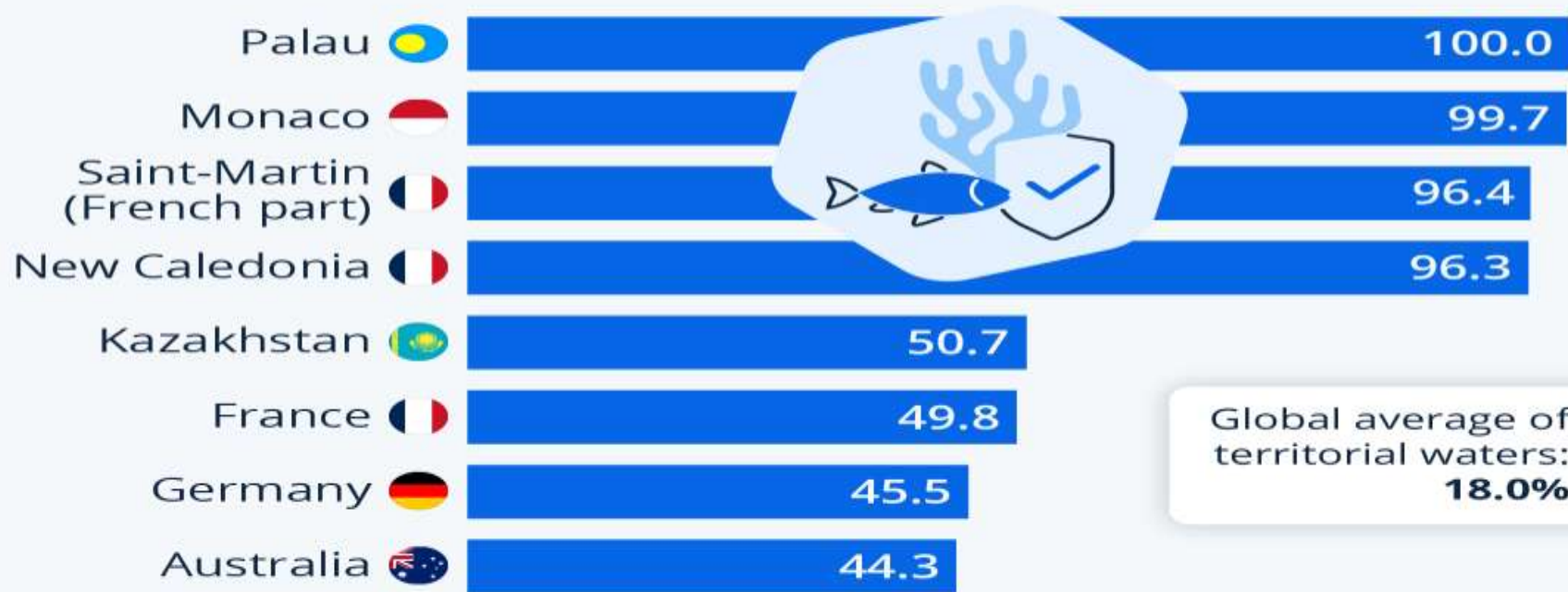
More than half of Venezuela consists of protected land, while in Afghanistan nature reserves cover less than 1 percent of the country.

Kristyna Folyanova | Source: World Bank



The Places With the Most Marine Protected Areas

Countries/territories with the highest share of protected marine territorial waters in 2022 (in %)



Source: World Bank



SUMMARY

Establishing protected areas is crucial in conservation because they safeguard biodiversity by preserving species, habitats, and ecosystems from human pressures such as deforestation, hunting, and pollution, while maintaining essential ecosystem services like water regulation, carbon storage, soil protection, and pollination. They mitigate human impacts by limiting activities like logging, fishing, and mining, protect endangered species, and prevent overexploitation in marine and terrestrial environments.

THE END

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!