

EU Results Framework Indicator Methodology Note

1. Indicator name
Areas of terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems under a) protection, b) sustainable management with EU support (ha)
2. Associated EU Results Framework statement and primary SDG
SDG 15 - Life on land EU RF statement - Support the conservation and sustainable management and use of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems
3. Technical Definition
<p>The indicator refers to the EU support for the creation and/or conservation of protected areas and the promotion of sustainable management measures in terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems, as measured in hectares under a) protection and b) sustainable management.</p> <p>What constitutes a protected area follows the definition proposed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN): "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".</p> <p>Examples of EU interventions in support of terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems under a) protection include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – support to increase the surface of protected areas, either by the creation of (a) new one(s), or the extension of (an) existing one(s); – support to consolidate the management of existing protected areas, or networks of protected areas, through supplying technical or financial assistance or equipment, strengthening of capacities, or the setup of management committee and management plans; – support to strengthen the management system in place so as to effectively protect the area and to prevent it from degradation or depletion; – the implementation of sustainable management practices for the conservation of biodiversity in terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems. <p>Sustainable management practices aim at maintaining and enhancing terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems and the services they provide and ensuring their sustainable use.</p> <p>Examples of EU interventions in support of a) sustainable management of terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the provision of technical and financial assistance to support the restoration of degraded land and sustainable land management through practices such as soil and water conservation, erosion control, reforestation, restoration of land cover; – the provision of technical and financial assistance to support reforestation, afforestation and forest management in line with internationally agreed principles and criteria for sustainable forest management;

- the promotion of economic activities that contribute to maintain ecosystems integrity targeting land or freshwater systems, such as eco-tourism, and the sustainable use of non-timber forest products;
- the promotion of territorial approaches for sustainable landscape management;
- to improve Forest Management Plans for production forest and/or help increase the level of compliance with management plans;
- support to forest policy reforms through capacity building and increased transparency;
- enhancement of freshwater bodies through e.g. pollution control, land management to reduce siltation associated to deforestation

If sustainable management practices are in direct relation to productive agricultural or pastoral systems -as covered by SDG 2- they should be reported under EU RF indicator 2.4. This includes productive uses or activities such as agroforestry, apiculture and pastures managed for productive purposes. The same holds for the management of inland fisheries (e.g. control of fishing rights and practices, introduction of species, fish processing and trade).

Where activities aim at SDG 15, i.e. the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, they will be covered by the present EU RF indicator.

4. Rationale (including policy priorities and links to this indicator)

The indicator is in line with the New Consensus for Development priority to support the conservation and sustainable management of natural resources and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems, including land, forests, river basins and other ecosystems.

The 2030 Agenda includes the goal to protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss (SDG 15).

The EU is party to various Multilateral Environmental Agreements on the protection and sustainable use of ecosystems, including the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification and the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention).

The Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan is the main EU policy framework to promote sustainable forest management. It puts emphasis on forest governance, inclusiveness and transparency.

5. Level of disaggregation and other reporting requirements

The indicator must be disaggregated by areas under a) protection, b) sustainable management.

6. Data Sources (including issues on different definitions by source and level of availability of the data)

For areas under **protection**, the main data source is the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA)¹, the most comprehensive global dataset on marine and terrestrial protected areas available. The WDPA is a joint product of UNEP and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), prepared by the UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) and the IUCN World

¹ <https://www.protectedplanet.net/c/world-database-on-protected-areas>

Commission on Protected Areas working with Governments, the Secretariats of Multilateral Environmental Agreements, and collaborating Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

The Digital Observatory of Protected Areas (DOPA)², developed by the Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC), is based on the WDPA, the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and JRC's own remote sensing products such as the European Space Agency Landcover 2015.

According to the country assessed, where available and disclosable, other sources can be the Ministries or government agencies in charge of the management of the National Protected Areas Systems. Some have developed their own web-based observatory of protected areas where data are easily available.

For areas under **sustainable management**:

- The national reports on the state of the environment and on the implementation of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification provide valuable information.
- Copernicus is a European system for monitoring the Earth. Data is collected from different sources, including Earth observation satellites and in-situ sensors. The data is processed and provides reliable and up-to-date information on six thematic areas including land, marine and the atmosphere. It provides information on land cover, land use and their changes. <https://land.copernicus.eu/>. In particular the European Space Agency Land Cover website provides useful information: <https://www.esa-landcover-cci.org/>. Data can be extracted by Geographical Information Systems.
- In regard to forest under sustainable management, the main data will be provided by the FAO global Forest Resource Assessment (FRA) published annually. The FRA is supported by a wide range of partner/donors among them the EU
- EU intervention monitoring and reporting systems may also yield useful information: annual and final reports from implementing organisations (e.g. governments, international organisations, non-state actors, etc.), baseline surveys, ROM reviews, and evaluations.

7. Data calculation (including any assumptions made

The area (in hectares) of terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems under a) protection, or b) sustainable management is reported for this indicator in line with the technical definition stated above.

Agricultural and pastoral ecosystems under sustainable management should be counted under EU RF indicator 2.4- agricultural and pastoral ecosystems where sustainable management practices have been introduced with EU support (ha). These areas should not be counted under this indicator to avoid double counting.

The same area supported by the EU intervention(s) in successive years should only be counted once and particular attention should be given to avoid double counting.

When it comes to reporting, during or at the end of the implementation, clear information about the actual areas of operation (districts, provinces, departments, natural entities, etc.) needs to be provided as part of the reporting against this indicator.

² <http://dopa.jrc.ec.europa.eu/en>

8. Worked examples
<p>Example A</p> <p>An EU intervention in Bangladesh aims to increase the effectiveness of an existing management system of protected forest that spans an area of 1 000 000 hectares between India and Bangladesh. Around 60% of the areas is situated in Bangladesh (or 600 000 hectares). The EU support is not aiming at extending the area of this internationally acknowledged Forest Reserve, but at strengthening the management of the forest for its conservation.</p> <p>For this intervention, 600 000 hectares can be reported for areas of terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems under a) protection with EU support.</p> <p>Example B</p> <p>An EU intervention in Lesotho supports the development of Integrated Water Catchment Management. As a result, 5 000 hectares of wetlands are restored with EU support, and reported under b) sustainable management.</p>
9. Is it used by another organisation or in the framework of international initiatives, conventions, etc? If so, which?
<p>The UNDP Integrated Results and Resources Framework 2018-21 has a similar indicator:</p> <p>Natural resources that are managed under a sustainable use, conservation, access and benefit-sharing regime: a) Area of land and marine habitat under protection (hectares); b) Area of existing protected area under improved management (hectares); c) Number of shared water ecosystems (fresh or marine) under cooperative management; d) Area under sustainable forest management (hectares); e) Biodiversity (using appropriate units of measure); f) Amount of chemicals reduced or disposed (metric tons); g) Other</p>
10. Other issues
N/A