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# The VCA Approach

## Recognising area-based conservation



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[v-c-a.org](http://v-c-a.org)

Dr Francis Vorhies  
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# Caring for our planet - a global challenge



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## The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

A plan of action for **people, planet and prosperity**... resolved to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want and to **heal and secure our planet for present and future generations.**

- **SDG14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development**
- **SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss**



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“The only way to save upward of 90 percent of the rest of life is to vastly increase the area of refuges, from their current 15 percent of the land and 3 percent of the sea to half of the land and half of the sea.

That amount, as I and others have shown, can be put together from large and small fragments around the world to remain relatively natural, without removing people living there or changing property rights.”

Or in **CBD** language:

“Other effective **area-based conservation** measures”  
need to be  
“integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes.”

# Verified Conservation Areas Approach



- Scales up conservation efforts across different land uses
- Recognises voluntary efforts to conserve and restore our planet
- Encourages conservation by companies and others beyond parks
- Enables conservation to be a marketable and investable asset
- Facilitates payments for ecosystem services and biodiversity mitigation
- Assures that money invested in conservation is well spent
- Establishes transparency and accountability in natural capital



# Recognising verified area-based conservation



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**VCA** - a geographically-defined area managed to conserve nature and listed on the VCA Registry

- **To list a VCA** - initially submit a proposal to draft a conservation management plan within two years
- **To register a VCA** - submit an audited area-based conservation management plan
- **To remain registered as a VCA** - submit annual audited conservation reports



# VCA Registry as of April 2016



9 pilot listings

- 3 Registered
- 6 Proposed

Each has its own webpage

- Description
- Images
- Required docs

VCA	Country	Hectares
▶ <b>Jama-Coaque Reserve</b>	Ecuador	411
▶ <b>Hintenteiche &amp; Sernitz Nature Reserves</b>	Germany	700
▶ <b>Cinco Grandes</b>	Mozambique	250,000
▶ <b>Tetepare Community</b>	Solomon Islands	14,400
▶ <b>Espai Natura Montserrat-Coll de Can Maçana</b>	Spain	177
▶ <b>Tullstorp Stream</b>	Sweden	6,300
▶ <b>Budongo Forest Reserve</b>	Uganda	42,500
▶ <b>Knepp Castle Estate Wildland</b>	United Kingdom	1,400
▶ <b>Balhaf Headland Marine Area</b>	Yemen	1,816

# Budongo Forest Reserve, Uganda



The largest block of natural high forest in Uganda and home to a large (500+) population of wild chimpanzees.

Facing a number of threats including neighbouring sugarcane plantations, illegal logging, illegal snaring and trapping, and encroachment by immigrant farmers.

# Cinco Grande Reserve, Mozambique



HOME | POLICIES & PRIVACY | CONTACT US | PHOTO GALLERY

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Coutada 5

ABOUT US | ABOUT MOZAMBIQUE | OUR POLICIES | MANAGEMENT PLANS | MISSION & OBJECTIVES | COUTADA SYSTEM

Original signpost dating back to 1972

More images...

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A VCA-registered 250,000 hectares wilderness & wildlife restoration project

Located within a 680,000 private concession which will also include sustainable agriculture, ranching & community development initiatives



# Balhaf Headland Marine Area, Yemen



Protecting coral reefs & fish habitat in an industrial harbour

# The VCA Standard



- Sets out the VCA listing requirements for management plans, performance reports and third-party audits
- Aligned with the Performance Standards of the International Finance Corporation on environmental management and biodiversity conservation
- Requires assessments of habitats, legally protected areas, invasive alien species, ecosystem services, and primary production of living natural resources
- Requires an action plan based on the biodiversity mitigation hierarchy - avoid, minimise, restore and offset
- Supported by a **VCA Toolkit** of recommended best practice guidance

# The VCA Approach

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Hosted by Earthmind & the Global Footprint Network

Secretariat at the IUCN Conservation Centre in Switzerland

Governed by an international Board who approves VCA Auditors

Promoting a growing voluntary alliance to conserve our planet

Establishing a new asset class of natural capital

