

Biodiversity of protected areas of Kuwait: potential role for Ecotourism

Dr. Matrah Al-Mutairi

Associate Research Scientist

Environment and Life Sciences Research Center

Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research

Preface

We know that protected areas like national parks and wildlife reserves are beneficial for protecting biodiversity and combating climate change. But, it's difficult to translate these benefits into financial value. Protected areas also benefit the many people who visit them, and in turn those people spend money on things like entrance fees, tours, souvenirs and accommodation. Calculating this economic value may be key to keeping these areas protected or establishing new ones, and to help compare the long-term value of protected areas to extractive industries like logging, mining or drilling for oil.

Summary

- A recent published study estimated that protected nature areas around the world receive **8 billion** visits per year.
- This figure excludes protected areas smaller than 100 m², marine protected areas, Antarctic areas, and areas where tourism is discouraged.
- 2.5 billion visits per year to protected areas in the United States and over 1 billion visits per year to China's National Parks.

Summary

- Estimated visits per protected area were highest in North America and lowest in Africa.
- The researchers calculated how much these 8 billion visits are worth, and estimated that direct spending comes to 600 billion USD.
- Less than US \$10 billion spent annually on safeguarding and managing these areas.
- Estimated net income from ecotourism worldwide is \$ 590 billion US per year.

History of protected area categories

- Brief history
- The International Conference for the Protection of Fauna and Flora (1933), set out four protected area categories: national park; strict nature reserve; fauna and flora reserve; and reserve with prohibition for hunting and collecting.
- IUCN published a new edition of the guidelines for protected area categories in 2008;
- Replaced by the current Best Practice Guidelines No. 21 http://www.iucn.org/about/work/programmes/gpap_home/gpap_quality/gpap_pacategories/
-

Protected area categories

Protected area categories (2008)

- Ia Strict nature reserve
- Ib Wilderness area
- II National park
- III Natural monument or feature
- IV Habitat/species management area
- V Protected landscape or seascape
- VI Protected areas with sustainable use of natural resources

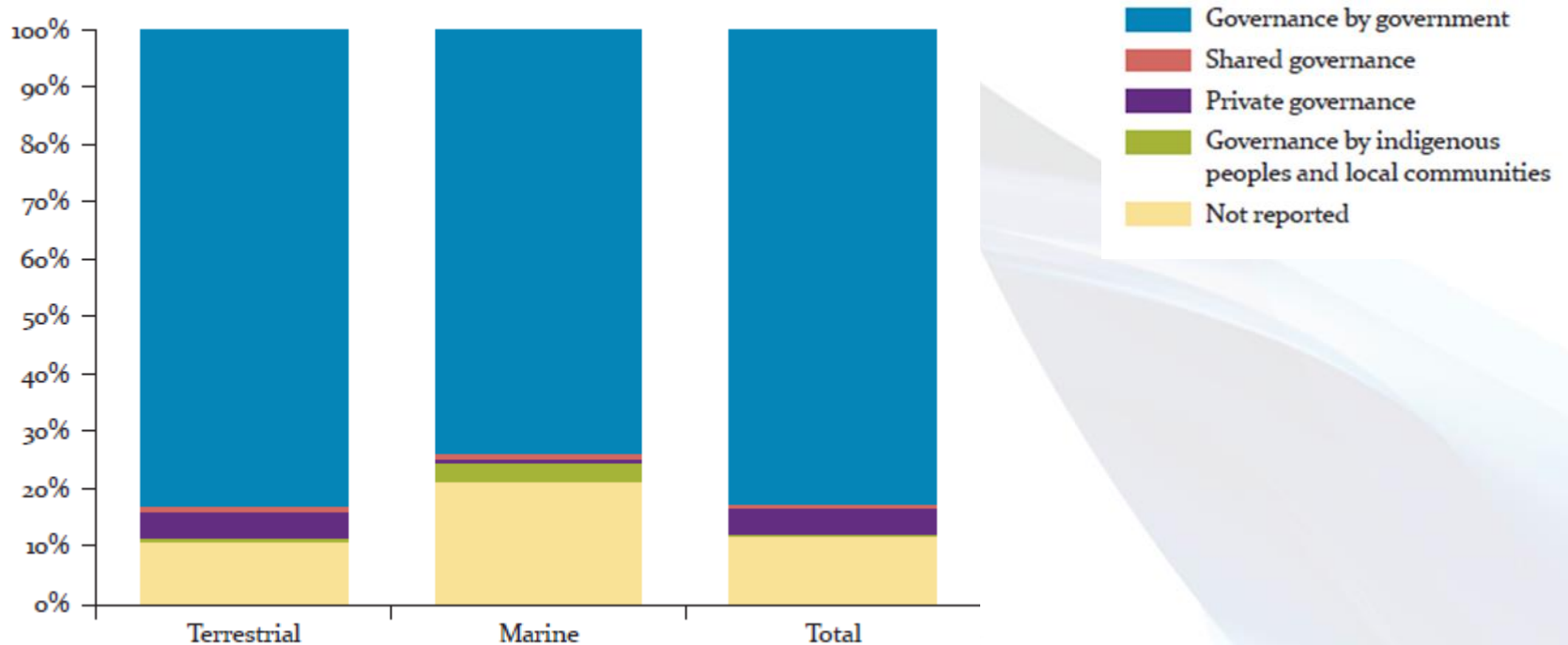


Protected area categories

Protected area categories (2008)

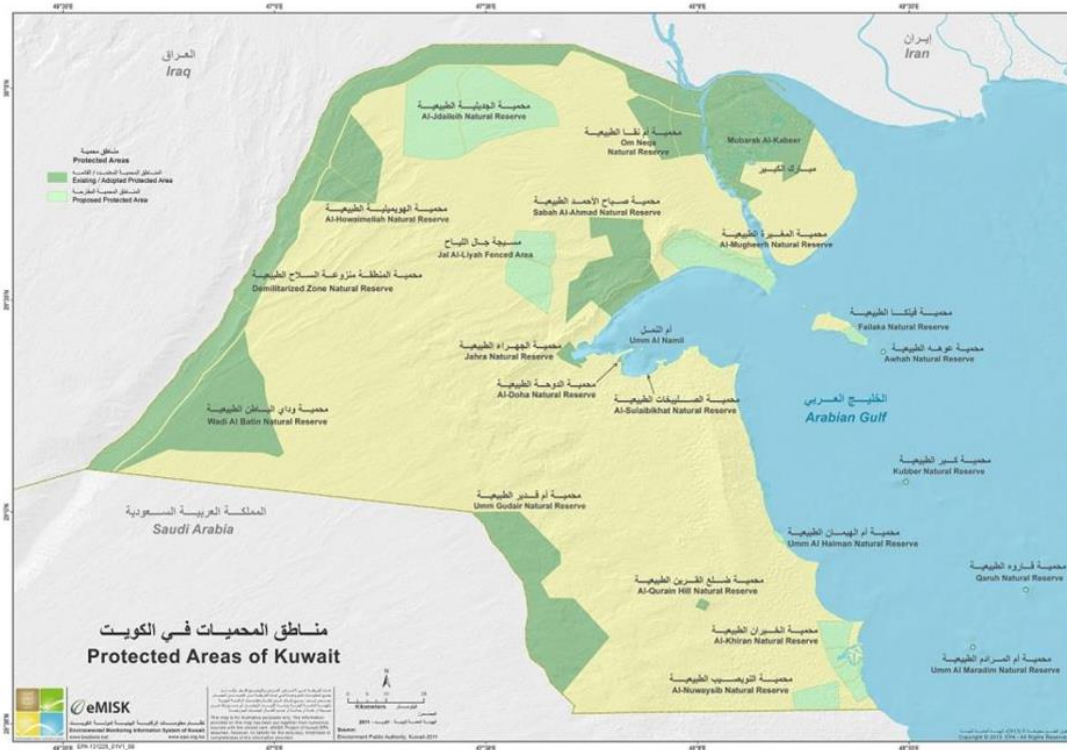
- Which category depends on the needs of biodiversity conservation, the opportunities for delivering ecosystems services, the needs and beliefs of local people, land ownership patterns, strength of governance and population levels.
- The category should be based on the main management objective(s), which should apply to at least 75% of the site.
- The categories do not imply a hierarchy, e.g. in terms of quality or importance.
- A well-balanced protected area system should consider using all the categories

Management categories



- 82% of PAs are governed by either national or subnational agencies.
- 5% have private governance.
- 1% shared governance.
- 1% governed by indigenous peoples and local communities.
- 12% no governance type has been reported.

Kuwait: Protected areas



National Parks

Jal Az-Zor

Marine Parks

Bobiyan, Qaru, Umm al-Maradim

Parks

Al-Batin desert, Al-Khiran desert

Nature Reserves

Al-Khairan, Failaka island, Jahra pool, Mud Flats, Umm al Rimam, Umm Al-Aish Rock, Um-Niqqa desert P, Wadi Al-Batin

Scientific Reserves

Sulaibia Experimental Station

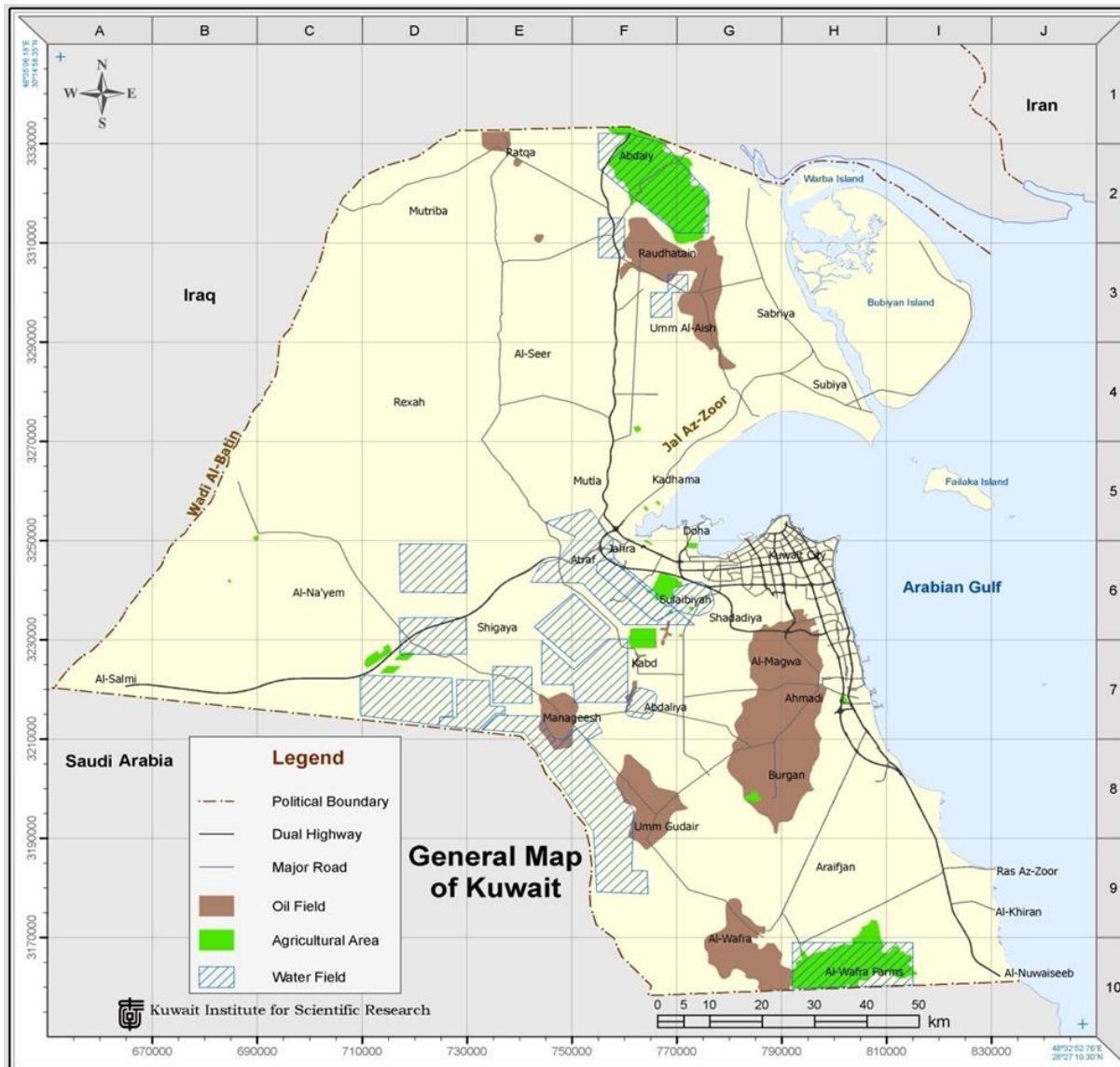
Wildlife Nature Reserves

Sabah Al-Ahmed

Other Protected Areas

Doha, Khadmh, Khawr Mufattah, Kubbar

General map of Kuwait



Areas of KOC

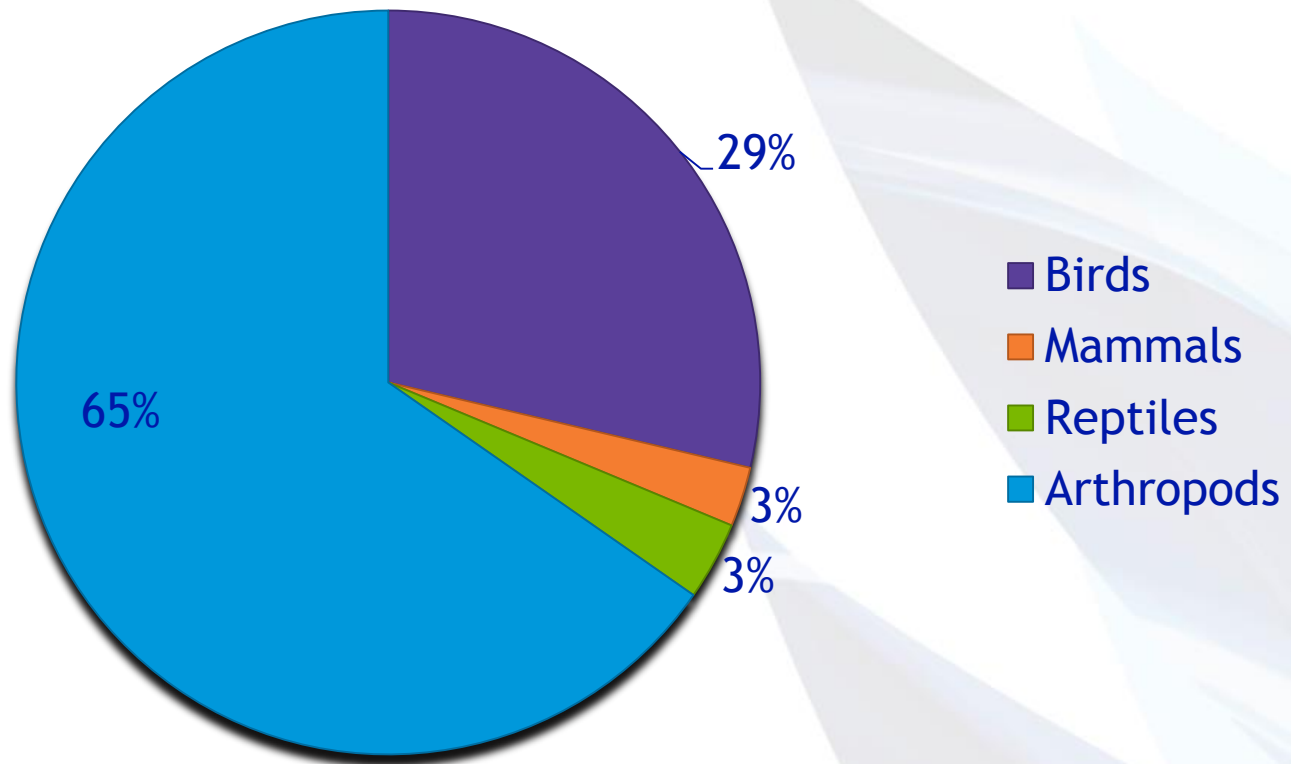
Region	Name	Area (sq.km)
South Kuwait and East Kuwait	Burgan , Magwa	560
North Kuwait	Raudhatain, Sabriyah, Retqa	460
West Kuwait	Minagish, Umm Ghdair	230
Export and Marine Areas	facilities oil operations	
Ahmadi Area	Residential	
Total		1250

- Kuwait Oil Company (KOC) occupies almost 10 % of Kuwaiti land.
- Most of the land is under indirect protection.
- KOC is the best candidate to enhance biodiversity through conservation and re-introduction of extinct species.

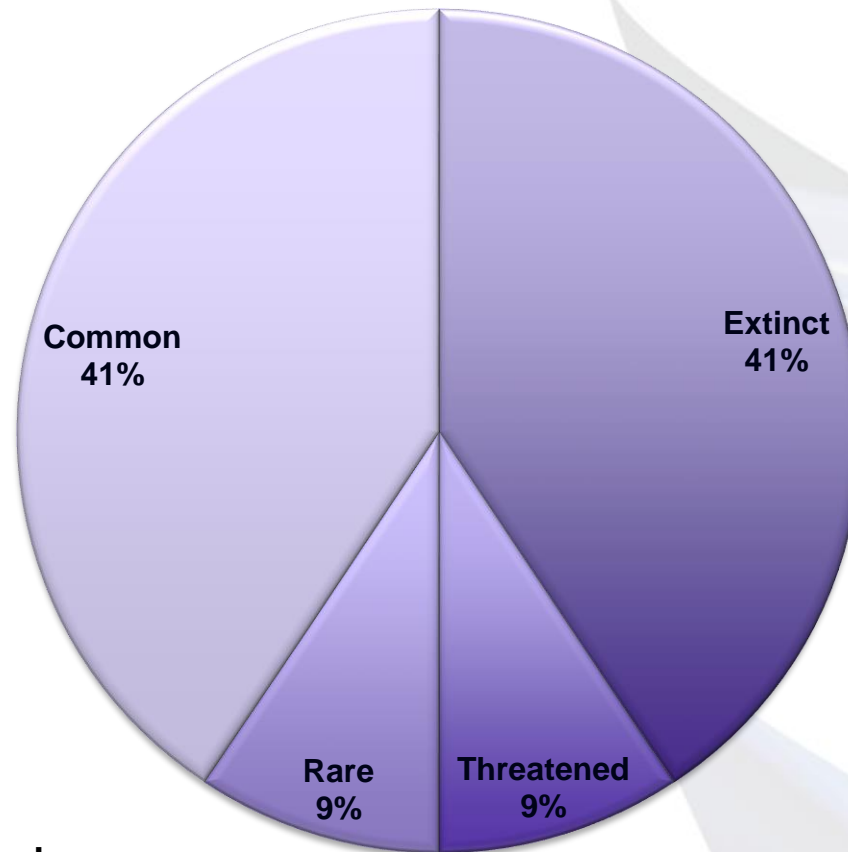
Wildlife species recorded in Kuwait

Phyla	No. Sp.
Birds	354
Mammals	32
Reptiles	42
Arthropods	806

Wildlife species recorded in Kuwait



Status of recorded Mammals in Kuwait within 100 yrs



Total 32 species recorded





Kuwait & Eco-tourism

Combining the following factors:

1. Large coverage areas
2. Economical value
3. Biodiversity

Kuwait is in high demand for developing some protected areas into sites for Eco-tourism, especially with the traditional culture of cherishing both desert and sea.

Kuwait & Eco-tourism

Eco-tourism is achievable by:

- 1-Re-introduction centers for extinct species.
2. Natural botanical gardens.
3. Controlled hunting.
4. A walk in the nature.
5. Accommodation in natural landscapes.
6. Marine reserves.
7. Natural islands.
8. Areas with combined Archeology and biodiversity.

Example:

Boubyan Island: Potential
Eco-tourism site.



Biodiversity



Biodiversity



Conclusion

- Eco-tourism is in high demand worldwide.
 - Kuwait is limited in ecotourism, especially when related to biodiversity.
 - Eco-tourism in the region yields high annual income;
-
- ❑ Al-Maha Resort (UAE): Daily income = **700-1000/night/person** + additional activities.
 - ❑ Al-Areen wildlife park and reserve (Bahrain): 2.6 USD entry fees + income from gift shop + Accommodation (**700-1000/night**).

The figures are based on different seasons according to www.booking.com

Thank you



International Environmental Treaties, Conventions, Protocols and Agreements Related to Wildlife Which Was Signed and Ratified by the State of Kuwait

No.	Name	Date of Signature	Date of Ratification
1	United Nations Convention to combat desertification in these countries experiencing drought and redensertification particularly in Africa, Paris (1994)	September 22, 1995	June 27, 1997
2	United Nations convention on biological diversity, Rio de Janeiro (1992)	June 9, 1992	August 2, 2002
3	Convention on the international trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora (CITES), Washington (1973)	April 9, 1973	August 12, 2002
4	Kyoto protocol to the United Nations, frame work convention on climate change, Japan (1997)	-	March 11, 2005

Regional Environmental Treaties, Conventions, Protocols and Agreements Related to Wildlife Which Was Signed and Ratified by the State of Kuwait

No.	Name	Date of Signature	Date of Ratification
1	Kuwait regional convention for cooperation on the protection of the marine environment from pollution (ROPME, 1978)	April 24, 1987	November 7, 1978
2	ROPME protocol for the protection of the marine environment against pollution from land based sources (1990)	February 21, 1990	May 13, 1992
3	Convention on the protection and conservation of wildlife and natural habitats in GCC countries	-	December 31, 2002