

Table 5. Definitions related to special places A variety of definitions for special places have been proposed by different stakeholders in different places. The following is a short compilation of selected definitions Section V includes more references.

Developed by	Definition	Characteristics	Management preferences	Notes
Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE)	AZE sites (AZE, 2007)	Focus on sites in most urgent need of conservation to prevent species extinctions. Priority sites must meet the three following requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endangerment – at least one endangered or critically endangered species listed by IUCN. • Irreplaceability – the area contains the overwhelmingly significant known resident population of the endangered or critically endangered species, or it contains the overwhelmingly significant known population for one life history segment of the species. • Discreteness – the area has a definable boundary within which the habitats, biological communities, and/or management issues have more in common with each other than they do with those adjacent areas. 	Management for conservation.	A global joint initiative of 52 biodiversity conservation organizations. Alliance members include BirdLife International, Conservation International, Wildlife Conservation Society, and World Wildlife Fund US. 595 sites around the world have been identified to protect 794 species of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and conifers.
American Tree Farm System (ATFS)	Special sites (AFF, 2004)	Sites of special interest because of their recreational, historical, biological, archaeological and geological features.	To the extent practicable, management practices should protect these sites.	Special sites can be identified directly on the ground by landowner and an ATFS inspection forester.
Conservation International	Biodiversity hotspots (Conservation International, 2007)	Hotspots are priority global areas for conservation. Hotspots are characterized by exceptional levels of plant endemism (at least 1,500 species of vascular plants) and by serious levels of habitat loss (lost at least 70% of its original habitat). Worldwide, 34 biodiversity hotspots have been identified. Collectively, these hotspots are estimated to house high levels of biodiversity, including at least 150,000 plant species as endemics and 77% of the world’s total terrestrial vertebrate species.	Conservation can be carried out through a variety of approaches including the establishment of protected areas and the implementation of economic alternatives.	Conservation outcomes identified for individual hotspots are defined through regional-scale planning processes; maps of biodiversity hotspots and species databases are available at www.biodiversityhotspots.org .
Conservation International	Major tropical wilderness areas (Mittermeier et al., 2001)	A complementary concept to the biodiversity hotspots, the major tropical wilderness areas have high diversity and endemism, low human population density, and remain largely intact.	Conservation can be carried out through large-scale conservation set-asides.	Include the Guyana Shield region (Suriname, Guyana, French Guiana, Venezuela and adjacent parts of Brazil), the upper Amazonian (Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia); a substantial portion of the Congolese forests block/Congo River Basin in Central Africa; and most of the island of New Guinea and adjacent smaller Melanesian islands (Solomon Islands, New Britain, New Ireland and Vanuatu).
Birdlife International, Conservation International, and Plantlife International	Key biodiversity areas (Eken et al., 2004)	Building on the concept of hotspots, Conservation International is leading an effort to map and identify key biodiversity areas. These are globally important sites that are large enough or sufficiently interconnected to support viable populations of the species for which they are important. The definition is based on four criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Globally threatened species • Restricted-range species • Congregations of species that concentrate at particular sites during some stage in their life cycle • Biome-restricted species assemblages The first criterion addresses vulnerability of species, while the other three cover different aspects of irreplaceability. Key biodiversity areas can be within biodiversity hotspots.	Conservation of the sites to reduce global biodiversity loss.	Groups identifying these areas include: Birdlife International (Europe, Middle East, Africa); Plantlife International and Dutch Dragonfly Conservation (Europe); IUCN and Alliance for Zero Extinction (global); and Conservation International (Andes and Africa). More details at www.plantlife.org.uk
Finnish Forest Certification System	Key biotopes (Mikkela et al., 2001; FFCS, 1999)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sites designed for protection under the Finnish Nature Conservation Act such as wild woods rich in broad-leaved deciduous species, hazel woods, Juniper and wooded meadows. • Habitats recognized as especially valuable under the Finnish Forest Act, such as the surroundings of springs and streams, hardwood spruce swamps, and heath land forest islets on undrained wetlands. • Additional habitats such as old-growth conifer forests, mixed forests and broad-leaved forests, and forest meadows in traditional landscapes. • Small water biotopes listed in the Finnish Water Act. 	Key biotopes are to be left in their natural state and only subject to gentle management operations.	Guidelines for assessing and protecting key biotopes have been produced (Korpela, 2004); key biotopes have been identified by different stakeholders.
ForestEthics, Natural Resources Defense Council, Rainforest Action Network, Greenpeace	Endangered forests (Forest Ethics et al., 2006)	Forests that require protection from intensive industrial use in order to maintain their outstanding ecological values. Endangered forests include: forests that maintain landscape integrity; rare forest types; forests with high species richness; forests with a high concentration of rare, endangered and endemic species; forests that provide core habitat for focal species; and forests that exhibit rare ecological and evolutionary phenomena. Endangered forests are identified as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilderness forests and intact forest landscapes • Remnant forests and forests with restoration values • Forests ecologically critical for the protection of biological diversity, such as naturally rare forest types, high endemism, or the habitat of focal conservation species 	No intensive industrial activities or extraction. “No-go” zones. Endangered forests are defined as a subset of HCVFs due to their outstanding ecological values.	ForestEthics and its partners are working to define and map endangered forests of the world. The definition is meant to complement certification of logging operations under FSC (www.forestethics.org).

Table 5. Definitions related to special places (cont.)

Developed by	Definition	Characteristics	Management preferences	Notes
FSC	High conservation value forests (HCVF) (FSC, 1996)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forests that contain globally, regionally, or nationally significant concentrations of biodiversity values • Globally, regionally, or nationally significant large landscape-level forests • Rare, threatened or endangered ecosystems • Forest areas providing basic services of nature in critical situations • Forest areas fundamental to meeting basic needs of local communities • Forest areas critical to local communities’ traditional cultural identity 	Management to maintain or enhance features of these forests.	A variety of tools have been developed to assist identifying these sites including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a toolkit (www.proforest.net) • a resource network (www.hcvf.org) • a sourcebook (www.proforest.net) There are various efforts to identify HCVFs in Indonesia, Russia, Romania and other countries.
Greenpeace, WRI	Intact Forest Landscapes (IFLs) (Greenpeace, 2006)	Intact Forest Landscapes are landscapes larger than 500 km ² that are not fragmented by infrastructure, such as roads, settlements, waterways, pipelines, power lines, etc. These tracts are located within the forest vegetation zone and are mostly forested but also contain swamps and other non-forested ecosystems that are without significant visible signs of human impact such as logging, burning or other forms of forest clearing.	Management for conservation of biological diversity. WRI has not outlined management preferences.	Maps of Intact Forest Landscapes for northern forests are available (globalforestwatch.org), as well as draft maps for other forest biomes (intactforests.org).
Natura Networking Programme	Natura 2000 Sites (Natura Networking Programme, 2007; European Commission, 2003)	A network of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) in the European Union. SPAs are for the protection and management of areas important for rare and vulnerable birds as specified by the EU Parliament Birds Directive while SACs are areas established for the protection and management of rare and vulnerable animal and plant species, and habitats, as specified by the EU Parliament Habitats Directive. Among other things, the Birds Directive seeks to conserve, maintain or restore the biotopes and habitats of all bird species naturally living in the wild in the European Union (European Union, 2006). The Habitats Directive includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural habitats in danger of disappearance in their natural range • Those having small natural range following their regression or by reason of their intrinsically restricted area • Those presenting outstanding examples of typical characteristics of more of the following biogeographical regions: Alpine, Atlantic, Continental, Macronesian and Mediterranean (European Union, 2007) 	Appropriate economic activity to maintain or improve the conservation status of Natura 2000 Sites is allowed. Member states identify and propose a list of sites for their territory and are in charge of managing these sites. Management can include strictly protection and sustainable management.	Natura 2000 Sites are identified and proposed by countries. For each site, national governments submit standard information describing the site and its ecology, this information is to be validated by the European Topic Centre for Nature Conservation. A complete GIS database of Nature 2000 Sites will be built after compilation and validation. Detailed information and maps can be obtained directly from the national governments. Links to governmental institutions with information can be found at www.ec.europa.eu/environment/nature
SFI	Forests with exceptional conservation value (FECV) (SFB, 2004)	Globally threatened or rare forests, with high levels of endemism, or that have little human intervention; forests containing high biodiversity value, unique or rare forest communities, viable populations of rare individual plant and animal species.	Managed in a way that protects their unique qualities and promotes conservation of biodiversity.	FECVs are identified with assistance from information provided by NatureServe in the US and Canada. Outside North America, these areas can be identified in base of biodiversity hotspots and other important areas in the tropics.
Wildlife Conservation Society	Last of the wild (Sanderson et al., 2002)	The largest, least influenced areas around the world where the full range of nature may still exist with a minimum of conflict with existing human structures. The last of the wild were identified based on an assessment of the human footprint, which compiles the following types of data as proxies for human influence: population density, land transformation, accessibility, and electrical power infrastructure.	These areas are a guide to opportunities for effective conservation.	569 places have been identified. Maps are available at www.ciesin.columbia.edu/wild_areas/
World Bank	Critical forests (World Bank, 2002B)	Critical forest areas are the subset of natural forest lands that cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing protected areas and areas officially proposed by governments as protected areas, areas initially recognized as protected by traditional local communities, and sites that maintain conditions vital for the viability of these protected areas. • Sites identified as recognized by traditional local communities; areas with known high suitability for biodiversity conservation; and sites that are critical for rare, vulnerable, migratory, or endangered species. 	Definition is for internal purposes. The Bank would not finance projects that would involve significant conversion or degradation of critical forest areas.	Critical forests are identified by the Bank or an authoritative source determined by the regional environment sector unit.
WRI	Frontier forests (Bryant et al., 1997)	Relatively undisturbed large tracts of forests are capable of sustaining viable populations of all native species.	No management preferences outlined.	Maps available at www.globalforestwatch.org
WWF	Global 200 (WWF, 2007)	Outstanding and representative eco-regions of each major habitat type in the world based on their biodiversity patterns and degree of threat. Global 200 harbor globally important biodiversity and ecological processes and represent the world’s most outstanding examples within each major habitat type.	Primary objective is to promote their conservation.	Maps available at www.worldwildlife.org . WWF also uses the HCVF concept to define special places at a more local scale.