PLAN VIVO

PV Nature

Guidance For a Conservation Project's Eligibility (KBA Criteria)

Version 1.0

PLAN VIVO

Contents

PLAN VIVO

1 PV Nature Conservation Project Eligibility Guidance – Key Biodiversity Area Criteria

If you want to register a conservation project under PV Nature, you need to demonstrate that the project is conserving a project area with existing high biodiversity value. This requires demonstration of the project's eligibility to be a conservation project by meeting at least one Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) criterion or two Important Plant Area (IPA) criteria (See PV Nature Methodology and PV Nature Glossary). This does not mean the project needs to be officially designated as a KBA or IPA, but rather trigger one or two criteria, respectively.

This guidance document aids projects in applying the **Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) Criterion A – Threatened Biodiversity** to your site, as this is likely to be the most commonly used criterion by PV Nature projects. Similar approaches can be applied when assessing other biodiversity elements under other KBA criteria (Criteria B-E). Guidance on these criteria to be developed in the future.

Some of these approaches may also be relevant for assessments of range-restricted plant species under the Important Plant Area (IPA) criteria.

This guidance should be used when preparing to submit a Prospective Project and Eligibility Questionnaire (PPQ) to confirm that your project meets PV Nature's eligibility requirements for conservation projects, as outlined in the PPQ template.

If, after reviewing this document, you are confident that your project meets the KBA eligibility criteria, you may provide some of the required information (outlined in this document) at the eligibility check stage. However, at the Project Idea Note (PIN) stage, more detailed information, including supporting evidence, is required. Refer to the PV Nature PIN Template for further details.

2 Steps To Apply The KBA Criteria To Your Project

2.1 Step 1: Check The KBA Map Search

Confirm whether your project area has an already designated KBA status. If the area has a KBA status, check the year it was designated, and if it is more than 8-12 years, then the site will require a reassessment. This is to ensure that the qualifying trigger biodiversity elements are still present and in sufficient abundance to trigger the KBA status. Another reason for a site to be reassessed is if the site was identified before the publication of the KBA Standard (IUCN, 2016).

If the project area was recently assessed, you may state in the PPQ and PIN: "*The project area is a confirmed KBA site* "and include the year of assessment, the KBA site ID and a hyperlink to the KBA site page https://www.keybiodiversityareas.org/site/factsheet/6733)

If your project area is not a recently assessed and designated KBA site, then proceed to Step 2 below.

2.2 Step 2: Identify Species That May Trigger Criterion A

Check the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species or relevant National/Regional Red List Databases (e.g. The National Red List Project) for species found in your project area that are categorised as threatened:

- Critically Endangered (CR),
- Endangered (EN), or
- Vulnerable (VU).

To trigger any of the threatened categories above, a species will need to meet the qualifying thresholds as stipulated in the IUCN Red List criteria A-E (see IUCN Red List of Threatened Species Criteria Summary Sheet). On the IUCN Red List, you can also find the global population size, area of occupancy, and range for relevant trigger species. These figures will be required in Step 3 when evaluating if the proportion of a species assessment parameter at the site meets the minimum qualifying KBA thresholds.

If the species is not published on the IUCN Red List or in any regional or national databases, reliable information on KBA assessment parameters could be obtained from peer-reviewed articles, reports, or other biodiversity databases, provided it is properly cited. Additionally, reliable information on KBA assessment parameters could be inferred from a taxon expert or taxonomic authority (e.g. IUCN Hornbill Specialist Group). In such a case, the name(s) and email address(es) should be provided under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

2.3 Step 3: Determine The Relevant KBA Sub-Criterion

Identify the appropriate KBA sub-criterion (A1a to A1e) based on population size thresholds (0.2% to 1.0%), reproductive units (5 to 10), or other assessment parameters and IUCN Threatened Categories (VU to CR).

Example: Sub -c riterion A1b (≥1.0% of global population size and ≥10 Reproductive Units (RU) of a Vulnerable (VU) species

For KBA sub-criteria A1c and A1d, species assessed as VU, EN, or CR must be assessed under the IUCN Red List Criteria A1, A2, or A4. The figure below indicates the threatened status and assessment criteria of a species. The example below for Grevy's zebra (*Equus grevyi*), shows that the species has been assessed as Endangered under the Criteria A2acd, which enables the species to be used in the KBA criteria A1a and A1c.

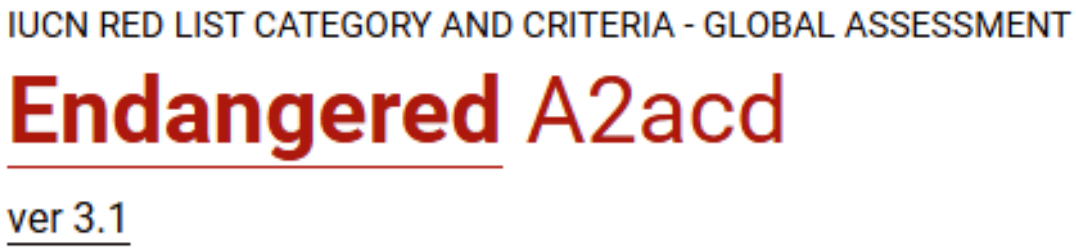

Figure 1 Example of IUCN Red List Threatened Status for Grevy's zebra as Endangered under the IUCN Categories & Criteria

2.4 Step 4: Identify the Assessment Parameters for the Determined KBA Sub-Criterion

Under KBA Criteria A1 - Threatened Species, the following assessment parameters can be used:

(i) number of mature individuals;
(ii) area of occupancy;
(iii) extent of suitable habitat;
(iv) range;
(v) no. of localities; and
(vi) distinct genetic diversity.

Determine which assessment parameters have the most reliable data for the species.

Ideally, use the number of mature individuals as the preferred assessment parameter.

The assessment parameter used at the global level must be the same assessment parameter used at the site level (e.g., number of mature individuals at the global level vs. number of mature individuals at the site level). When selecting the assessment parameters, please note:

- It is not required for projects to provide data for all KBA assessment parameters, but it is encouraged to explore whether there is reliable data for the species and provide information for as many parameters as possible; and
- Where different assessment parameters point to different conclusions, use the best available information, and justify that choice.

In most instances, the species assessment under the IUCN Red List provides information on the number of mature individuals for a species globally, however, you will need to estimate this for the PV Nature Project Area if not yet known. This can be done by consulting with local experts and providing the expert's contact details as proof (see Step 2 above).

For the area-based parameters, calculation of the area of occupancy (AOO) can be done using the GeoCat Tool, which uses available locality data for the species within the project area. The locality data can be obtained from GBIF, iNaturalist or from local biodiversity data repositories.

2.5 Step 5: Assess Whether The Species Meets The Quantitative Thresholds In The PV Nature Project Area

Example of a species for a project that triggers the KBA Criteria

Grevy's zebra *(Equus grevyi)* in the Rift Valley of Kenya

- Assessed as EN under the IUCN Red List under criteria A2acd
- Applicable KBA sub-criterion: A1a and A1c
- Global population: approx. 2,680 (IUCN, 2016)
- Global population size (number of mature individuals)[1]: 1,956 (IUCN, 2016)
- Site number (PV Nature Project Area) of mature individuals: 17 (IUCN SSC Equip Specialist Group, John Doe, 2025)

Evaluate the applicable KBA Criteria under the criterion thresholds:

1. *Population size threshold:*
   - For A1a: ≥0.5% (PV Nature project area needs to have at least 0.5% of the global population size/ number of mature individuals only)
   - For A1c: ≥0.1% (PV Nature project area needs to have at least 0.1% of the global population size/ number of mature individuals only)

2. *Reproductive units:*
   - For A1a: ≥5 (PV Nature project area needs to have at least 5 reproductive units of EN species)
   - For A1c: ≥5 (PV Nature project area needs to have at least 5 reproductive units of EN species under Red List Criteria A1, A2, or A4 only)

To be eligible under A1a, the PV Nature project area must regularly hold at least 10* Grevy's zebras with at least 5 RU of a species assessed as CR or EN under the IUCN Red List.

OR

To be eligible under KBA criterion A1c, the PV Nature project must hold regularly at least 2 Grevy's zebras with at least 5 RU of a species assessed as CR or EN under the IUCN Red List, specifically assessed under IUCN Red List Criteria A1, A2 or A4.

[1] **Population** is all individuals of that species, including juveniles, whereas **population size** is the number of mature individuals known.

For all sub-criteria triggered, the presence of the species needs to be confirmed at the site within the last 8-12 years (see Step 6).

***Note:** Calculation of project area population size: For sub-criterion A1a, to arrive at the threshold of 10 zebras, the population threshold of 0.5% is first converted into a decimal by dividing by 100 (0.005). This decimal value is then multiplied by the global population size (1,956), yielding a result of 10 zebras.

2.6 Step 6: Confirming the Presence of the Species in Project Area

- Adequate recent evidence, no older than 8-12 years, is required to confirm species presence with a certain threshold of mature individuals;
- Acceptable data sources include:
  - Peer-reviewed papers (recent publications);
  - National biodiversity records;
  - Public databases, e.g. IUCN Red List, GBIF, OBIS, iNaturalist;
  - Local knowledge from Indigenous Peoples and community members*;
  - Personal communications with experts and researchers*.
  - Camera trap or satellite data
- All sources must be referenced in the justification.

***Note:**

- Local knowledge plays a vital role in understanding species. To ensure consistency in taxonomy and accuracy, this knowledge can be complemented by validation from species experts.
- Personal communications must provide contact details for verification by the Technical Review Panel (TRP), in accordance with GDPR.

3 Additional Information

If possible, list multiple species from multiple taxa that trigger the KBA criteria to increase PV Nature and KBA site eligibility chances. However, a minimum of one species is needed to qualify a site as a KBA. Currently, projects are not required to submit their areas for KBA status assessment under the KBA Standard, as this process is resource intensive. However, when resources permit, the submitted information may contribute to future KBA designation efforts, which PV Nature will likely consider in the future.

Lastly, it is essential to ensure the taxonomy used is consistent with the IUCN.

4 Glossary (IUCN, 2016)

Global Population Size: The total, global number of mature individuals of the species.

Mature Individuals: The number of individuals known, estimated or inferred to be capable of reproduction.

Reproductive Units: The minimum number and combination of mature individuals necessary to trigger a successful reproductive event at a site.

5 Eligibility Example

The table below highlights a worked example that presents the species information categorised with the required level of detail and evidence to support your proof of eligibility for KBA Criteria A1 on Threatened Species, specifically sub-criteria A1a and A1c. This table will be in the annex of the PIN template and will undergo review and approval by the TRP. NB: The global and site population sizes are fictional for this example.

Species	IUCN Red List status	Relevant KBA A1 sub-criterion	Threatened Status as assessed under the Red List Criteria	% global population threshold required	Global population size (mature individuals)	Site population size (mature individuals)	% of global population size at project area	Reproductive units in project area	Year of recent confirmation of species presence at the site	KBA A1 subcriterion met	Reference/ Justification
Yangtze Giant Softshell Turtle (*Rafetus swinhoei*)	CR	A1c	A2acd;D	≥0.1%	10	6	60%	5	2019 (pers. comm, Damian Grey – Red River fisherman)	Yes	Le Duc *et al.*, 2020

Project A is along the Red River in Yen Bai Province, Vietnam where six occurrences of Yangtze Giant Softshell Turtle were recently seen by one fisherman in October or November 2019 (Le Duc et al., 2020).

Project A passes the conservation eligibility requirement because it meets the population thresholds of sub-criterion A1c for a KBA (highlighted green in Table 1). Taxonomy and threat status follow the 2018 IUCN Red List.

Assessment parameter(s) included: Number of mature individuals.

6 References

Fong, J., Hoang, H., Kuchling, G., Li, P., McCormack, T., Rao, D.-Q., Timmins, R.J. & Wang, L. (2021). *Rafetus swinhoei*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2021: e.T39621A2931537. https://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2021-1.RLTS.T39621A2931537.en. Accessed on 27 March 2025.

IUCN (2016). A Global Standard for the Identification of Key Biodiversity Areas, Version 1.0. First edition. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN.

IUCN (2016). A Global Standard for the Identification of Key Biodiversity Areas, Version 1.0. First edition. Gland, Switzerland: IUCN.

Rubenstein, D., Low Mackey, B., Davidson, ZD, Kebede, F. & King, S.R.B. (2016). *Equus grevy* i. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2016: e.T7950A89624491.

https://dx.doi.org/10.2305/IUCN.UK.2016-3.RLTS.T7950A89624491.en. Accessed on 02 April 2025.