

Drawing the Map: A Site-Based Review of Blue Action Fund's Grant Portfolio

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Preface

Area-based conservation is the foundation of Blue Action Fund's mission to conserve marine ecosystems and secure livelihoods in coastal communities. Since our first call for proposals in 2018, we have funded projects across 25 countries that establish or strengthen marine protected areas (MPAs) and, increasingly, other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs). These area-based sites are at the centre of every grant we fund.

From project reporting to portfolio insights

From the outset, we have collected site-specific data from grantees on every supported site. This began to ensure accuracy in our KPI reporting and to avoid double-counting when aggregating protected area figures across projects. Over time, we recognised the potential of this growing database to serve a broader purpose: tracking progress in conservation effectiveness and supporting programme-level learning. This report is the first in-depth analysis of that data, a major step in the transition from project-level reporting to portfolio-level insight.

What this analysis does and doesn't tell us

The analysis was conducted by an external consultant and focuses exclusively on what the data shows. It does not attempt to interpret the wider context – including strategic decisions to focus on single country interventions, the shift toward fewer sites per project, or our efforts to align conservation with sustainable use. Traces of these decisions are visible in the data, but the report does not explain them.

It is also important to note that this is a descriptive analysis, not an evaluation. It describes what the portfolio looks like and how it has performed against its own targets, but not why. The data is self-reported and carries inherent limitations, and all findings are presented in aggregated form, in line with our confidentiality commitment to grantees. We have chosen to publish this report in the interest of transparency, and in the hope that it offers a useful example of how the MPA Guide framework can be integrated into programme-level analysis.

So, what does the data show?

The portfolio has grown substantially since 2018 and is remarkably diverse in the size of sites supported, the governance arrangements in place, the level of protection targeted, and the stage of establishment reached. A few findings stand out:

- A typical Blue Action Fund project supports five marine protected areas or conservation sites, ranging from tiny community-managed areas of less than 1 km² to vast marine reserves exceeding 100,000 km². This reflects the breadth of contexts in which we work.
- The portfolio is roughly split between strengthening existing protected areas (60%) and establishing new ones (40%). Among completed projects, approximately 68% of the targeted area of new sites was officially designated during the project lifetime.
- Nearly half of supported sites target Light Protection, and only 17% target Full Protection. This reflects our mission to balance conservation with the livelihoods of the coastal communities that depend on them.

Drawing the Map: A Site-Based Review of Blue Action Fund's Grant Portfolio

- Around a third of funded sites (91 out of 280) are governed by local communities and Indigenous peoples. Although a higher share than one might expect, these sites were mainly concentrated in just four countries: Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Mozambique, and Madagascar.
- 73% of completed project sites improved their stage of establishment from project start to project end – a meaningful signal that Blue Action Fund's model of sustained project support delivers real progress in effective management on the ground.
- Blue Action Fund's portfolio covers marine areas equivalent to 3.25% of the 30% benchmark in countries receiving official development assistance. While this is a meaningful contribution toward the global 30×30 target, this number also highlights how much more investment is still needed.

What comes next

The results of this analysis will feed directly into Blue Action Fund's 10-year evaluation, and we look forward to discussing them with our board, grantees, and partners. We see this analysis not as a final assessment, but as a foundation – a baseline from which to track how our portfolio continues to develop, and to ask ever sharper questions about where and how we can have the greatest impact for the ocean.

We are grateful to the external consultant for the rigour and care with which this analysis was conducted, and to our grantees for the data and trust that made it possible.

Markus Knigge & Judith Weigand

Management Board

Berlin, July 2026



Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Data.....	2
3. Methods	3
4. Results.....	5
4.1. Topic: Reach and Scope.....	5
4.1.1. Diagnostic 1: Site count.....	5
4.1.2. Diagnostic 2: Total protected area	7
4.1.3. Diagnostic 3: Distribution of site sizes.....	8
4.1.4. Diagnostic 4: Distribution by governance type.....	10
4.1.5. Diagnostic 5: Distribution by site type	13
4.2. Topic: Ambition and Impact	17
4.2.1. Diagnostic 6: Targeted protected area for new MPAs.....	17
4.2.2. Diagnostic 7: Distribution by targeted level of protection and stage of establishment	18
4.2.3. Diagnostic 8: Targeted improvement in level of protection and stage of establishment.....	20
4.2.4. Diagnostic 9: Achieved improvement in level of protection and stage of establishment	27
4.2.5. Diagnostic 10: Target delivery for site count and protected area	33
4.2.6. Diagnostic 11: Target delivery for level of protection and stage of establishment	36
4.2.7. Diagnostic 12: Management plan adoption	42
4.3. Topic: Strategic Positioning	43
4.3.1. Diagnostic 13: International recognition	43
4.3.2. Diagnostic 14: Coverage of marine area toward 30×30	46
5. Summary	47
References.....	49
Appendix	50
A1. Data cleaning and processing	50
A2. Analytical framework.....	51
A3. Confirmed question set.....	69

Drawing the Map: A Site-Based Review of Blue Action Fund's Grant Portfolio

List of Tables

Table 1: Total number of Blue Action sites (no complete duplicates)	5
Table 2: Site count by country, protected area category and call for proposals.....	5
Table 3: Total area supported by Blue Action.....	7
Table 4: Largest and smallest Blue Action site (with area overlap; excluding sites with zero result area due to not reaching Designated status).....	8
Table 5: Summary statistics for a typical Blue Action site and project (with area overlap; excluding sites with zero result area due to not reaching Designated status).....	9
Table 6: Number and share of Blue Action sites per governance type, overall and by country and by call for proposals.	10
Table 7: Number and share of Blue Action sites per site type, overall and by country and by call for proposals.....	13
Table 8: Area and share of Blue Action sites per site type, overall and by country and by call for proposals.	14
Table 9: Target surface area and share of new and extended sites, overall and per protected area category.	17
Table 10: Number and share of Blue Action sites per combination of target level of protection (rows) and target stage of establishment (columns), with marginal totals.	18
Table 11: Baseline-to-target transitions in level of protection and stage of establishment for running projects, by number of sites and target area.	25
Table 12: Number and share of Blue Action sites and target area planned to improve on level of protection only, on stage of establishment only, on both, or on neither, for running projects.	26
Table 13: Baseline-to-result transitions in level of protection and stage of establishment for completed projects, by number of sites and result area.	32
Table 14: Number and share of Blue Action sites and result area that improved on level of protection only, on stage of establishment only, on both, or on neither, for completed projects.....	32
Table 15: Delivery of target area, overall and by site type, for completed projects.....	34
Table 16: Number and share of Blue Action sites and result area that met or exceeded their target area, for completed projects.	34
Table 17: Target-to-result transitions in level of protection and stage of establishment for completed projects, by number of sites, target area and result area.	41
Table 18: Number and share of Blue Action sites and result area that met or exceeded the target on level of protection only, on stage of establishment only, on both, or on neither, for completed projects.....	41
Table 19: Number and share of Blue Action sites and result area by management plan status, for completed projects....	42
Table 20: Number and share of Blue Action sites and area with any international recognition.....	43
Table 21: Number and share of Blue Action sites and area per award. Schemes overlap, so a site can hold several.....	43
Table 22: Internationally recognized sites from the Blue Action portfolio and the number of project sites they map to.	44
Table 23: Blue Action portfolio area, the total marine area of ODA countries, the 30% benchmark, and the portfolio's share of each.	46

List of Figures

Figure 1: Cumulative number of Blue Action sites (no complete duplicates) by project start year.	6
Figure 2: Cumulative area supported by Blue Action by project start year.....	7
Figure 3: Distribution of Blue Action site sizes (with area overlap), by number of sites and by summed site area.....	8
Figure 4: Distribution of the number of sites per Blue Action project.	9
Figure 5: Governance type distribution of Blue Action sites per country.....	11
Figure 6: Governance type distribution of Blue Action sites per call for proposals.	12
Figure 7: Site type distribution of Blue Action sites per country, by number of sites and by area.....	15

Drawing the Map: A Site-Based Review of Blue Action Fund's Grant Portfolio

Figure 8: Site type distribution of Blue Action sites per call for proposals, by number of sites and by area.	16
Figure 9: Bubble chart showing the number of Blue Action sites per combination of target level of protection (rows) and target stage of establishment (columns). Bar charts at the margins show the total number of sites at each level of protection and each stage of establishment separately.	19
Figure 10: Planned changes in level of protection for running projects, from baseline to target. Each line represents a transition between two levels of protection, with thicker lines indicating more sites (top chart) or larger target area (bottom chart). The bar charts on either side show the total number of sites (top chart) or the total target area (bottom chart) at each level of protection, at baseline and at target separately.	21
Figure 11: Planned changes in stage of establishment for running projects, from baseline to target. Each line represents a transition between two stages of establishment, with thicker lines indicating more sites (top chart) or larger target area (bottom chart). The bar charts on either side show the total number of sites (top chart) or the total target area (bottom chart) at each stage of establishment, at baseline and at target separately.	22
Figure 12: Bubble charts showing the number of Blue Action sites per combination of level of protection (rows) and stage of establishment (columns) at baseline (top) and at target (bottom) for running projects.	23
Figure 13: Bubble charts showing the target area of Blue Action sites per combination of level of protection (rows) and stage of establishment (columns) at baseline (top) and at target (bottom) for running projects. Sites with zero target area occur due to overlap adjustment.	24
Figure 14: Achieved changes in level of protection for completed projects, from baseline to result. Each line represents a transition between two levels of protection, with thicker lines indicating more sites (top chart) or larger result area (bottom chart). The bar charts on either side show the total number of sites (top chart) or the total result area (bottom chart) at each level of protection, at baseline and at result separately.	28
Figure 15: Achieved changes in stage of establishment for completed projects, from baseline to result. Each line represents a transition between two stages of establishment, with thicker lines indicating more sites (top chart) or larger result area (bottom chart). The bar charts on either side show the total number of sites (top chart) or the total result area (bottom chart) at each stage of establishment, at baseline and at result separately.	29
Figure 16: Bubble charts showing the number of Blue Action sites per combination of level of protection (rows) and stage of establishment (columns) at baseline (top) and at result (bottom) for completed projects.	30
Figure 17: Bubble charts showing the result area of Blue Action sites per combination of level of protection (rows) and stage of establishment (columns) at baseline (top) and at result (bottom) for completed projects. Sites with zero result area occur due to overlap adjustment or not reaching Designated status by the end of the project.	31
Figure 18: Result area against target area, per site (top) and per project (bottom), each by site type, for completed projects. The dashed line marks exact delivery. Sites with zero overlap-adjusted target area appear at a target of zero (orange; due to overlap adjustment or not being in the project scope during the design phase). Sites with zero overlap-adjusted result area appear at a result of zero (yellow; due to overlap adjustment or not reaching Designated status by the end of the project), unless they also have zero overlap-adjusted target area. In the project view (bottom), point size shows the number of sites per project. Axes use a pseudo-logarithmic scale for readability.	34
Figure 19: Distribution of the per-site delivery ratio (result area over target area), overall and by site type, for completed projects. For example, sites that exactly met their target area sit at '1', sites that more than doubled their target area sit at '>2'. Sites with zero overlap-adjusted result area sit at '0' (due to overlap adjustment or not reaching Designated status by the end of the project), unless they have also zero overlap-adjusted target area. Sites with zero overlap-adjusted target area form the separate bar 'Undefined' (due to overlap adjustment or not being in the project scope during the design phase). Percentages are shares of sites where a ratio could be calculated (all except 'Undefined').	35
Figure 20: Target delivery in level of protection for completed projects, from target to result. Each line represents a transition between two levels of protection, with thicker lines indicating more sites (top chart) or larger area (bottom chart; target area at target, result area at result). The bar charts on either side show the total number of sites (top chart) or the total area (bottom chart) at each level of protection, at target and at result separately.	37
Figure 21: Target delivery in stage of establishment for completed projects, from target to result. Each line represents a transition between two stages of establishment, with thicker lines indicating more sites (top chart) or larger area (bottom chart; target area at target, result area at result). The bar charts on either side show the total number of sites (top chart) or the total area (bottom chart) at each stage of establishment, at target and at result separately.	38
Figure 22: Bubble charts showing the number of Blue Action sites per combination of level of protection (rows) and stage of establishment (columns) at target (top) and at result (bottom) for completed projects.	39

Drawing the Map: A Site-Based Review of Blue Action Fund’s Grant Portfolio

Figure 23: Bubble charts showing the area of Blue Action sites per combination of level of protection (rows) and stage of establishment (columns) at target (top; target area) and at result (bottom; result area) for completed projects. Sites with zero target area (top panel) occur due to overlap adjustment or not being in the project scope during the design phase. Sites with zero result area (bottom panel) occur due to overlap adjustment or not reaching Designated status by the end of the project. 40

Figure 24: Number of Blue Action sites and result area by management plan status, for completed projects. 42

Figure 25: Share of Blue Action sites and area per award combination. 44

Figure 26: Blue Action portfolio area as progress toward the 30% benchmark of ODA countries’ marine area.....46

List of Abbreviations

IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
MPA	Marine Protected Area
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECM	Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measure
SSI	Site-Specific Information

1. Introduction

Blue Action Fund is systematically collecting data on all Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) or Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) that have been targeted by one of their funded projects. This *site-specific information* (SSI) is elicited from Blue Action grantees and contributes to a complete database of supported sites, their basic characteristics, as well as conservation targets and outcomes. For example, core variables in the database are geographical scope as well as baseline, targeted and final MPA Guide categorization (Gorud-Colvert et al., 2021) of a project site. The MPA Guide complements the classical Protected Area Categories of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) (Dudley, 2008). It adds to mere area counts a closer assessment of the quality and effectiveness of protected areas. Blue Action aims to use these data for internal analytics of their grant portfolio, tracking the evolution of the program and the increasing number and diversity of grantees. The SSI data currently feed into the calculation of multiple Key Performance Indicators, the assessment of geographical overlap of project sites, and routine reporting, management and evaluation activities.

This report structures and extends the current use cases of the SSI database. We present new results from an in-depth analysis of the current state of the SSI database within a newly designed analytical framework. The findings can support Blue Action's upcoming 10-year evaluation and future strategic vision setting. Specifically, we present results of 14 *portfolio diagnostics*, grouped under three thematic headers. These diagnostics are quantitative analyses that describe characteristics of project sites, with each diagnostic answering one question or set of related questions.¹ Jointly, they provide a portfolio-level view of the reach and scope of the funded sites, the ambition and impact of the projects, and the strategic positioning of the portfolio against international benchmarks. Because each diagnostic follows a fixed and documented procedure, the analysis can be repeated on updated versions of the SSI database to track how the portfolio develops over time.

¹ Appendix A3 lists all questions from which the analyses were developed. For reference and clarity, we rephrase these questions in section 4 at the beginning of each Diagnostic's set of results.

2. Data

The database ("master file") is designed to capture each project site as one observational unit (rows), uniquely identified by the combination of a project identifier and site number. Various characteristics of the sites (columns) are stored in multiple data formats, including character strings (e.g., international site name), date-times (e.g., project start), and numeric values (e.g., result surface area). The data is collected from grantee organizations under a confidentiality agreement (no publication or sharing with third parties) via an Excel data request template. The Excel file is filled out twice, once before project start (baseline and target) and once after project end (result). The template comes with detailed instructions and, where appropriate, pre-specified dropdown lists of response options. Grantees' self-reports are cross-checked with proposal documents and, where appropriate, also external datasets. The analysis also draws on some pre-computed area counts calculated from geospatial data, obtained via ESRI shapefiles.

The analysis used as its input the database as provided by Blue Action on 18 June 2026. It contained 282 project site records in its original form. Prior to data analysis, some variables were further cleaned and processed. The detailed steps are listed in Appendix A1. Despite the standardized format of data collection with a carefully designed template, irregular or inconsistent data can occur. This includes spelling errors, wrong data formats, missing data, or contradictory responses across columns. Although careful cleaning and processing can improve data quality – and so could potential adjustments to the data request template – it has to be kept in mind that the site-specific information is contributed by many people with diverse backgrounds, can change dynamically over time and is partially based on estimates. These are imperfections that cannot be fully erased given the complexities of project implementation and the need to balance level of detail and pragmatism during data collection. In fact, Blue Action's effort invested in data collection and management is commendable and the basis of all analyses presented in this report. The data processing also led to the removal of 2 sites that were stored in the database only for completeness. They had either once been considered for a project, but were never actively engaged in it, or were dropped during implementation. Hence, they form no part of the portfolio and 280 project site records went into the final analysis.

3. Methods

The analysis builds on an analytical framework that was finalized before running the full suite of analyses. In brief, it contains 14 portfolio diagnostics, which represent descriptive analyses of site characteristics, grouped under the following headers:

- **Reach and scope** (section 4.1, diagnostics 1-5): Counts how many sites and how much area are covered by Blue Action's portfolio, broken down by characteristics like site size, governance type, and new-versus-existing site type.
- **Ambition and impact** (section 4.2, diagnostics 6-12): Tracks planned and achieved change of project sites, like how they move between MPA Guide categories (level of protection and stage of establishment) from baseline to target to result, and whether they adopted a management plan.
- **Strategic positioning** (section 4.3, diagnostics 13-14): Measures the grant portfolio against international benchmarks: how much of the portfolio sits in marine parks of international recognition from trusted conservation organizations, and how much of the marine area of countries receiving official development assistance (ODA) the portfolio covers relative to the global 30×30 protection target.

Precise quantitative definitions for all 14 diagnostics can be found as part of the analytical framework in Appendix A2.²

A core feature of the SSI database and hence also the reported portfolio diagnostics is the use of the MPA Guide framework for scoring the stage of establishment – reflecting the current implementation status of the protected area – and level of protection – reflecting impact of activities allowed within the protected area – of an MPA (Gronrud-Colvert et al., 2021). The MPA Guide categorization for baseline and target status is collected from grantees prior to project start and can be contrasted with the information of achieved categorization collected after project completion.³ Categories are always assigned on the MPA level as a whole and not further defined for individual MPA zones. The MPA Guide framework is the cornerstone of many analyses in section 4.2 on ambition and impact of the Blue Action portfolio.

Some general methodological aspects warrant being made explicit here, since they affect interpretation of the results. It is possible that sites within and between projects overlap. This information is managed by Blue Action and stored in the SSI database. The database includes both a marker for complete duplicate sites, e.g., when the exact same site is targeted in a follow-up project, and area counts (baseline area, target area, result area) before and after adjusting for overlap. The adjustment, a reduction in area from one of the overlapping sites to account for the overlap, always occurs in the newer project. In this analysis, we avoid the double-counting of the

² During implementation of the analysis, a few minor additions and edits to the analytical framework as originally delivered to Blue Action on 29 June 2026 occurred. Therefore, Appendix A2 shows the final version including these updates. Appendix A3 also shows the confirmed question set, from which the analytical framework was further developed. A matching table shows, for each confirmed question, the portfolio diagnostic in this report that answers it and the corresponding question in the initial question set proposed by Blue Action.

³ For early projects not working with the current standardized data request template, some of the information had to be collected retrospectively.

same geographic site covered in multiple projects only when the total number of project sites is calculated (section 4.1.1). When the total site count is broken down by other variables, however, these sites are counted multiple times. This is because the same site may have different characteristics depending on the project, and that information should not be lost. Therefore, different site totals may occur in different analyses. When counting surface area, we generally use the overlap-adjusted data.⁴ Only when the distribution of site sizes is described (section 4.1.3), we use the raw areas. Their sum therefore deviates from the area total that results after accounting for overlap.

It is noteworthy that a site's result or target area, two variables that are compared and analyzed in detail in section 4.2, could be zero for a single site or even a sum over multiple sites. First, this can occur due to adjustment for overlap in the target or result area (see above). Second, a completed project can have a target area of zero even before overlap adjustment. These sites were not included in the project scope during the design phase, but they benefited during project implementation and were therefore added to the SSI database after the project ended. Similarly, a completed project can have a result area of zero even before overlap adjustment. These sites were not yet officially designated protected areas by project end and thus did not reach a stage of establishment that requires defined boundaries and regulations (Gorud-Colvert et al., 2021). As a consequence, it is advisable not to include them in counts of protected area.

All analyses were conducted in R v4.6.1 (R Core Team, 2026), using the `ggplot2` graphics library for visualizations (Wickham, 2016) and `flextable` for table design (Gohel & Skintzos, 2026). All figures were colorized using the `Pronotogrammus_martinicensis` palette (mimicking the color phenotype of the *rougtongue bass*, a Caribbean deep-water reef fish) from the `fishualize` package (Schiettekatte et al., 2022).

⁴ Of course, for an even more comprehensive view, all analyses of area count could also be run twice: once including and once excluding overlap with other sites. Although this might aid comparison and interpretation in some cases, it could also confuse and distract in many others. The amount of numerical results presented in this report would double without necessarily delivering a clearer picture. In the future, if a contrast of results with and without overlap is of substantive interest for a specific question, the analysis can and should be extended accordingly. In particular, for the newer of two overlapping projects, the adjustment can reduce its target and result area, in the extreme to zero, so that its achievements are understated or omitted in calculations involving area, even if its sites advanced or met their target.

4. Results

The following sections present results on reach and scope (section 4.1, diagnostics 1–5), ambition and impact (section 4.2, diagnostics 6–12), and strategic positioning (section 4.3, diagnostics 13–14).

4.1. Topic: Reach and Scope

4.1.1. Diagnostic 1: Site count

How many marine and coastal sites has Blue Action supported since its inception, by country, protected area category, and call?

The portfolio totals 254 sites (Table 1). The sites lie in 25 countries, led by Mozambique (46 sites, 16.4%); 79.3% are MPAs and 20.7% are OECMs. The 10 calls for proposals contribute between 17 and 46 sites each (Table 2). Figure 1 shows continuous growth, from 35 sites in 2018 to 252 by 2026 (2 further sites belong to projects planned to start after 2026).

Note that the total count excludes complete duplicates, that is, sites targeted again in a follow-up project. The breakdowns in Table 2 keep these duplicates, because the same site can fall under different categories in different projects, so their sums (280 sites) exceed the total.

Table 1: Total number of Blue Action sites (no complete duplicates).

Category	Sites
Total number of sites	254

Table 2: Site count by country, protected area category and call for proposals.

Category	Sites	Share
Country		
Mozambique	46	16.4%
Indonesia	28	10.0%
Tanzania	22	7.9%
São Tomé and Príncipe	21	7.5%
Madagascar	20	7.1%
Belize	16	5.7%
Cape Verde	14	5.0%
Papua New Guinea	13	4.6%
Myanmar	12	4.3%
Colombia	10	3.6%
Honduras	10	3.6%
Costa Rica	8	2.9%
South Africa	8	2.9%
Cambodia	6	2.1%
Ecuador	6	2.1%
Fiji	6	2.1%
Solomon Islands	6	2.1%
Vietnam	6	2.1%
Guinea-Bissau	5	1.8%
Peru	5	1.8%
Bangladesh	4	1.4%

Category	Sites	Share
Namibia	3	1.1%
Kenya	2	0.7%
Panama	2	0.7%
Philippines	1	0.4%
Protected area category		
MPA	222	79.3%
OECM	58	20.7%
Call for proposals		
1st Call - Inception Pilot	32	11.4%
2nd Call - Small Island Developing States	46	16.4%
3rd Call - Western Indian Ocean	21	7.5%
4th Call - East Asian Seas	35	12.5%
5th Call - Eastern Tropical Pacific Ocean	17	6.1%
6th Call - EbA I Western Indian Ocean	28	10.0%
7th Call - Africa's Atlantic Coast	22	7.9%
8th Call - EbA II Western Indian Ocean	26	9.3%
9th Call - Wider Caribbean Sea	31	11.1%
10th Call - Asia-Pacific Region	22	7.9%

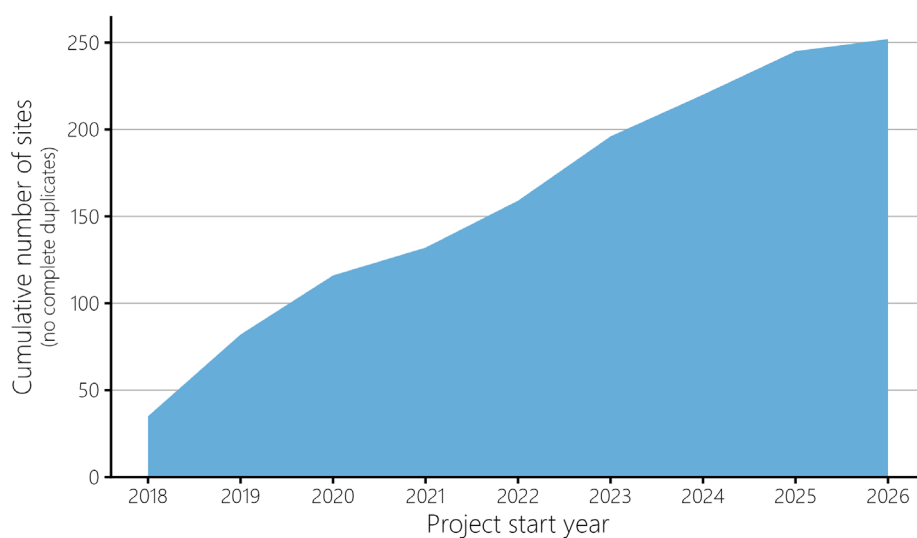


Figure 1: Cumulative number of Blue Action sites (no complete duplicates) by project start year.

4.1.2. Diagnostic 2: Total protected area

What is the total protected surface area that Blue Action has supported since its inception?

The portfolio covers 521,582 km², with overlaps between sites removed so that no area is counted twice (Table 3). Figure 2 shows the accumulation by project start year (which may precede the year the area was designated or established). The total combines the targeted area for running projects with the achieved area for completed projects.

Table 3: Total area supported by Blue Action.

Category	Area
Total area (km ²)	521,581.619

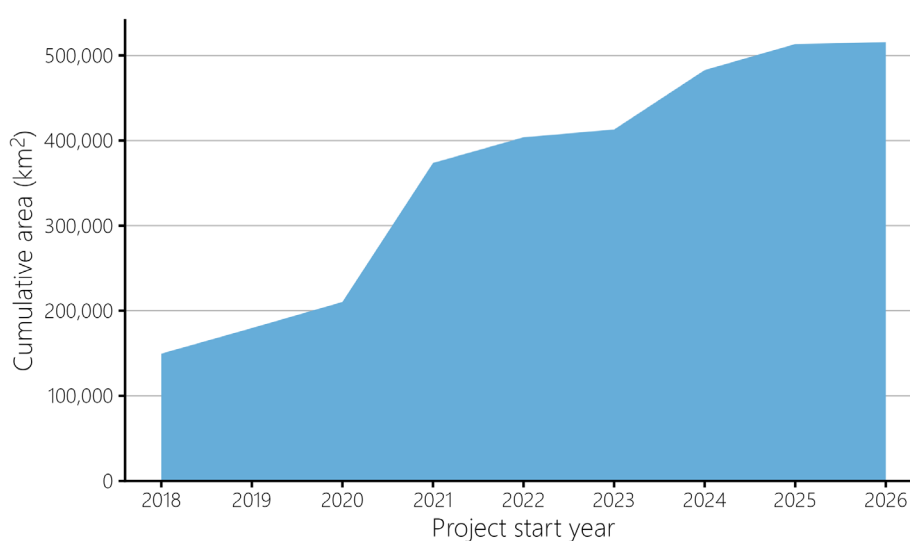


Figure 2: Cumulative area supported by Blue Action by project start year.

4.1.3. Diagnostic 3: Distribution of site sizes

What is the largest and smallest site, how are site sizes distributed, and how many sites do projects contain?

Figure 3 shows the size distribution, with categories in orders of magnitude as commonly used for grouping MPAs (e.g., Bohorquez et al., 2019). The analysis draws on the targeted area for running projects and the achieved area for completed projects, and it includes area overlap between sites, since we treat area here as a characteristic of a project site, not as an area total. As a consequence, the summed areas are not comparable to the portfolio total in Diagnostic 2 (section 4.1.2). Sites between 10 and 1,000 km² are most common, while the 10 sites above 10,000 km² hold 75.2% of the summed site area; 34 sites have an area of zero because they were not yet officially designated by project end (causing an entry of zero result area). The largest site in the dataset covers 142,759 km², while the smallest site with an area above zero (i.e., excluding sites that did not reach Designated status) covers 0.040 km² (Table 4).

The 39 projects contain between 1 and 25 sites each, with a median of 5 (Figure 4). Projects with more than 10 sites are relatively rare (10 out of 39 projects, about one quarter). Excluding sites with zero result area, the median site measures 110 km²; the mean of 2,863 km² is far higher because the largest sites pull it up (Table 5).

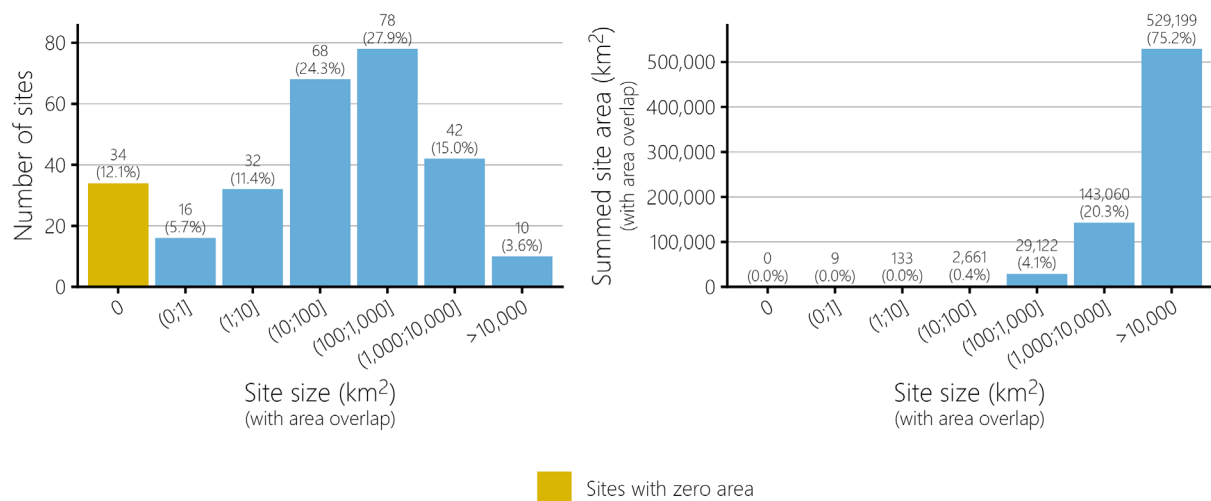


Figure 3: Distribution of Blue Action site sizes (with area overlap), by number of sites and by summed site area.

Table 4: Largest and smallest Blue Action site (with area overlap; excluding sites with zero result area due to not reaching Designated status).

Category	Site size (km ²)
Largest site	142,759.000
Smallest site	0.040

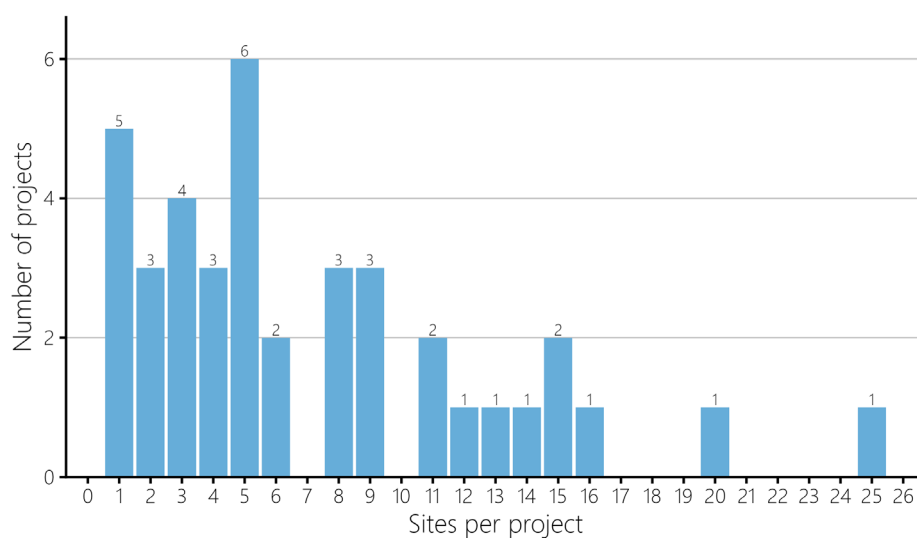


Figure 4: Distribution of the number of sites per Blue Action project.

Table 5: Summary statistics for a typical Blue Action site and project (with area overlap; excluding sites with zero result area due to not reaching Designated status).

Statistic	Value
Median site size (km ²)	109.528
Mean site size (km ²)	2,862.531
Median number of sites per project	5

4.1.4. Diagnostic 4: Distribution by governance type

How are sites distributed across governance types, by country and call?

Applying the IUCN governance types framework (Borrini-Feyerabend et al., 2013), governance by government (Type A, 39.3%), governance by indigenous peoples and local communities (Type D, 32.5%), and shared governance (Type B, 28.2%) all carry substantial parts of the portfolio, while no site is under private governance (Type C; Table 6). The composition varies substantially across countries (Figure 5): Type D sites dominate strongly in Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Mozambique and Madagascar, but 16 of the 25 countries have none. The mix also shifts considerably across calls for proposals, where the share of sites governed by government ranges from zero to 90.9% (Figure 6). Almost one third of the portfolio (91 sites) is governed by indigenous peoples and local communities, reflecting the 30x30 target's call for "equitably governed systems" of protected and conserved areas "recognizing indigenous and traditional territories" (Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, 2022).

Table 6: Number and share of Blue Action sites per governance type, overall and by country and by call for proposals.

Category	Type A - Governance by government	Type B - Shared governance	Type D - Governance by indigenous peoples and local communities
Overall			
All sites	110 (39.3%)	79 (28.2%)	91 (32.5%)
Country			
Bangladesh	0 (0.0%)	4 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Belize	6 (37.5%)	10 (62.5%)	0 (0.0%)
Cambodia	1 (16.7%)	5 (83.3%)	0 (0.0%)
Cape Verde	14 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Colombia	6 (60.0%)	4 (40.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Costa Rica	6 (75.0%)	2 (25.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Ecuador	6 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Fiji	0 (0.0%)	2 (33.3%)	4 (66.7%)
Guinea-Bissau	3 (60.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (40.0%)
Honduras	0 (0.0%)	10 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Indonesia	25 (89.3%)	1 (3.6%)	2 (7.1%)
Kenya	2 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Madagascar	1 (5.0%)	3 (15.0%)	16 (80.0%)
Mozambique	7 (15.2%)	2 (4.3%)	37 (80.4%)
Myanmar	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	12 (100.0%)
Namibia	3 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Panama	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Papua New Guinea	0 (0.0%)	1 (7.7%)	12 (92.3%)
Peru	5 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Philippines	1 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
São Tomé and Príncipe	0 (0.0%)	21 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Solomon Islands	0 (0.0%)	2 (33.3%)	4 (66.7%)
South Africa	8 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Tanzania	11 (50.0%)	11 (50.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Vietnam	4 (66.7%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (33.3%)
Call for proposals			
1st Call - Inception Pilot	11 (34.4%)	4 (12.5%)	17 (53.1%)

Category	Type A - Governance by government	Type B - Shared governance	Type D - Governance by indigenous peoples and local communities
2nd Call - Small Island Developing States	0 (0.0%)	26 (56.5%)	20 (43.5%)
3rd Call - Western Indian Ocean	10 (47.6%)	11 (52.4%)	0 (0.0%)
4th Call - East Asian Seas	16 (45.7%)	5 (14.3%)	14 (40.0%)
5th Call - Eastern Tropical Pacific Ocean	14 (82.4%)	3 (17.6%)	0 (0.0%)
6th Call - EbA I Western Indian Ocean	8 (28.6%)	4 (14.3%)	16 (57.1%)
7th Call - Africa's Atlantic Coast	20 (90.9%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (9.1%)
8th Call - EbA II Western Indian Ocean	5 (19.2%)	1 (3.8%)	20 (76.9%)
9th Call - Wider Caribbean Sea	11 (35.5%)	20 (64.5%)	0 (0.0%)
10th Call - Asia-Pacific Region	15 (68.2%)	5 (22.7%)	2 (9.1%)

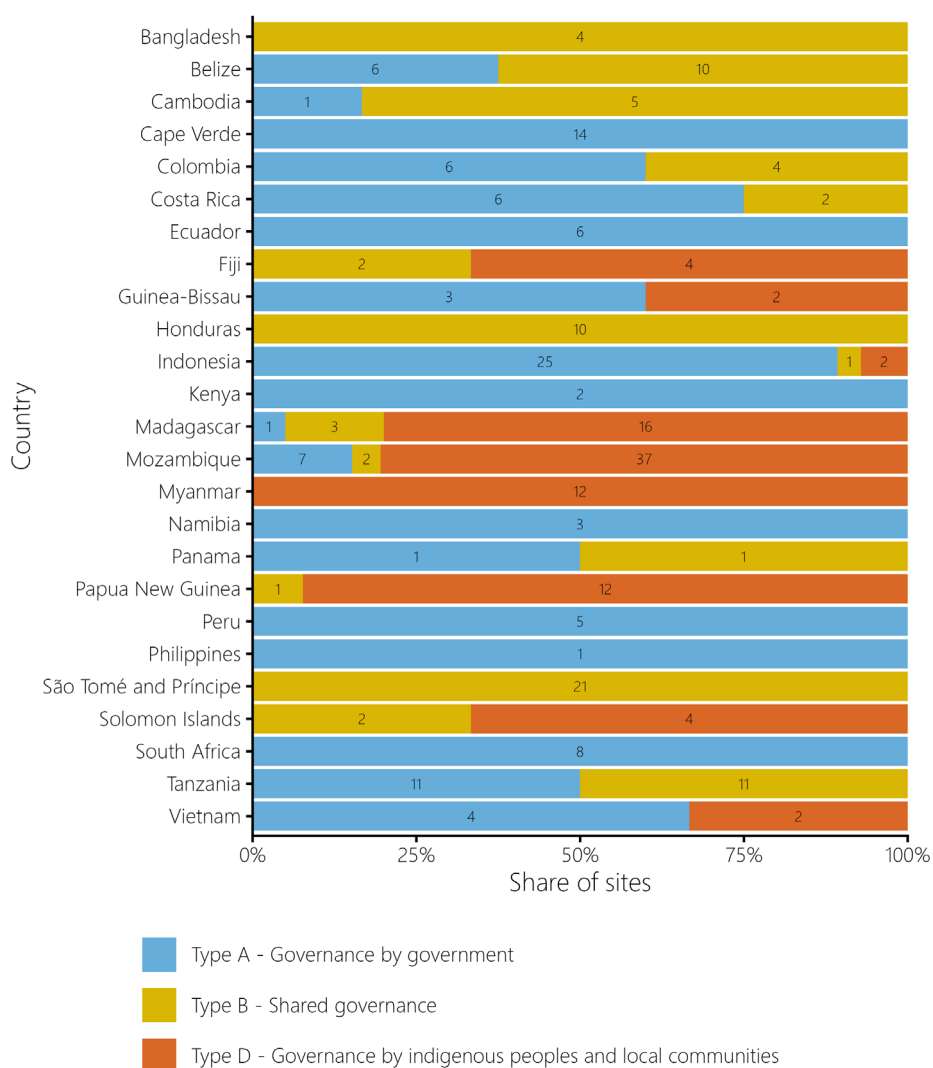


Figure 5: Governance type distribution of Blue Action sites per country.

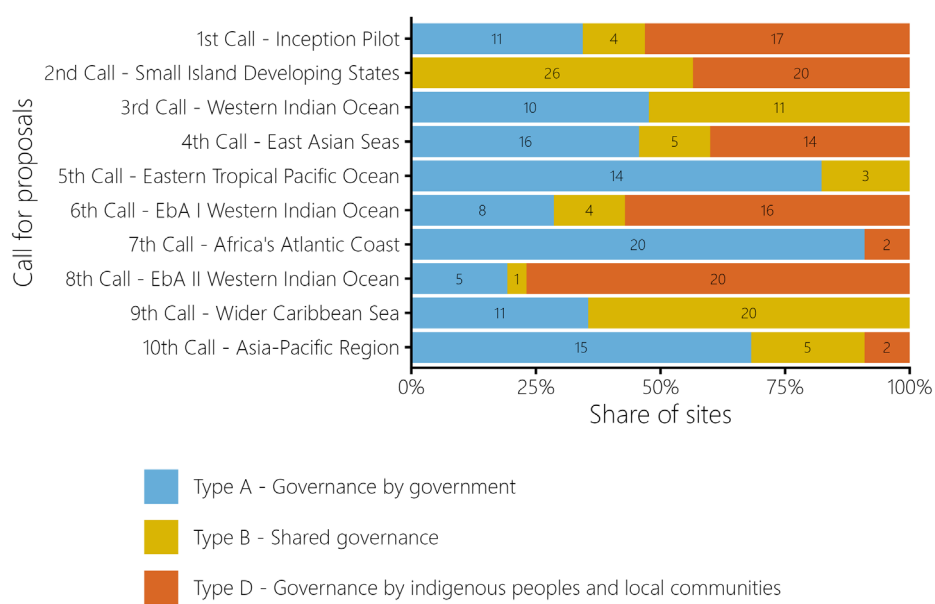


Figure 6: Governance type distribution of Blue Action sites per call for proposals.

4.1.5. Diagnostic 5: Distribution by site type

How are sites split between newly established or extended sites and effectively managed sites?

Sites that existed before the project and whose management effectiveness the project aims to enhance ("Effectively managed") make up the majority of the portfolio (167 sites, 59.6%) and an even larger share of its area (70.2%). Protected areas newly established or expanded during the project ("New/Extended") account for 113 sites (40.4%) and 29.8% of the area (Tables 7 and 8). The area figures combine the targeted area for running projects with the achieved area for completed projects. New or extended sites are therefore smaller on average than the pre-existing sites the portfolio supports. The balance differs widely by country (Figure 7): every site is newly established or extended in São Tomé and Príncipe and the Solomon Islands, whereas in Kenya, the Philippines and South Africa every site existed before the project. It also varies across calls for proposals (Figure 8), where the share of new or extended sites ranges from 7.1% (6th Call, EbA I Western Indian Ocean) to 69.6% (2nd Call, Small Island Developing States). A site that is both extended and effectively managed is recorded once under each type in the database by splitting its area between the types, so such sites count in both categories (e.g., Con Co Marine Protected Area in Vietnam).

Table 7: Number and share of Blue Action sites per site type, overall and by country and by call for proposals.

Category	New/Extended	Effectively managed
Overall		
All sites	113 (40.4%)	167 (59.6%)
Country		
Bangladesh	2 (50.0%)	2 (50.0%)
Belize	1 (6.2%)	15 (93.8%)
Cambodia	3 (50.0%)	3 (50.0%)
Cape Verde	6 (42.9%)	8 (57.1%)
Colombia	1 (10.0%)	9 (90.0%)
Costa Rica	2 (25.0%)	6 (75.0%)
Ecuador	3 (50.0%)	3 (50.0%)
Fiji	3 (50.0%)	3 (50.0%)
Guinea-Bissau	2 (40.0%)	3 (60.0%)
Honduras	3 (30.0%)	7 (70.0%)
Indonesia	7 (25.0%)	21 (75.0%)
Kenya	0 (0.0%)	2 (100.0%)
Madagascar	2 (10.0%)	18 (90.0%)
Mozambique	31 (67.4%)	15 (32.6%)
Myanmar	8 (66.7%)	4 (33.3%)
Namibia	2 (66.7%)	1 (33.3%)
Panama	1 (50.0%)	1 (50.0%)
Papua New Guinea	2 (15.4%)	11 (84.6%)
Peru	1 (20.0%)	4 (80.0%)
Philippines	0 (0.0%)	1 (100.0%)
São Tomé and Príncipe	21 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Solomon Islands	6 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)
South Africa	0 (0.0%)	8 (100.0%)
Tanzania	2 (9.1%)	20 (90.9%)
Vietnam	4 (66.7%)	2 (33.3%)
Call for proposals		
1st Call - Inception Pilot	21 (65.6%)	11 (34.4%)

Category	New/Extended	Effectively managed
2nd Call - Small Island Developing States	32 (69.6%)	14 (30.4%)
3rd Call - Western Indian Ocean	2 (9.5%)	19 (90.5%)
4th Call - East Asian Seas	15 (42.9%)	20 (57.1%)
5th Call - Eastern Tropical Pacific Ocean	5 (29.4%)	12 (70.6%)
6th Call - EbA I Western Indian Ocean	2 (7.1%)	26 (92.9%)
7th Call - Africa's Atlantic Coast	10 (45.5%)	12 (54.5%)
8th Call - EbA II Western Indian Ocean	12 (46.2%)	14 (53.8%)
9th Call - Wider Caribbean Sea	5 (16.1%)	26 (83.9%)
10th Call - Asia-Pacific Region	9 (40.9%)	13 (59.1%)

Table 8: Area and share of Blue Action sites per site type, overall and by country and by call for proposals.

Category	New/Extended	Effectively managed
Overall		
All sites	155,593.560 (29.8%)	365,988.060 (70.2%)
Country		
Bangladesh	7,829.000 (61.4%)	4,926.000 (38.6%)
Belize	58.000 (0.9%)	6,545.600 (99.1%)
Cambodia	610.000 (43.9%)	780.160 (56.1%)
Cape Verde	314.349 (28.1%)	804.234 (71.9%)
Colombia	3,081.810 (4.6%)	63,935.790 (95.4%)
Costa Rica	39,536.000 (40.9%)	57,041.310 (59.1%)
Ecuador	60,252.430 (30.4%)	138,101.300 (69.6%)
Fiji	0.000 (0.0%)	158.300 (100.0%)
Guinea-Bissau	1,479.350 (35.7%)	2,668.670 (64.3%)
Honduras	9,465.600 (76.3%)	2,947.630 (23.7%)
Indonesia	3,637.670 (11.0%)	29,300.716 (89.0%)
Kenya	0.000 (0.0%)	39.000 (100.0%)
Madagascar	4,300.000 (52.7%)	3,864.750 (47.3%)
Mozambique	1,559.820 (11.4%)	12,162.000 (88.6%)
Myanmar	4,383.670 (85.5%)	742.330 (14.5%)
Namibia	6,275.000 (39.8%)	9,500.000 (60.2%)
Panama	34.110 (3.5%)	940.610 (96.5%)
Papua New Guinea	5,814.250 (99.9%)	4.770 (0.1%)
Peru	0.000 (0.0%)	3,359.730 (100.0%)
Philippines	0.000 (0.0%)	5,359.000 (100.0%)
São Tomé and Príncipe	193.100 (100.0%)	0.000 (0.0%)
Solomon Islands	0.000 (-)	0.000 (-)
South Africa	0.000 (0.0%)	15,199.580 (100.0%)
Tanzania	6,475.230 (46.9%)	7,328.690 (53.1%)
Vietnam	294.170 (51.4%)	277.890 (48.6%)
Call for proposals		
1st Call - Inception Pilot	742.360 (0.5%)	148,825.250 (99.5%)
2nd Call - Small Island Developing States	6,007.350 (97.4%)	163.070 (2.6%)
3rd Call - Western Indian Ocean	5,405.230 (22.5%)	18,665.820 (77.5%)
4th Call - East Asian Seas	8,252.340 (24.3%)	25,691.839 (75.7%)
5th Call - Eastern Tropical Pacific Ocean	99,536.000 (62.2%)	60,512.270 (37.8%)
6th Call - EbA I Western Indian Ocean	5,140.000 (32.0%)	10,927.370 (68.0%)
7th Call - Africa's Atlantic Coast	8,068.700 (38.3%)	12,972.904 (61.7%)

Category	New/Extended	Effectively managed
8th Call - EbA II Western Indian Ocean	1,334.000 (59.5%)	908.830 (40.5%)
9th Call - Wider Caribbean Sea	12,605.410 (15.0%)	71,626.450 (85.0%)
10th Call - Asia-Pacific Region	8,502.170 (35.1%)	15,694.257 (64.9%)

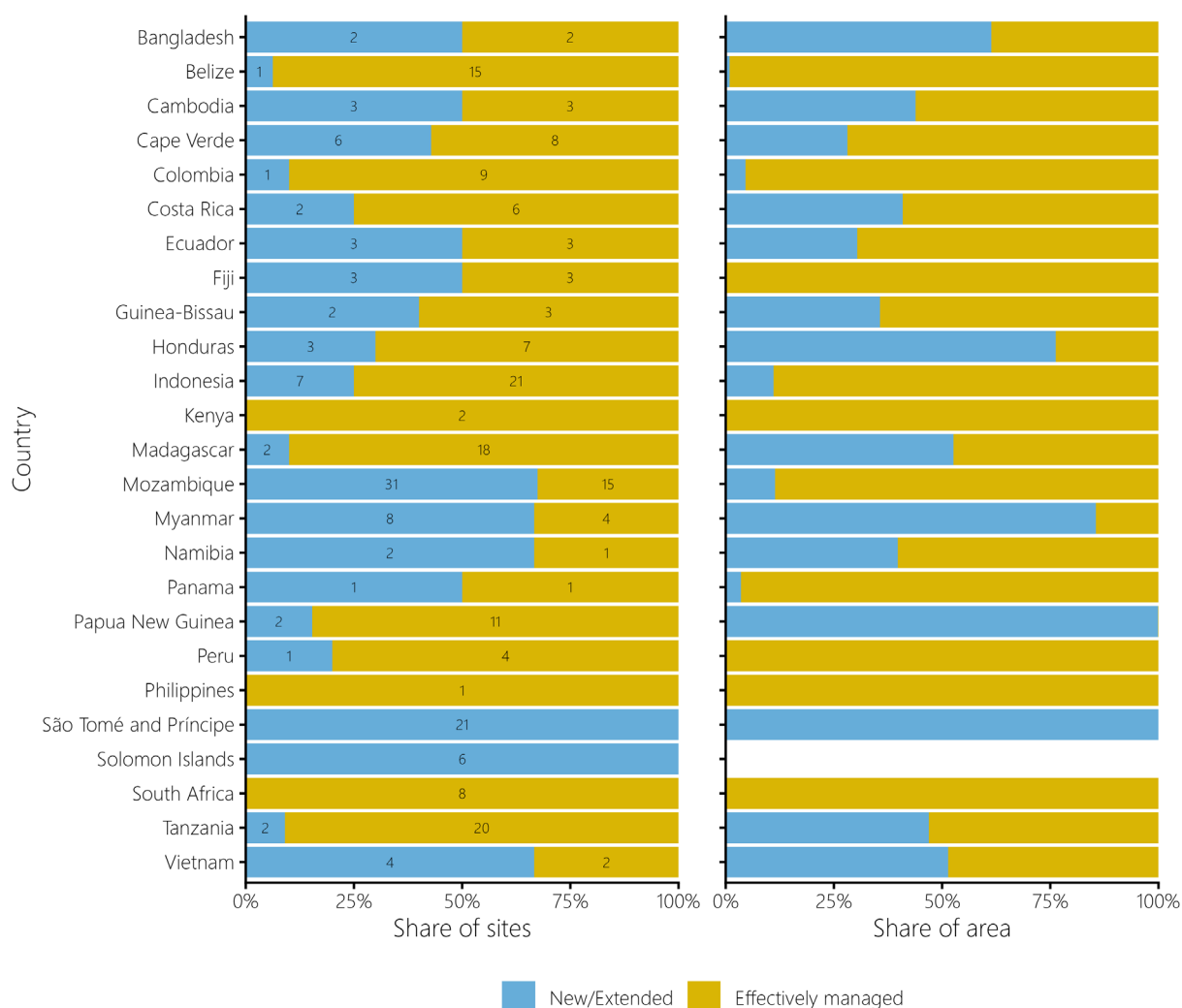


Figure 7: Site type distribution of Blue Action sites per country, by number of sites and by area.

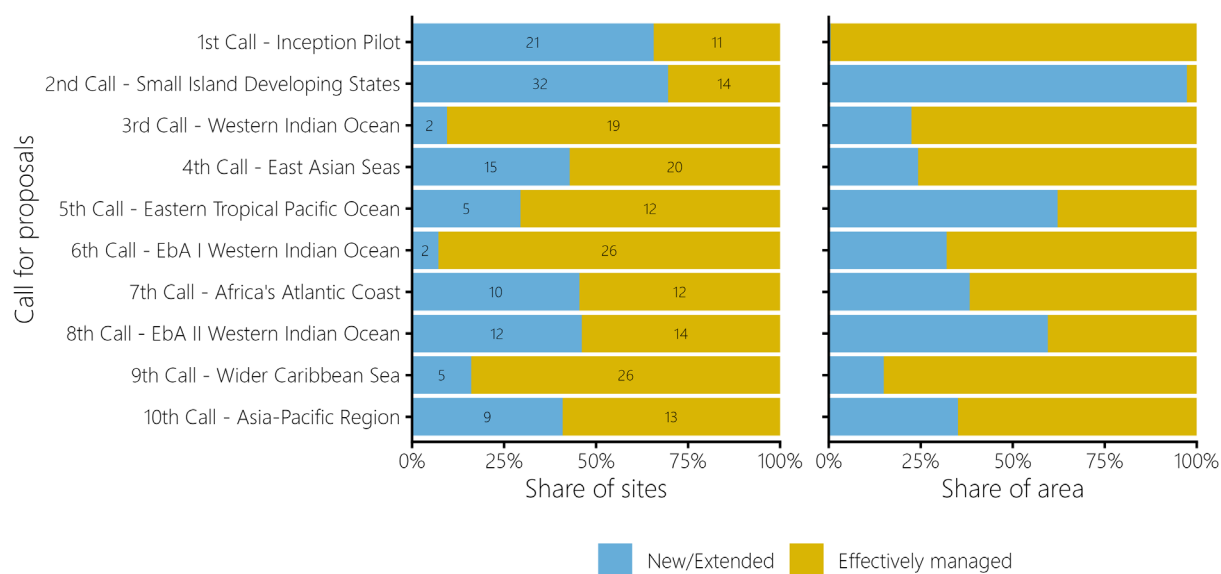


Figure 8: Site type distribution of Blue Action sites per call for proposals, by number of sites and by area.

4.2. Topic: Ambition and Impact

4.2.1. Diagnostic 6: Targeted protected area for new MPAs

What surface area does the portfolio aim to protect through new and extended sites, by protected area category?

Taken together, the new or extended sites target 190,486 km² (Table 9). Most of this area, 90.6%, is categorized as protected area under the IUCN framework (Dudley, 2008), and the remaining 9.4% belong to OECMs. Results for completed projects are not reflected here, as the diagnostic measures ambition, but the protected area actually resulting from projects is analyzed in Diagnostic 10 (section 4.2.5).

Table 9: Target surface area and share of new and extended sites, overall and per protected area category.

Category	Target area (km ²)	Share
All new/extended sites	190,486.376	100.0%
MPA	172,660.026	90.6%
OECM	17,826.350	9.4%

4.2.2. Diagnostic 7: Distribution by targeted level of protection and stage of establishment

Where are sites positioned on the MPA Guide's level of protection and stage of establishment based on their target status?

The MPA Guide with its scales for level of protection and stage of establishment allows for a closer assessment of the quality and effectiveness of protected areas targeted by Blue Action's grantees (Grorud-Colvert et al., 2021). On the level of protection, most sites target a Lightly Protected level (47.5%), followed by Highly Protected (32.1%) and Fully Protected (16.8%). Expectedly, none targets the lowest level, Not Protected (Table 10). On the stage of establishment, targets are ambitious: 63.9% of sites aim for the top stage, Actively Managed, and almost all of the rest for Implemented or Designated status, in line with advancing a site's establishment typically being the projects' main objective. Combining the two scales, the most common targets are Lightly, Highly or Fully Protected sites that are also Actively Managed (Figure 9). Overall, 80% of sites (224) target the upper-right region of the matrix, reaching at least Minimally Protected and at least Implemented status, where biodiversity benefits begin to accrue. Only 8 sites are not even targeted to reach Designated status, remaining at Proposed/Committed or Pre-Proposed. Of these, 6 belong to the 1st Call, 5 of them within a single project in Mozambique.⁵

Table 10: Number and share of Blue Action sites per combination of target level of protection (rows) and target stage of establishment (columns), with marginal totals.

Level of protection (target)	Pre-Proposed	Proposed/Committed	Designated	Implemented	Actively Managed	Total
Fully Protected	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (2.1%)	1 (0.4%)	40 (14.3%)	47 (16.8%)
Highly Protected	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	5 (1.8%)	18 (6.4%)	67 (23.9%)	90 (32.1%)
Lightly Protected	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)	36 (12.9%)	26 (9.3%)	70 (25.0%)	133 (47.5%)
Minimally Protected	0 (0.0%)	7 (2.5%)	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.7%)	10 (3.6%)
Not Protected	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Total	1 (0.4%)	7 (2.5%)	48 (17.1%)	45 (16.1%)	179 (63.9%)	280 (100.0%)

⁵ The sites were not part of the initial project design and only added retrospectively.

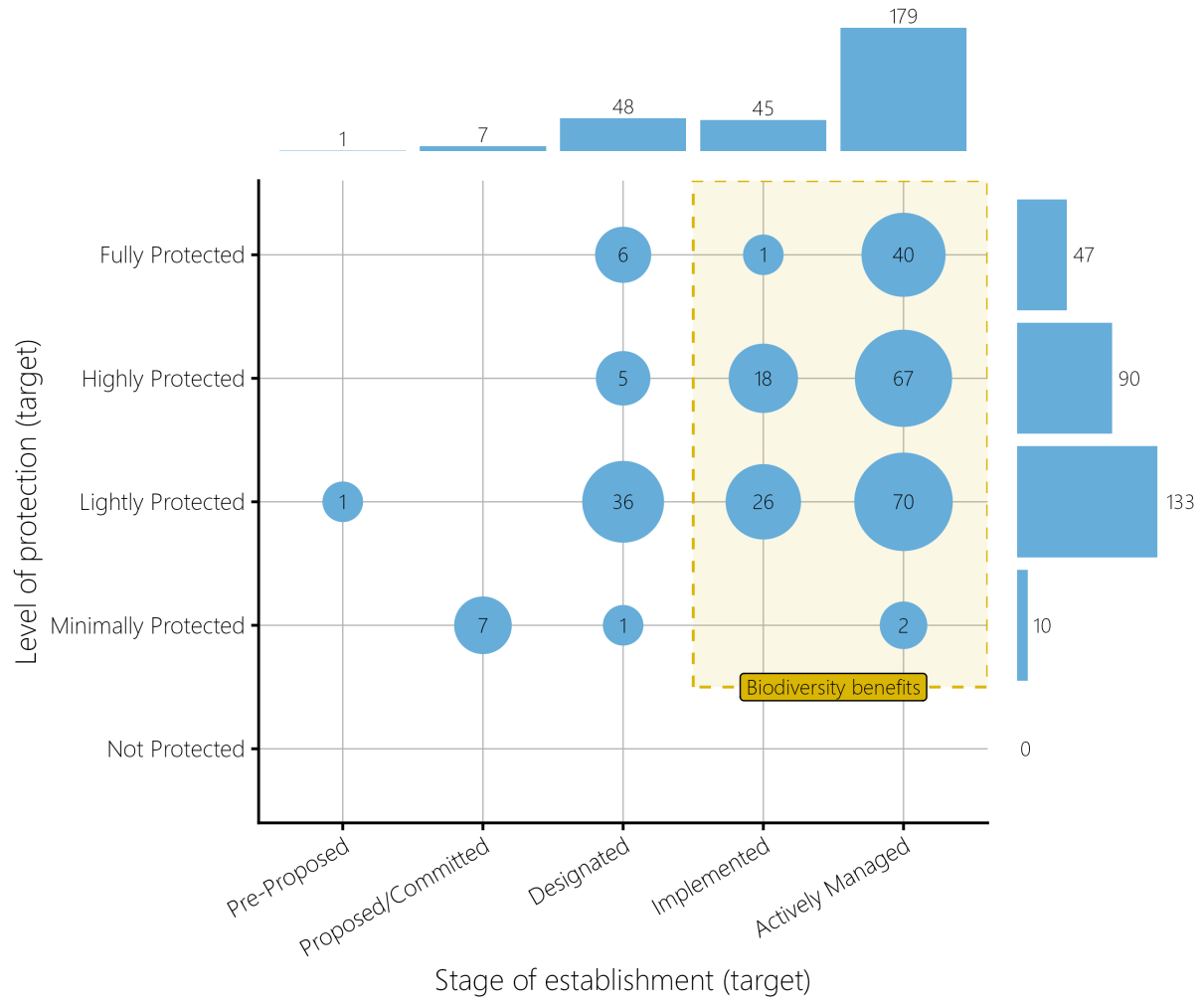


Figure 9: Bubble chart showing the number of Blue Action sites per combination of target level of protection (rows) and target stage of establishment (columns). Bar charts at the margins show the total number of sites at each level of protection and each stage of establishment separately.

4.2.3. Diagnostic 8: Targeted improvement in level of protection and stage of establishment

For running projects, how far do sites plan to advance on the MPA Guide's level of protection and stage of establishment from baseline to target?

Expectedly, among the 166 sites of running projects, any planned changes point upward. In total, 97 sites (58.4%) are planned to improve on both scales, and only 13 (7.8%) on neither (Table 12). On the level of protection, all 47 sites that have Not Protected status at baseline are planned to reach at least Minimally Protected status, and Highly and Fully Protected sites together grow from 30 to 99 (Figure 10). On the stage of establishment, plans concentrate on the top stage: 137 sites (82.5%) target Actively Managed status, up from 39 at baseline (Figure 11). The most common single transition, with 23 sites, upgrades Lightly Protected sites that are already Actively Managed to Highly Protected (Table 11).

Combining the two scales, most sites are planned to move into the upper-right region of the matrix, reaching at least Minimally Protected and at least Implemented status, where biodiversity benefits begin to accrue: 63 sites (38.0%) lie in this region at baseline, 153 (92.2%) at target (Figure 12). In terms of area, the share rises from 43.1% to 94.5% of the 197,269 km² total target area (Figure 13). Note that 31 sites here contribute no target area of their own, because each is a newer site overlapping an older Blue Action site, which carries the shared area.⁶ Accordingly, their overlap-adjusted target area that enters the calculations is zero. These sites add only to the site counts (in top panels in Figures 10, 11, in both panels in Figure 12), but not to area counts. Note that they also lead to target area entries of zero in the rightmost column in Table 11 for some combinations of planned transitions on the MPA Guide matrix.

Results for completed projects are not reflected here, as the diagnostic measures ambition, but the achieved change on both MPA guide scales is analyzed in Diagnostic 9 (section 4.2.4).

⁶ For example, this applies to 16 out of the 20 sites from Mozambique as part of the 8th call for proposals.

Drawing the Map: A Site-Based Review of Blue Action Fund's Grant Portfolio

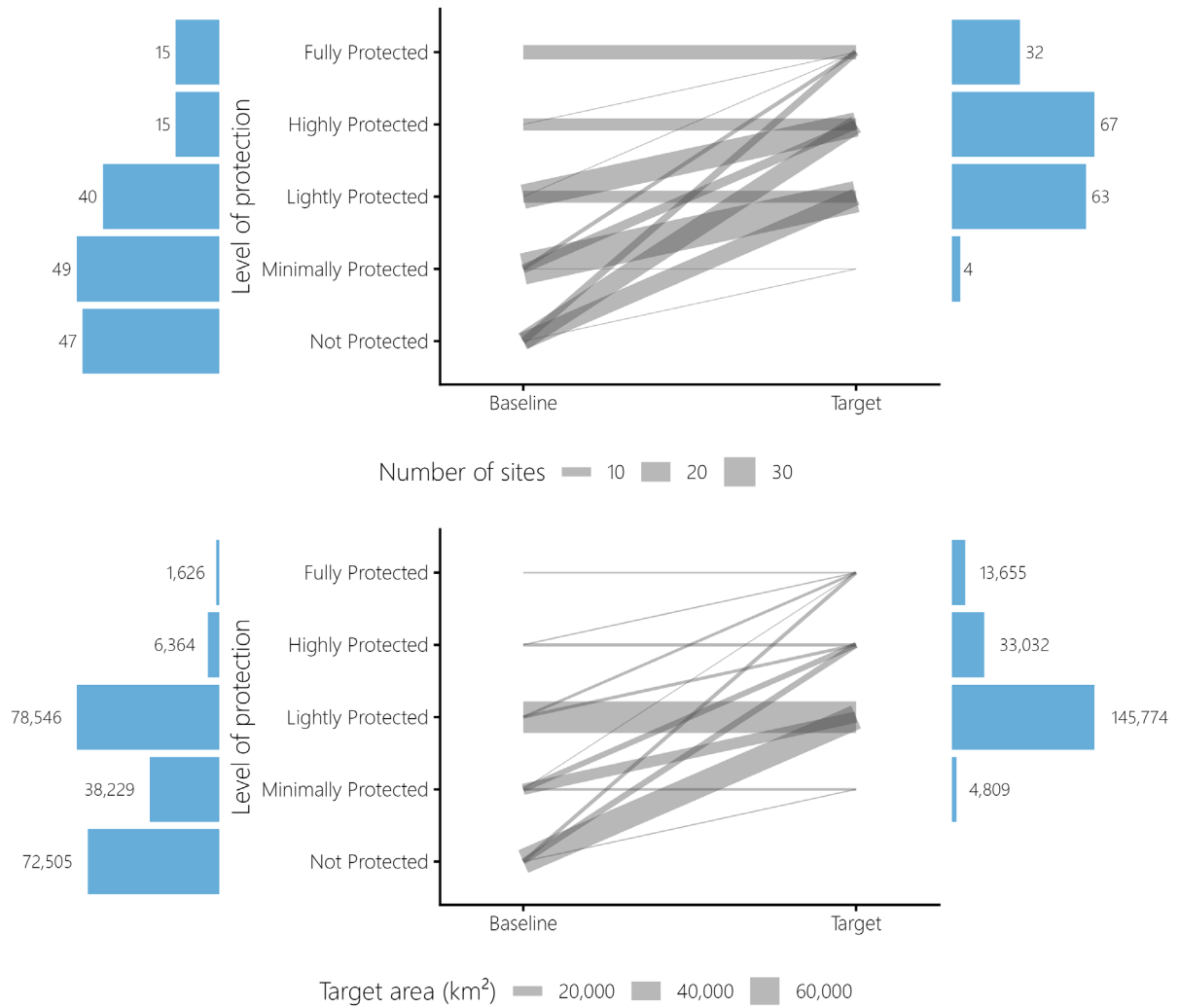


Figure 10: Planned changes in level of protection for running projects, from baseline to target. Each line represents a transition between two levels of protection, with thicker lines indicating more sites (top chart) or larger target area (bottom chart). The bar charts on either side show the total number of sites (top chart) or the total target area (bottom chart) at each level of protection, at baseline and at target separately.

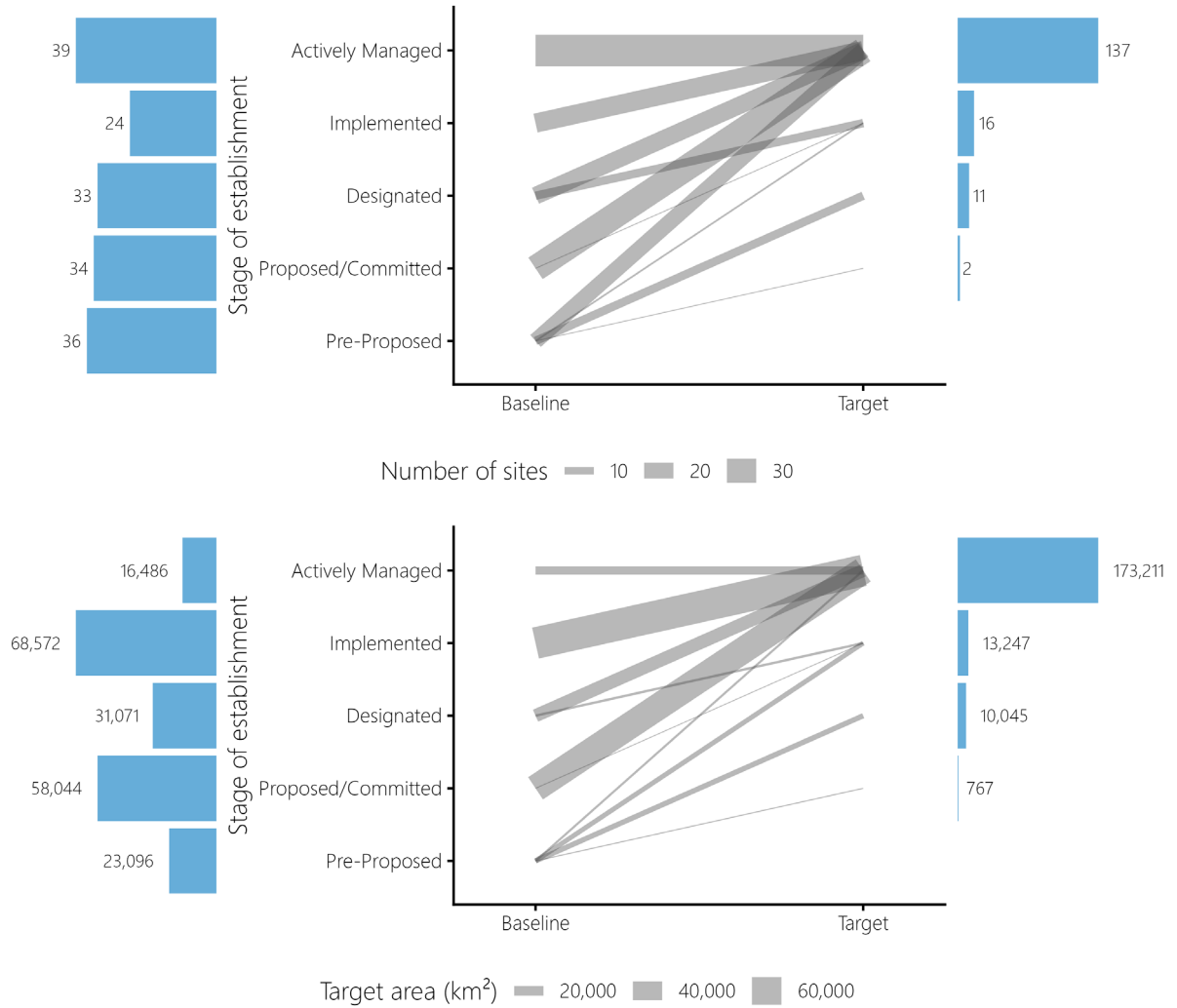


Figure 11: Planned changes in stage of establishment for running projects, from baseline to target. Each line represents a transition between two stages of establishment, with thicker lines indicating more sites (top chart) or larger target area (bottom chart). The bar charts on either side show the total number of sites (top chart) or the total target area (bottom chart) at each stage of establishment, at baseline and at target separately.

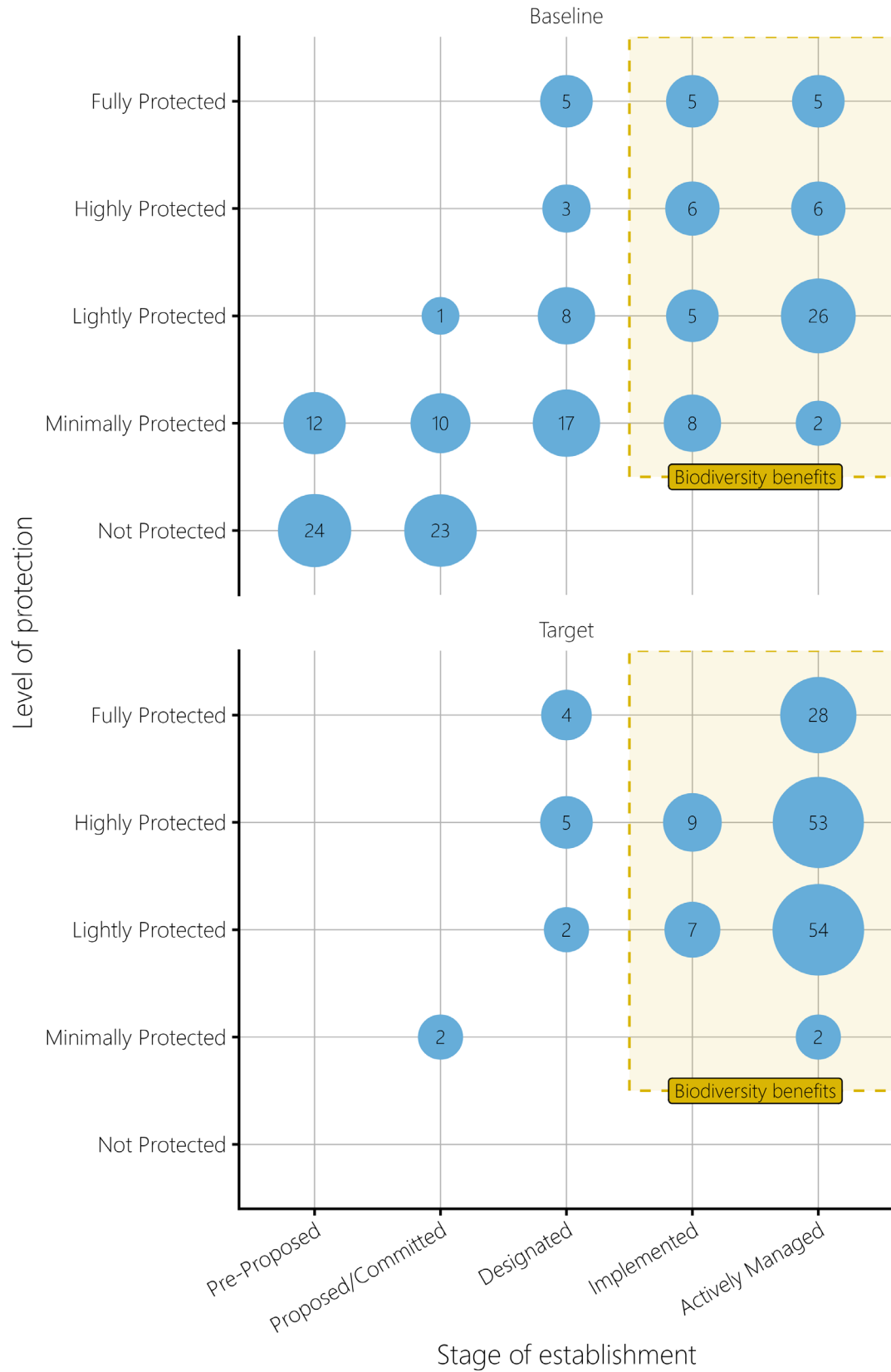


Figure 12: Bubble charts showing the number of Blue Action sites per combination of level of protection (rows) and stage of establishment (columns) at baseline (top) and at target (bottom) for running projects.

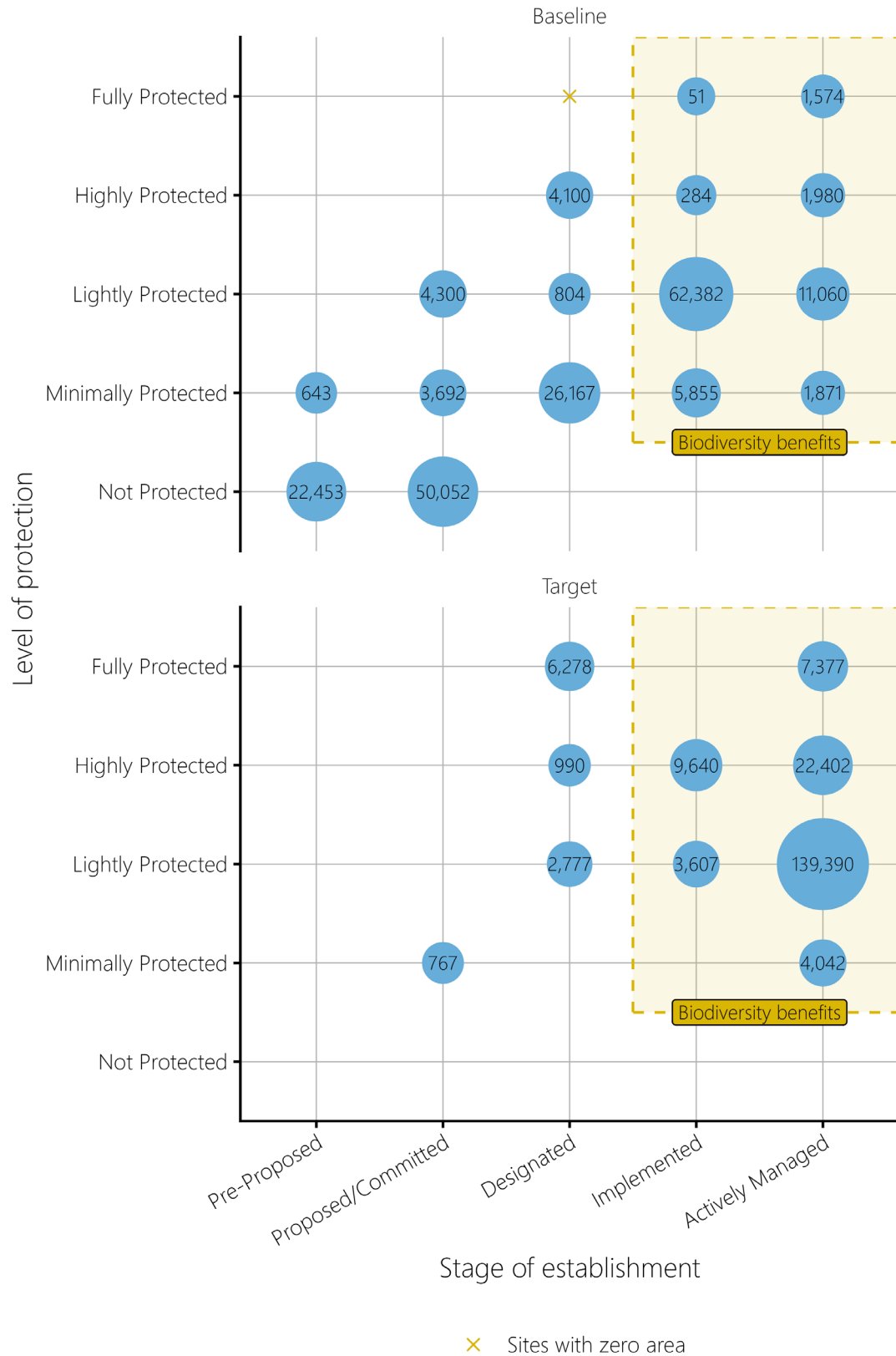


Figure 13: Bubble charts showing the target area of Blue Action sites per combination of level of protection (rows) and stage of establishment (columns) at baseline (top) and at target (bottom) for running projects. Sites with zero target area occur due to overlap adjustment.

Table 11: Baseline-to-target transitions in level of protection and stage of establishment for running projects, by number of sites and target area.

Level of protection (baseline → target)	Stage of establishment (baseline → target)	Sites	Target area (km ²)
Lightly Protected → Highly Protected	Actively Managed → Actively Managed	23	5,183.450
Not Protected → Highly Protected	Proposed/Committed → Actively Managed	11	1,608.050
Not Protected → Lightly Protected	Proposed/Committed → Actively Managed	9	48,242.270
Minimally Protected → Lightly Protected	Designated → Actively Managed	9	12,484.981
Minimally Protected → Lightly Protected	Proposed/Committed → Actively Managed	7	3,271.810
Not Protected → Lightly Protected	Pre-Proposed → Actively Managed	6	2,434.839
Minimally Protected → Lightly Protected	Pre-Proposed → Actively Managed	6	239.000
Minimally Protected → Lightly Protected	Implemented → Actively Managed	6	2,109.135
Not Protected → Highly Protected	Pre-Proposed → Designated	5	989.856
Highly Protected → Highly Protected	Implemented → Actively Managed	5	48.900
Highly Protected → Highly Protected	Actively Managed → Actively Managed	5	1,090.320
Fully Protected → Fully Protected	Designated → Actively Managed	5	0.000
Fully Protected → Fully Protected	Implemented → Actively Managed	5	51.150
Fully Protected → Fully Protected	Actively Managed → Actively Managed	5	1,574.420
Not Protected → Fully Protected	Pre-Proposed → Designated	4	6,278.240
Minimally Protected → Fully Protected	Pre-Proposed → Actively Managed	4	25.000
Minimally Protected → Highly Protected	Designated → Actively Managed	4	10,205.016
Lightly Protected → Lightly Protected	Designated → Implemented	4	251.774
Not Protected → Fully Protected	Proposed/Committed → Actively Managed	3	201.430
Minimally Protected → Highly Protected	Designated → Implemented	3	297.000
Lightly Protected → Lightly Protected	Designated → Actively Managed	3	546.190
Lightly Protected → Lightly Protected	Implemented → Actively Managed	3	62,314.070
Lightly Protected → Lightly Protected	Actively Managed → Actively Managed	3	5,876.330
Not Protected → Minimally Protected	Pre-Proposed → Proposed/Committed	2	766.800
Not Protected → Lightly Protected	Pre-Proposed → Designated	2	2,776.930
Not Protected → Highly Protected	Pre-Proposed → Implemented	2	9,036.776
Minimally Protected → Lightly Protected	Actively Managed → Actively Managed	2	1,871.480
Highly Protected → Highly Protected	Designated → Implemented	2	0.000
Not Protected → Lightly Protected	Pre-Proposed → Implemented	1	54.849
Not Protected → Highly Protected	Pre-Proposed → Actively Managed	1	58.000
Not Protected → Fully Protected	Pre-Proposed → Actively Managed	1	57.000
Minimally Protected → Minimally Protected	Pre-Proposed → Actively Managed	1	379.000
Minimally Protected → Highly Protected	Pre-Proposed → Actively Managed	1	0.000
Minimally Protected → Lightly Protected	Proposed/Committed → Implemented	1	120.000
Minimally Protected → Highly Protected	Proposed/Committed → Implemented	1	300.000
Minimally Protected → Fully Protected	Proposed/Committed → Actively Managed	1	0.000
Minimally Protected → Lightly Protected	Designated → Implemented	1	3,180.000
Minimally Protected → Minimally Protected	Implemented → Actively Managed	1	3,663.000
Minimally Protected → Highly Protected	Implemented → Actively Managed	1	83.124
Lightly Protected → Fully Protected	Proposed/Committed → Actively Managed	1	4,300.000
Lightly Protected → Highly Protected	Designated → Implemented	1	6.270
Lightly Protected → Highly Protected	Implemented → Actively Managed	1	25.000
Lightly Protected → Fully Protected	Implemented → Actively Managed	1	43.010
Highly Protected → Highly Protected	Designated → Actively Managed	1	4,100.000
Highly Protected → Fully Protected	Implemented → Actively Managed	1	234.880
Highly Protected → Fully Protected	Actively Managed → Actively Managed	1	890.000

Table 12: Number and share of Blue Action sites and target area planned to improve on level of protection only, on stage of establishment only, on both, or on neither, for running projects.

Planned improvement	Sites	Target area (km ²)
Level of protection only	26 (15.7%)	7,944.930 (4.0%)
Stage of establishment only	30 (18.1%)	71,354.084 (36.2%)
Both	97 (58.4%)	109,429.266 (55.5%)
Neither	13 (7.8%)	8,541.070 (4.3%)
Total	166 (100.0%)	197,269.350 (100.0%)

4.2.4. Diagnostic 9: Achieved improvement in level of protection and stage of establishment

For completed projects, how far did sites advance on the MPA Guide's level of protection and stage of establishment from baseline to project end?

Among the 114 sites of completed projects, most sites moved up: 92 (80.7%) improved on at least one scale, 64 of them (56.1%) on both, and 22 (19.3%) on neither (Table 14). On the level of protection, the number of Not Protected sites fell from 45 to 9, and Lightly Protected became the most common level, rising from 26 to 63 (Figure 14). On the stage of establishment, all 60 Pre-Proposed sites advanced and Actively Managed sites more than doubled, from 15 to 36, though 5 sites recorded a one-step decline down from Designated, the only backward moves in the completed portfolio (Figure 15). The most common single transition, with 14 sites, advanced sites from Minimally Protected and Pre-Proposed to Lightly Protected and Implemented (Table 13). Overall, sites reaching the upper-right region of the matrix, at least Minimally Protected and at least Implemented, where biodiversity benefits begin to accrue, grew from 35 (30.7%) at baseline to 69 (60.5%) at project end (Figure 16).

Completed projects established 324,312 km² of protected area, 95.1% of it in the biodiversity-benefits region of the matrix at project end, up from 69.5% at baseline (Figure 17). Note that there are 44 of the 114 completed sites (38.6%) with zero result area for two distinct reasons: for 34, no protected area was officially designated at project end. The other 10 reached at least Designated status but overlap an older Blue Action site that carries their area, so they still show zero result area in Table 13. Because 40 of these 44 sites still improved on at least one scale, the results in terms of overlap-adjusted area could understate progress (see also section 3). This can be seen in the results in terms of site counts (in top panels in Figures 14, 15, in both panels in Figure 16). The single largest completed site (the Galapagos Marine Reserve, 138,000 km²) was already Highly Protected and Actively Managed at baseline and so could not advance further, which is why sites that improved on neither scale hold 46.1% of the result area but only 19.3% of the sites (Table 14).

Drawing the Map: A Site-Based Review of Blue Action Fund's Grant Portfolio

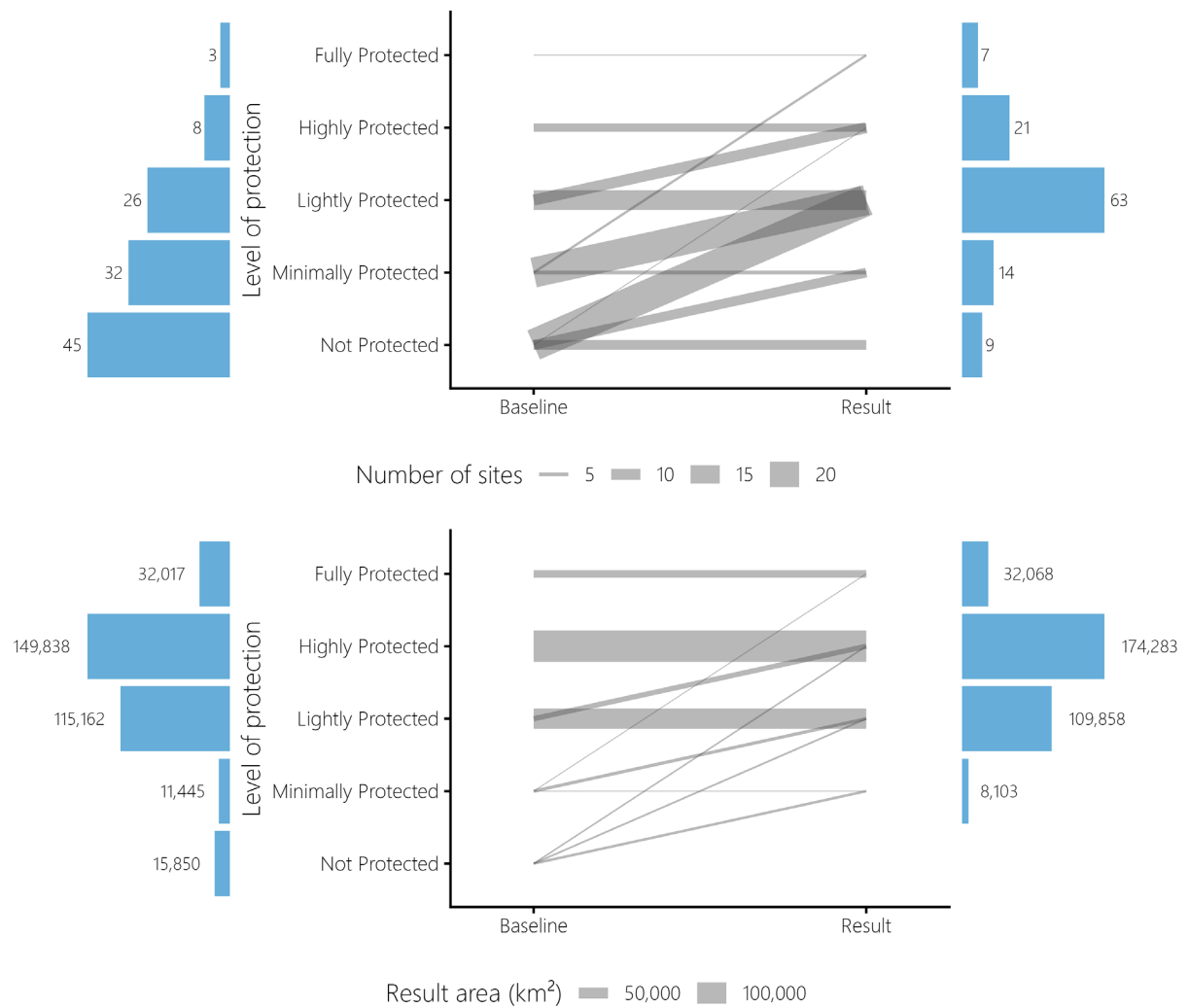


Figure 14: Achieved changes in level of protection for completed projects, from baseline to result. Each line represents a transition between two levels of protection, with thicker lines indicating more sites (top chart) or larger result area (bottom chart). The bar charts on either side show the total number of sites (top chart) or the total result area (bottom chart) at each level of protection, at baseline and at result separately.

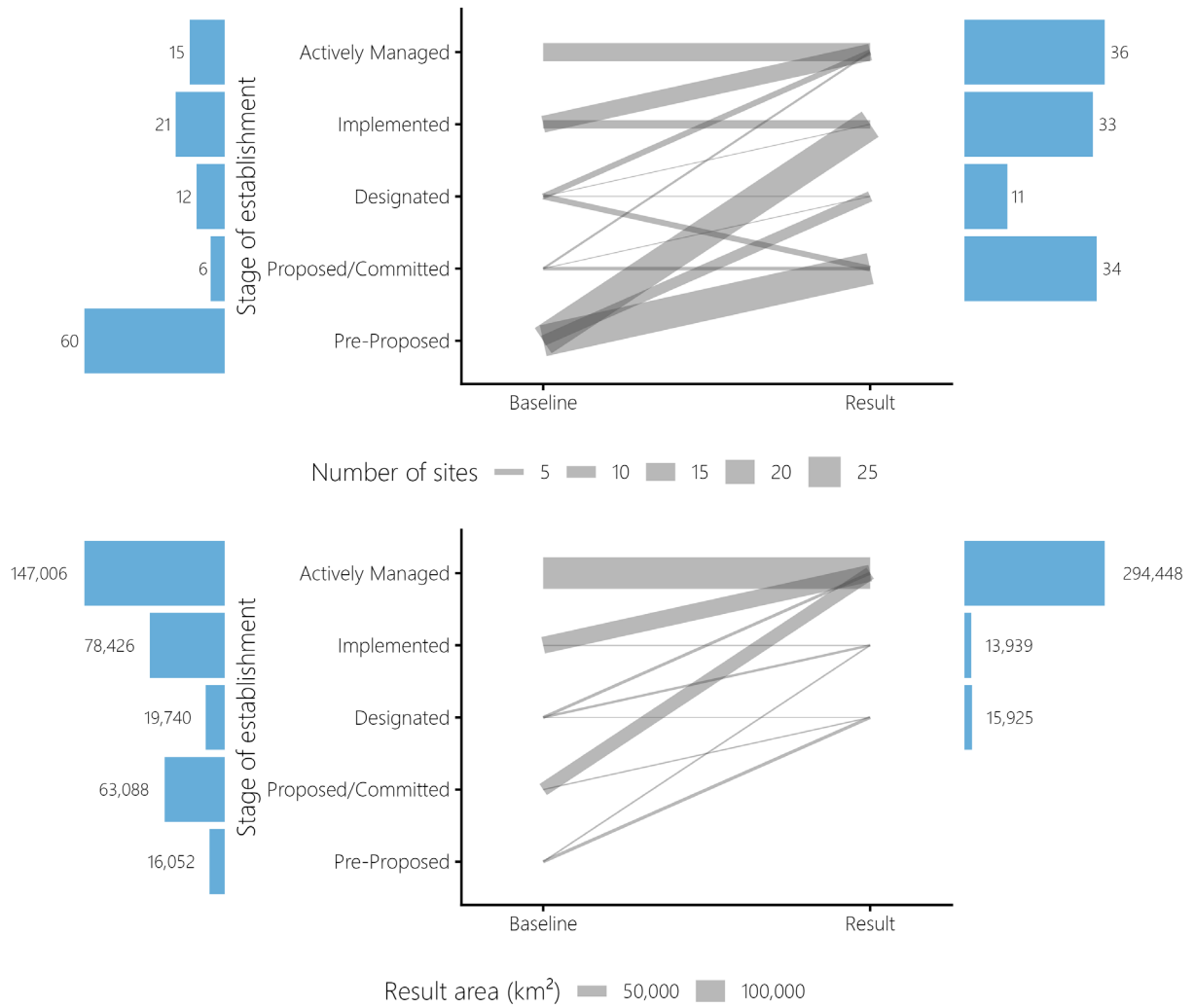


Figure 15: Achieved changes in stage of establishment for completed projects, from baseline to result. Each line represents a transition between two stages of establishment, with thicker lines indicating more sites (top chart) or larger result area (bottom chart). The bar charts on either side show the total number of sites (top chart) or the total result area (bottom chart) at each stage of establishment, at baseline and at result separately.

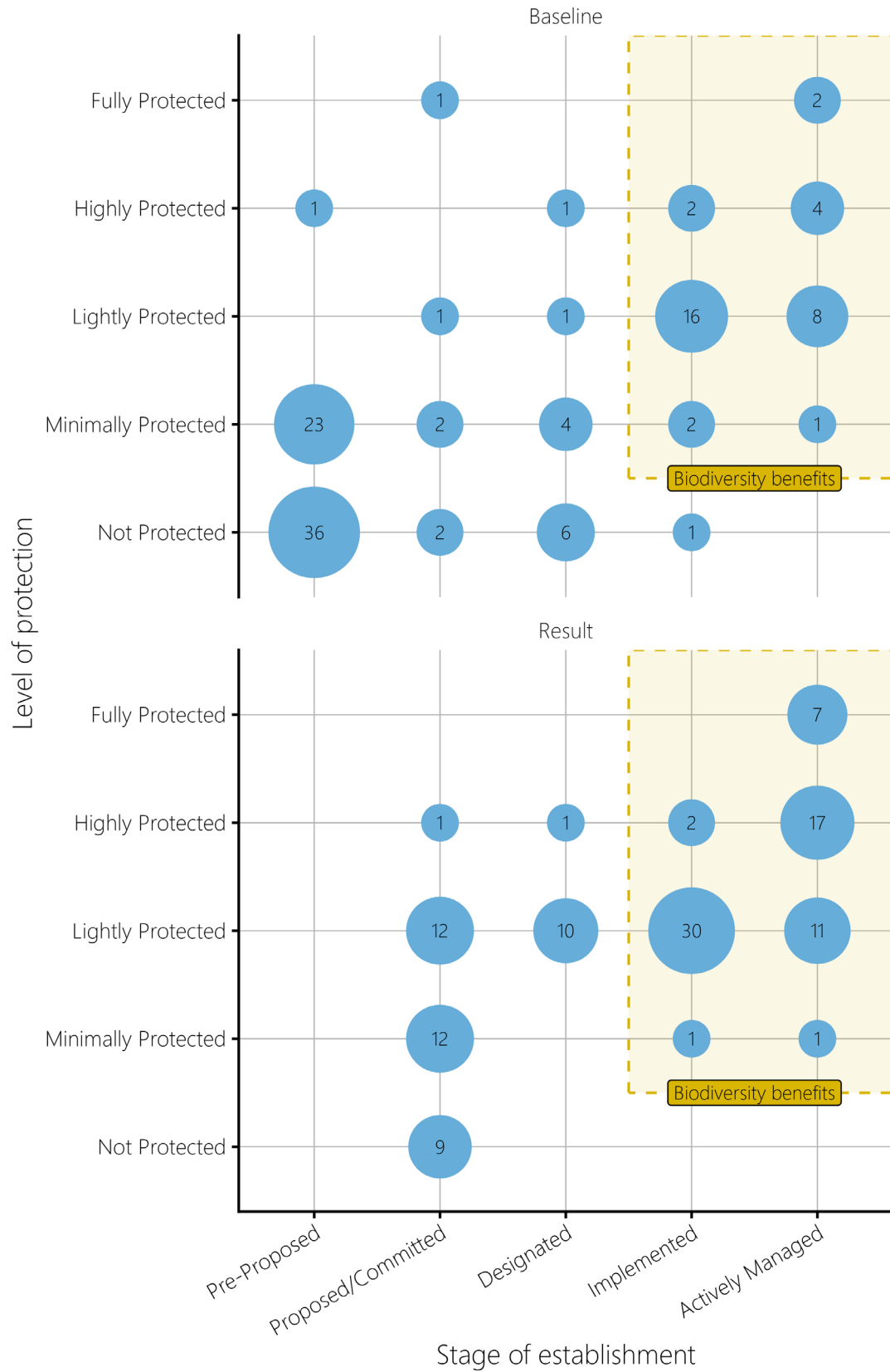


Figure 16: Bubble charts showing the number of Blue Action sites per combination of level of protection (rows) and stage of establishment (columns) at baseline (top) and at result (bottom) for completed projects.

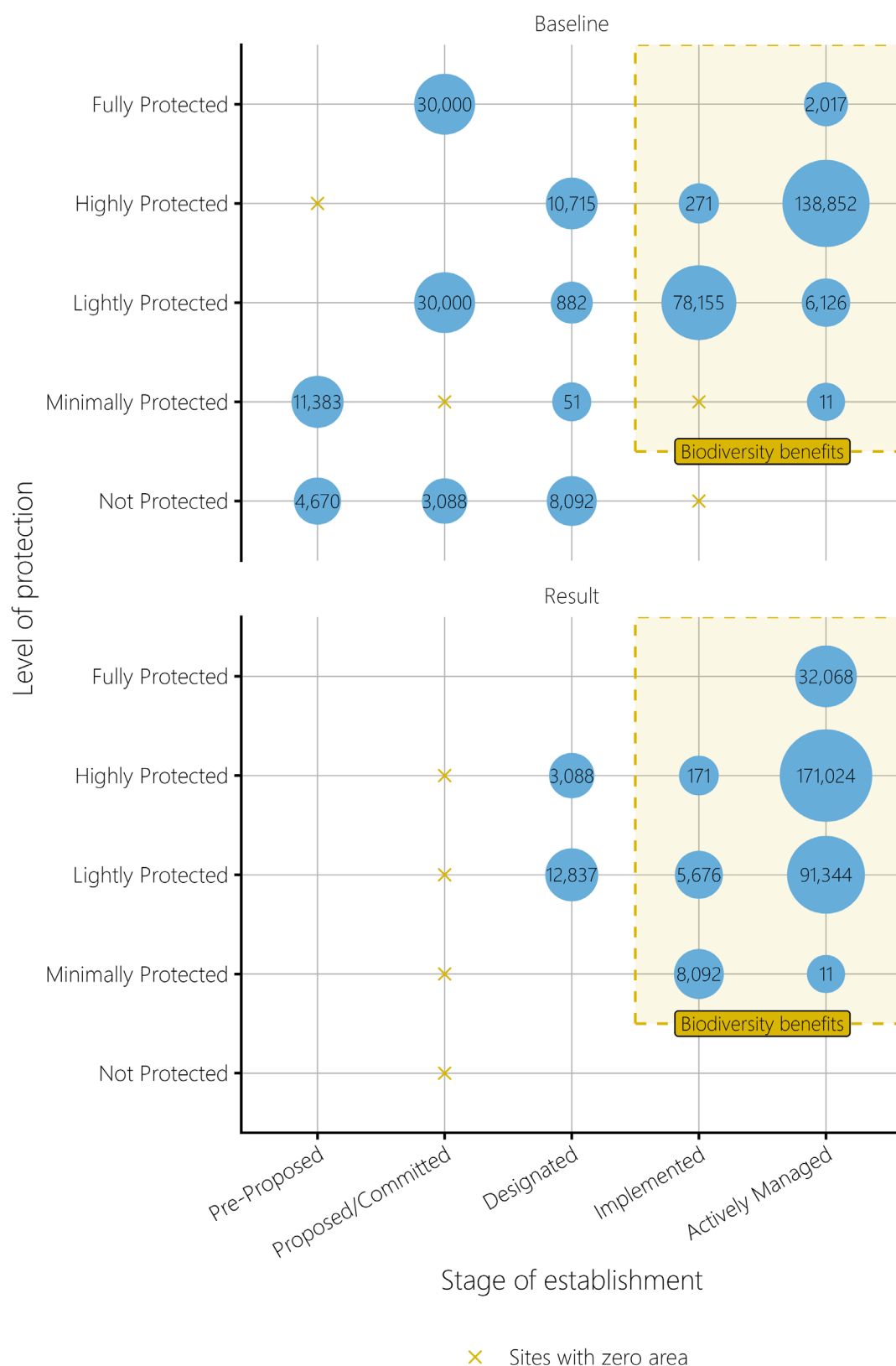


Figure 17: Bubble charts showing the result area of Blue Action sites per combination of level of protection (rows) and stage of establishment (columns) at baseline (top) and at result (bottom) for completed projects. Sites with zero result area occur due to overlap adjustment or not reaching Designated status by the end of the project.

Table 13: Baseline-to-result transitions in level of protection and stage of establishment for completed projects, by number of sites and result area.

Level of protection (baseline → result)	Stage of establishment (baseline → result)	Sites	Result area (km ²)
Minimally Protected → Lightly Protected	Pre-Proposed → Implemented	14	163.110
Lightly Protected → Highly Protected	Implemented → Actively Managed	10	21,186.020
Not Protected → Not Protected	Pre-Proposed → Proposed/Committed	9	0.000
Not Protected → Lightly Protected	Pre-Proposed → Implemented	9	3,762.770
Lightly Protected → Lightly Protected	Actively Managed → Actively Managed	8	6,125.980
Not Protected → Lightly Protected	Pre-Proposed → Designated	7	736.360
Not Protected → Minimally Protected	Pre-Proposed → Proposed/Committed	6	0.000
Minimally Protected → Lightly Protected	Pre-Proposed → Proposed/Committed	5	0.000
Minimally Protected → Fully Protected	Designated → Actively Managed	4	51.400
Lightly Protected → Lightly Protected	Implemented → Implemented	4	1,750.300
Highly Protected → Highly Protected	Actively Managed → Actively Managed	4	138,851.720
Not Protected → Lightly Protected	Pre-Proposed → Proposed/Committed	3	0.000
Not Protected → Lightly Protected	Designated → Proposed/Committed	3	0.000
Not Protected → Highly Protected	Pre-Proposed → Implemented	2	170.670
Not Protected → Minimally Protected	Designated → Proposed/Committed	2	0.000
Minimally Protected → Minimally Protected	Pre-Proposed → Proposed/Committed	2	0.000
Minimally Protected → Lightly Protected	Pre-Proposed → Designated	2	11,219.440
Minimally Protected → Minimally Protected	Proposed/Committed → Proposed/Committed	2	0.000
Minimally Protected → Lightly Protected	Implemented → Implemented	2	0.000
Lightly Protected → Lightly Protected	Implemented → Actively Managed	2	55,218.520
Highly Protected → Highly Protected	Implemented → Actively Managed	2	271.329
Fully Protected → Fully Protected	Actively Managed → Actively Managed	2	2,017.000
Not Protected → Lightly Protected	Proposed/Committed → Proposed/Committed	1	0.000
Not Protected → Highly Protected	Proposed/Committed → Designated	1	3,088.000
Not Protected → Minimally Protected	Designated → Implemented	1	8,092.000
Not Protected → Lightly Protected	Implemented → Implemented	1	0.000
Minimally Protected → Minimally Protected	Actively Managed → Actively Managed	1	11.000
Lightly Protected → Lightly Protected	Proposed/Committed → Actively Managed	1	30,000.000
Lightly Protected → Lightly Protected	Designated → Designated	1	881.650
Highly Protected → Highly Protected	Pre-Proposed → Proposed/Committed	1	0.000
Highly Protected → Highly Protected	Designated → Actively Managed	1	10,715.000
Fully Protected → Fully Protected	Proposed/Committed → Actively Managed	1	30,000.000

Table 14: Number and share of Blue Action sites and result area that improved on level of protection only, on stage of establishment only, on both, or on neither, for completed projects.

Achieved improvement	Sites	Result area (km ²)
Level of protection only	9 (7.9%)	0.000 (0.0%)
Stage of establishment only	19 (16.7%)	126,204.849 (38.9%)
Both	64 (56.1%)	48,469.770 (14.9%)
Neither	22 (19.3%)	149,637.650 (46.1%)
Total	114 (100.0%)	324,312.269 (100.0%)

4.2.5. Diagnostic 10: Target delivery for site count and protected area

For completed projects, how does the area achieved compare with the area targeted, and how many sites met their target?

Overall, the portfolio slightly exceeded its target: against 312,646 km² targeted, sites achieved 324,312 km², an area delivery ratio of 1.04 (Table 15). Across all sites, 82 of the 114 sites of completed projects (71.9%) met or exceeded their target area (Table 16).

The aggregate figure masks a meaningful split by site type: effectively managed sites over-delivered at an area delivery ratio of 1.23, whereas new and extended sites reached only 0.68 of their targeted area (Table 15). The high delivery of effectively managed sites comes almost entirely from a single site, the Marine Seamounts Management Area in Costa Rica, which achieved 54,844 km² against a 9,596 km² target (the outlier high above the line in the top right panel of Figure 18). Most other sites cluster on or above the dashed line of exact delivery in Figure 18, with an exception for the 22 sites with zero overlap-adjusted result area (despite positive overlap-adjusted target area), highlighted along the horizontal axis, which were all not yet officially designated at project end.⁷

Before turning to the per-site results, 24 completed sites must be set aside, because their overlap-adjusted target area was zero. Of these, 16 sites have zero target area due to overlap adjustment; 8 sites have zero target area because they were only added to the SSI database after the project ended: they were not included in the project scope during the design phase (i.e., there was no target), but they benefited during project implementation.⁸ Their delivery ratio cannot be calculated, since it would divide by zero, so they are treated separately across the outputs. In the bar chart, they form the separate “Undefined” bar and are excluded from the percentage shares (Figure 19). In the scatter plots, they sit at a target area of zero and are colored in orange (Figure 18). In the delivery table, their result area is still included in the summed areas, but they are excluded from the calculation of the median per-site delivery ratio (Table 15). They also affect the count of sites that met their target: because a target of zero is always met, all 24 count among the 82 sites (71.9%) that met their target (Table 16).

With those 24 sites removed, the per-site delivery ratio can be calculated for the rest, giving each site the same weight regardless of its area. Among effectively managed sites, 47 of the 54 remaining (87.0%) delivered exactly their target area, giving a median per-site delivery ratio of 1.0 (Figure 19, Table 15). Among new and extended sites, 22 of the 36 remaining (61.1%) recorded zero overlap-adjusted result area, giving a median per-site delivery ratio of 0 (Figure 19, Table 15). A further 8 (22.2%) exceeded their target area (Figure 19). As noted above, a result area of zero can mean that a site was not yet officially designated at project end, or that its area is carried by an overlapping older site. A delivery ratio of 0 therefore need not signal a lack of progress, and is best read together with the achieved improvements in Diagnostic 9. They measure site-level progress irrespective of overlap-adjusted result area (section 4.2.4).

⁷ For example, this includes all 8 sites from São Tomé and Príncipe as part of the 2nd call for proposals and completed in 2024.

⁸ For example, this includes 5 sites from Mozambique as part of the 1st call for proposals.

Table 15: Delivery of target area, overall and by site type, for completed projects.

Category	Sites	Target area (km ²)	Result area (km ²)	Difference (km ²)	Area delivery ratio	Median per-site delivery ratio
All sites	114	312,645.845	324,312.269	11,666.424	1.04	1.00
New/Extended	49	110,113.326	75,220.510	-34,892.816	0.68	0.00
Effectively managed	65	202,532.519	249,091.759	46,559.240	1.23	1.00

Table 16: Number and share of Blue Action sites and result area that met or exceeded their target area, for completed projects.

Target delivery	Sites	Result area (km ²)
Met or exceeded target	82 (71.9%)	247,480.949 (76.3%)
Below target	32 (28.1%)	76,831.320 (23.7%)
Total	114 (100.0%)	324,312.269 (100.0%)

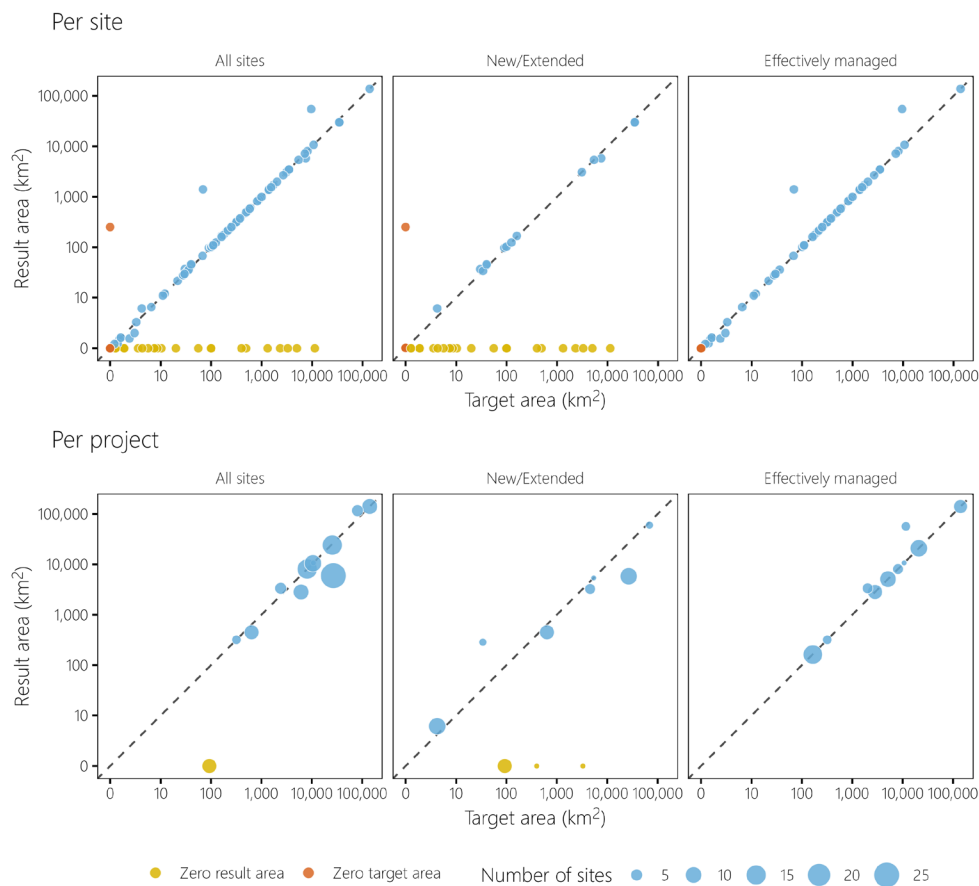


Figure 18: Result area against target area, per site (top) and per project (bottom), each by site type, for completed projects. The dashed line marks exact delivery. Sites with zero overlap-adjusted target area appear at a target of zero (orange; due to overlap adjustment or not being in the project scope during the design phase). Sites with zero overlap-adjusted result area appear at a result of zero (yellow; due to overlap adjustment or not reaching Designated status by the end of the project), unless they also have zero overlap-adjusted target area. In the project view (bottom), point size shows the number of sites per project. Axes use a pseudo-logarithmic scale for readability.



Figure 19: Distribution of the per-site delivery ratio (result area over target area), overall and by site type, for completed projects. For example, sites that exactly met their target area sit at '1', sites that more than doubled their target area sit at '>2'. Sites with zero overlap-adjusted result area sit at '0' (due to overlap adjustment or not reaching Designated status by the end of the project), unless they have also zero overlap-adjusted target area. Sites with zero overlap-adjusted target area form the separate bar 'Undefined' (due to overlap adjustment or not being in the project scope during the design phase). Percentages are shares of sites where a ratio could be calculated (all except 'Undefined').

4.2.6. Diagnostic 11: Target delivery for level of protection and stage of establishment

For completed projects, how did sites deliver their targets on the MPA Guide's level of protection and stage of establishment?

On the level of protection, 86 of the 114 sites of completed projects reached at least their targeted level, and on the stage of establishment 80 did (Figures 20 and 21). Taking the two scales together, 75 sites (65.8%) met or exceeded their target on both, and 23 (20.2%) on neither (Table 18). The sites that fell short mostly had not reached Designated status by project end (19 out of 23). Several (8) dropped from a Highly Protected target to Not Protected (Table 17).

In area terms, this shortfall is negligible, but this is partly for mechanical reasons: the 23 sites that met neither target hold just 6 km² of result area, since, of these, the 19 non-designated sites contribute no result area. The 75 sites that delivered on both scales account for 95.2% of the result area (Table 18). The portfolio thus ended approximately at its target on the MPA Guide: the region of the matrix where biodiversity benefits begin to accrue, at least Minimally Protected and at least Implemented, holds 60.5% of sites at result against 62.3% targeted, and 95.1% of the result area against 89.1% of the target area (Figures 22 and 23). The sites shown here with zero overlap-adjusted target or result area are the same as those analyzed in Diagnostics 9 and 10 (sections 4.2.4, 4.2.5): 24 sites have zero overlap-adjusted target area (16 due to overlap adjustment and 8 because they were not included in the project scope during the design phase), and 44 sites have zero overlap-adjusted result area (34 because they were not yet officially designated by project end and 10 due to overlap adjustment).

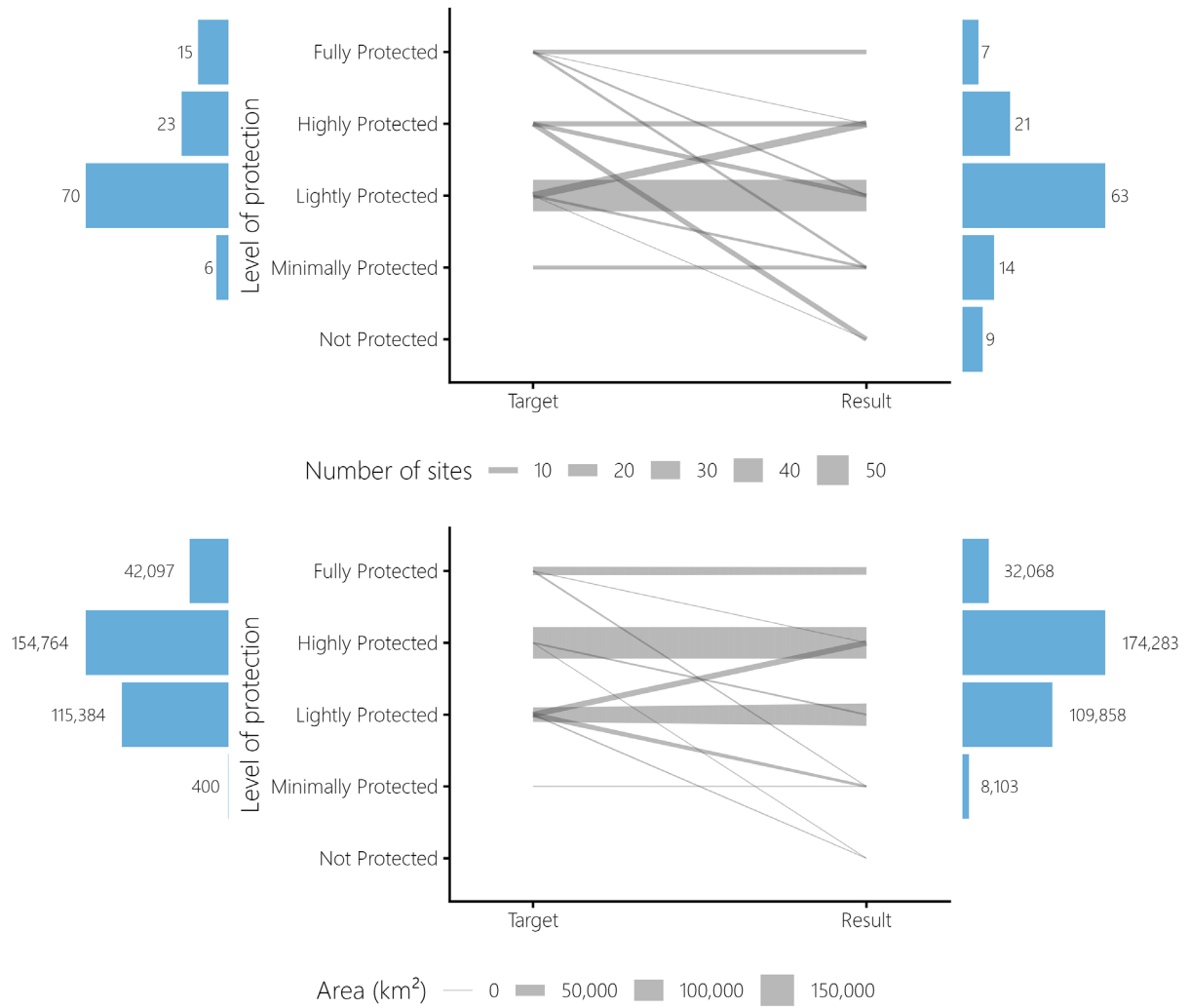


Figure 20: Target delivery in level of protection for completed projects, from target to result. Each line represents a transition between two levels of protection, with thicker lines indicating more sites (top chart) or larger area (bottom chart; target area at target, result area at result). The bar charts on either side show the total number of sites (top chart) or the total area (bottom chart) at each level of protection, at target and at result separately.

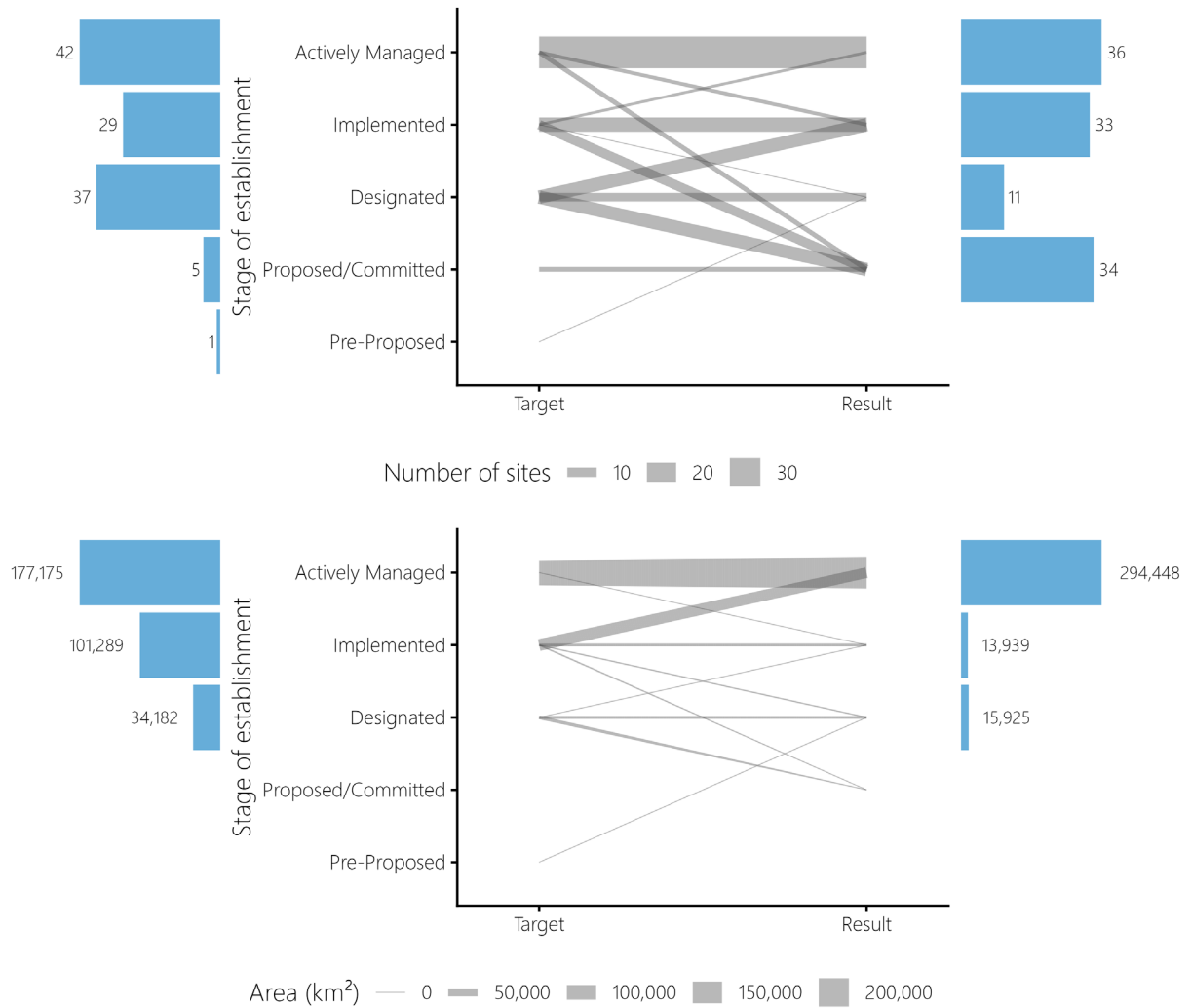


Figure 21: Target delivery in stage of establishment for completed projects, from target to result. Each line represents a transition between two stages of establishment, with thicker lines indicating more sites (top chart) or larger area (bottom chart; target area at target, result area at result). The bar charts on either side show the total number of sites (top chart) or the total area (bottom chart) at each stage of establishment, at target and at result separately.

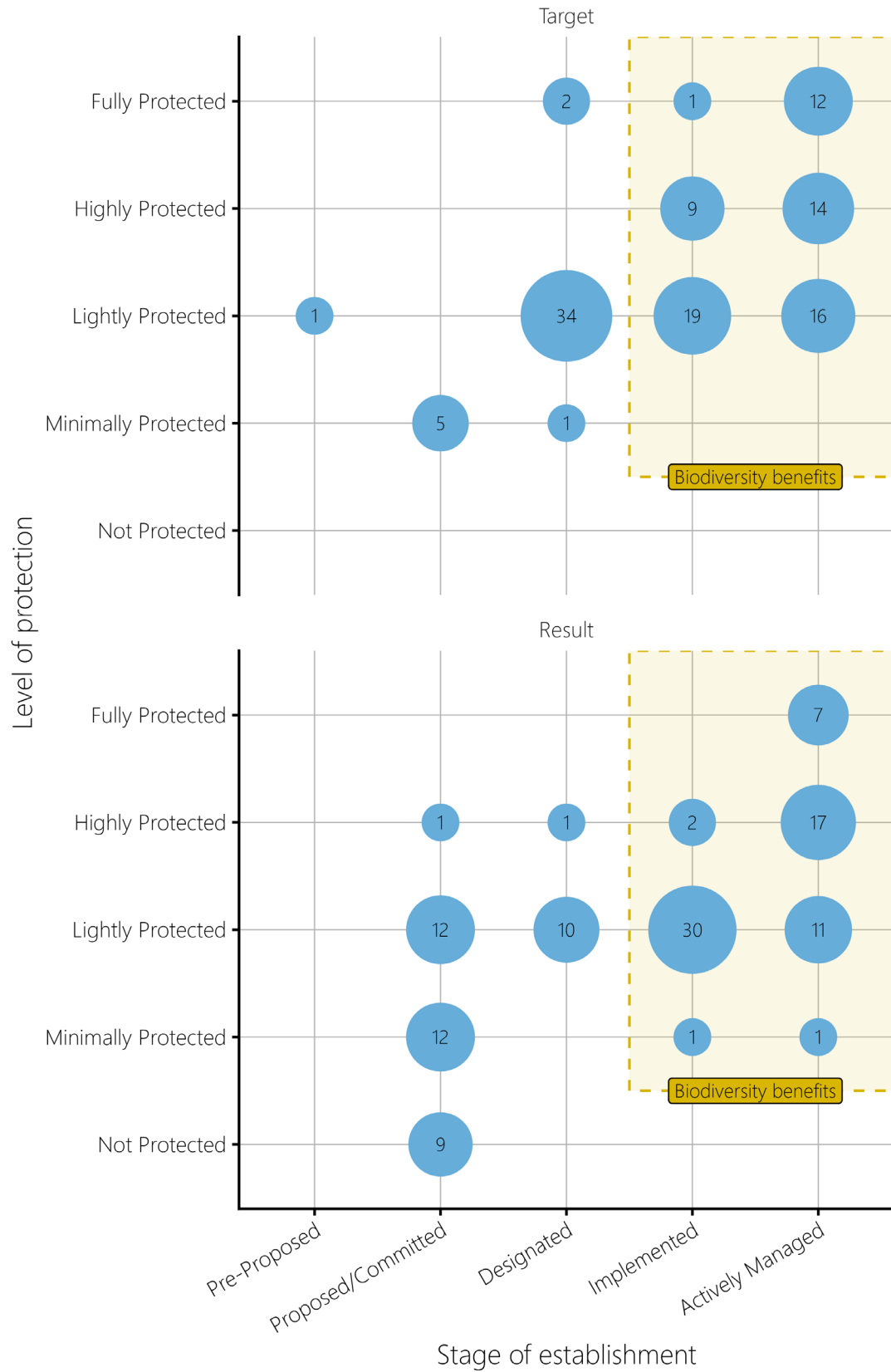


Figure 22: Bubble charts showing the number of Blue Action sites per combination of level of protection (rows) and stage of establishment (columns) at target (top) and at result (bottom) for completed projects.

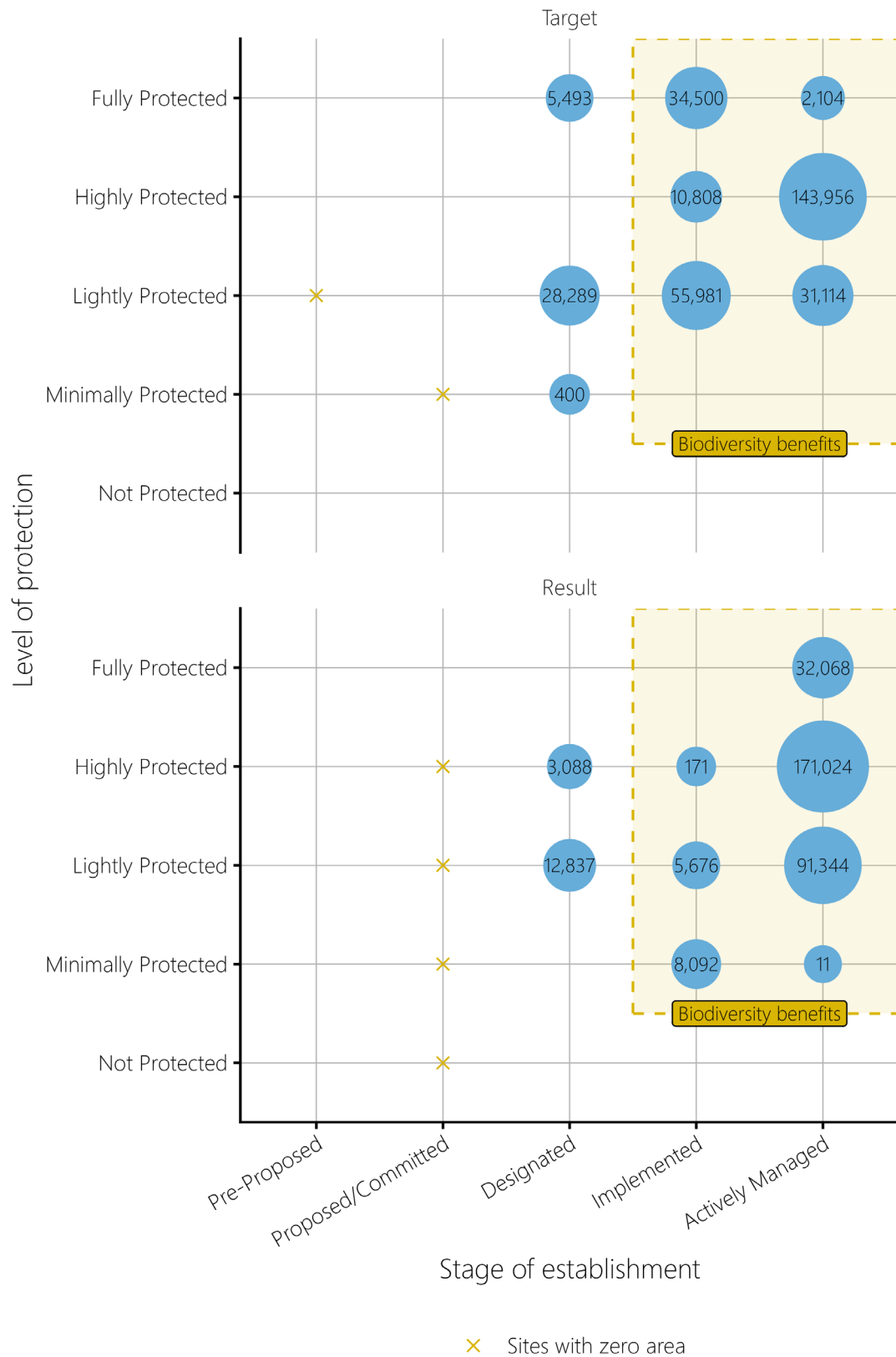


Figure 23: Bubble charts showing the area of Blue Action sites per combination of level of protection (rows) and stage of establishment (columns) at target (top; target area) and at result (bottom; result area) for completed projects. Sites with zero target area (top panel) occur due to overlap adjustment or not being in the project scope during the design phase. Sites with zero result area (bottom panel) occur due to overlap adjustment or not reaching Designated status by the end of

the project.

Table 17: Target-to-result transitions in level of protection and stage of establishment for completed projects, by number of sites, target area and result area.

Level of protection (target → result)	Stage of establishment (target → result)	Sites	Target area (km ²)	Result area (km ²)
Lightly Protected → Lightly Protected	Designated → Implemented	14	165.610	163.110
Lightly Protected → Lightly Protected	Implemented → Implemented	12	5,507.070	5,507.070
Lightly Protected → Lightly Protected	Designated → Designated	9	14,240.340	12,585.020
Lightly Protected → Highly Protected	Actively Managed → Actively Managed	9	20,654.020	20,654.020
Lightly Protected → Lightly Protected	Designated → Proposed/Committed	8	233.400	0.000
Highly Protected → Not Protected	Implemented → Proposed/Committed	8	92.960	0.000
Lightly Protected → Lightly Protected	Actively Managed → Actively Managed	7	10,460.360	57,047.690
Highly Protected → Highly Protected	Actively Managed → Actively Managed	7	139,655.599	139,655.049
Fully Protected → Fully Protected	Actively Managed → Actively Managed	6	2,093.400	2,068.400
Minimally Protected → Minimally Protected	Proposed/Committed → Proposed/Committed	5	0.000	0.000
Highly Protected → Lightly Protected	Actively Managed → Implemented	4	4.000	6.000
Lightly Protected → Minimally Protected	Designated → Proposed/Committed	3	13,650.000	0.000
Highly Protected → Lightly Protected	Actively Managed → Actively Managed	3	4,296.810	4,296.810
Fully Protected → Lightly Protected	Actively Managed → Proposed/Committed	3	0.000	0.000
Lightly Protected → Highly Protected	Implemented → Implemented	2	164.903	170.670
Fully Protected → Minimally Protected	Actively Managed → Proposed/Committed	2	0.000	0.000
Minimally Protected → Minimally Protected	Designated → Proposed/Committed	1	400.000	0.000
Lightly Protected → Lightly Protected	Pre-Proposed → Designated	1	0.000	252.430
Lightly Protected → Not Protected	Implemented → Proposed/Committed	1	3,297.000	0.000
Lightly Protected → Minimally Protected	Implemented → Implemented	1	8,092.000	8,092.000
Lightly Protected → Lightly Protected	Implemented → Proposed/Committed	1	1,317.253	0.000
Lightly Protected → Lightly Protected	Implemented → Actively Managed	1	34,500.000	30,000.000
Lightly Protected → Highly Protected	Implemented → Designated	1	3,102.350	3,088.000
Highly Protected → Highly Protected	Implemented → Actively Managed	1	10,715.000	10,715.000
Fully Protected → Minimally Protected	Designated → Proposed/Committed	1	5,000.000	0.000
Fully Protected → Highly Protected	Designated → Proposed/Committed	1	492.770	0.000
Fully Protected → Fully Protected	Implemented → Actively Managed	1	34,500.000	30,000.000
Fully Protected → Minimally Protected	Actively Managed → Actively Managed	1	11.000	11.000

Table 18: Number and share of Blue Action sites and result area that met or exceeded the target on level of protection only, on stage of establishment only, on both, or on neither, for completed projects.

Met or exceeded target	Sites	Result area (km ²)
Level of protection only	11 (9.6%)	3,088.000 (1.0%)
Stage of establishment only	5 (4.4%)	12,399.810 (3.8%)
Both	75 (65.8%)	308,818.459 (95.2%)
Neither	23 (20.2%)	6.000 (0.0%)
Total	114 (100.0%)	324,312.269 (100.0%)

4.2.7. Diagnostic 12: Management plan adoption

For completed projects, to what extent did sites adopt a management plan?

Of the 114 sites of completed projects, 32 (28.1%) adopted a management plan during the project period, 24 (21.1%) already had one, and one adopted a plan only after the project ended. In total, half the sites (57) have a management plan and half have none (Table 19). In area terms, coverage is far higher than the site count suggests: the half without a plan hold only 10.9% of the result area, so management plans cover almost 90% of the portfolio's area (Figure 24). Pre-existing plans account for the largest area share, 67.0%, reflecting large established sites that already had a plan in place, while plans adopted during projects added a further 22.0% (71,511 km²).

Table 19: Number and share of Blue Action sites and result area by management plan status, for completed projects.

Management plan	Sites	Result area (km ²)
No management plan	57 (50.0%)	35,491.191 (10.9%)
Pre-existing plan	24 (21.1%)	217,309.648 (67.0%)
Adopted during project	32 (28.1%)	71,510.510 (22.0%)
Adopted after project end	1 (0.9%)	0.920 (0.0%)
Total	114 (100.0%)	324,312.269 (100.0%)

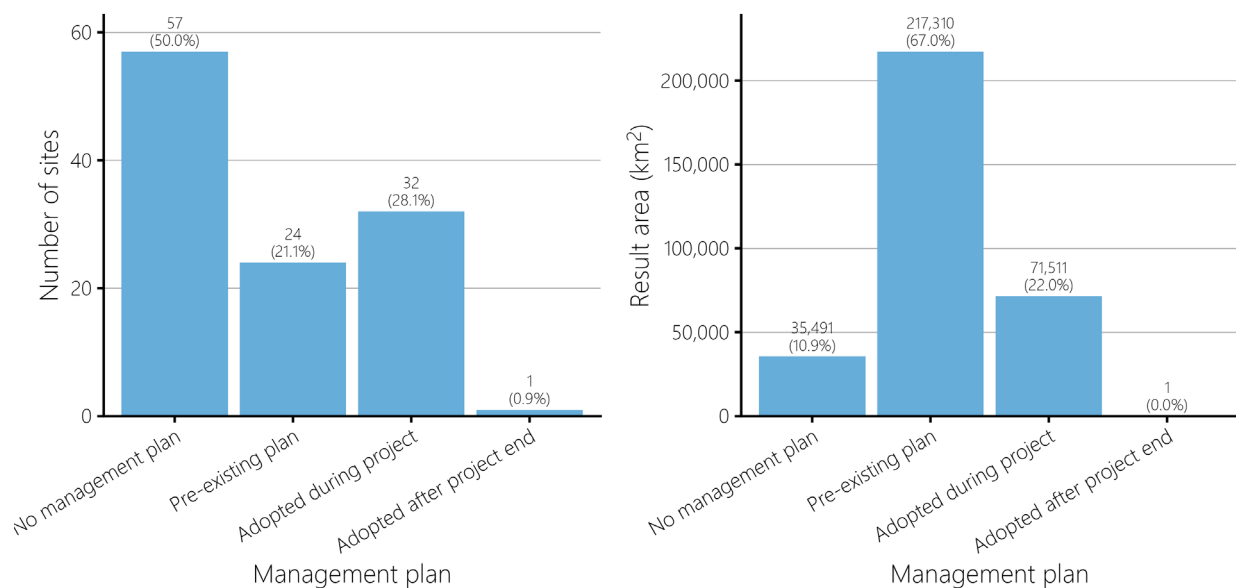


Figure 24: Number of Blue Action sites and result area by management plan status, for completed projects.

4.3. Topic: Strategic Positioning

4.3.1. Diagnostic 13: International recognition

To what extent does Blue Action support sites that have been awarded an international recognition of quality or effectiveness?

Four international standards are considered: the Marine Conservation Institute's Blue Park⁹ and Blue Spark¹⁰ awards (Marine Conservation Institute, 2025), Mission Blue's Hope Spot¹¹ status, and the IUCN Green List¹². Of the 280 project sites, 34 (12.1%) hold a recognition by at least one of the schemes, yet they account for 41.7% of the portfolio's area (Table 20, Figure 25). These 34 project sites correspond to 30 distinct geographical sites, as a few are targeted by more than one project (Table 22). The area figures combine the targeted area for running projects with the achieved area for completed projects.

Hope Spot status is the most common recognition, held by 24 project sites (8.6%), followed by the Blue Park award (14, 5.0%) and the Blue Spark award (2, 0.7%), with no Blue Action site currently on the IUCN Green List (Table 21).¹³ As a site can hold several awards, these per-scheme counts partially overlap and sum to more than the 34 recognized sites. There are 18 with a Hope Spot only, 8 with a Blue Park only, 6 with both, and 2 with a Blue Spark only (Figure 25). Note that a Blue Spark marks a collaboration working toward a Blue Park standard rather than one already granted.

The recognized area is concentrated in very few sites. The Galapagos Marine Reserve, which holds both a Blue Park and a Hope Spot, makes up most of it, while Ecuador's two Hermandad sites add a further 60,000 km² through their Blue Spark (Table 22, Figure 25).

Table 20: Number and share of Blue Action sites and area with any international recognition.

International recognition	Sites	Area (km ²)
Yes	34 (12.1%)	217,711.718 (41.7%)
No	246 (87.9%)	303,869.901 (58.3%)
Total	280 (100.0%)	521,581.619 (100.0%)

Table 21: Number and share of Blue Action sites and area per award. Schemes overlap, so a site can hold several.

Scheme	Sites	Area (km ²)
Blue Parks	14 (5.0%)	150,506.738 (28.9%)
Blue Sparks	2 (0.7%)	60,000.000 (11.5%)
Hope Spots	24 (8.6%)	150,666.670 (28.9%)
IUCN Green List	0 (0.0%)	0.000 (0.0%)

⁹ <https://marine-conservation.org/blueparks/>

¹⁰ <https://marine-conservation.org/blue-sparks/>

¹¹ <https://missionblue.org/hope-spots/>

¹² <https://iucn.org/resources/conservation-tool/iucn-green-list-protected-and-conserved-areas>

¹³ The IUCN Green List's website is under development and a current list of recognized sites could only be accessed from the XML sitemap at <https://iucngreenlist.org/sites-sitemap.xml>.

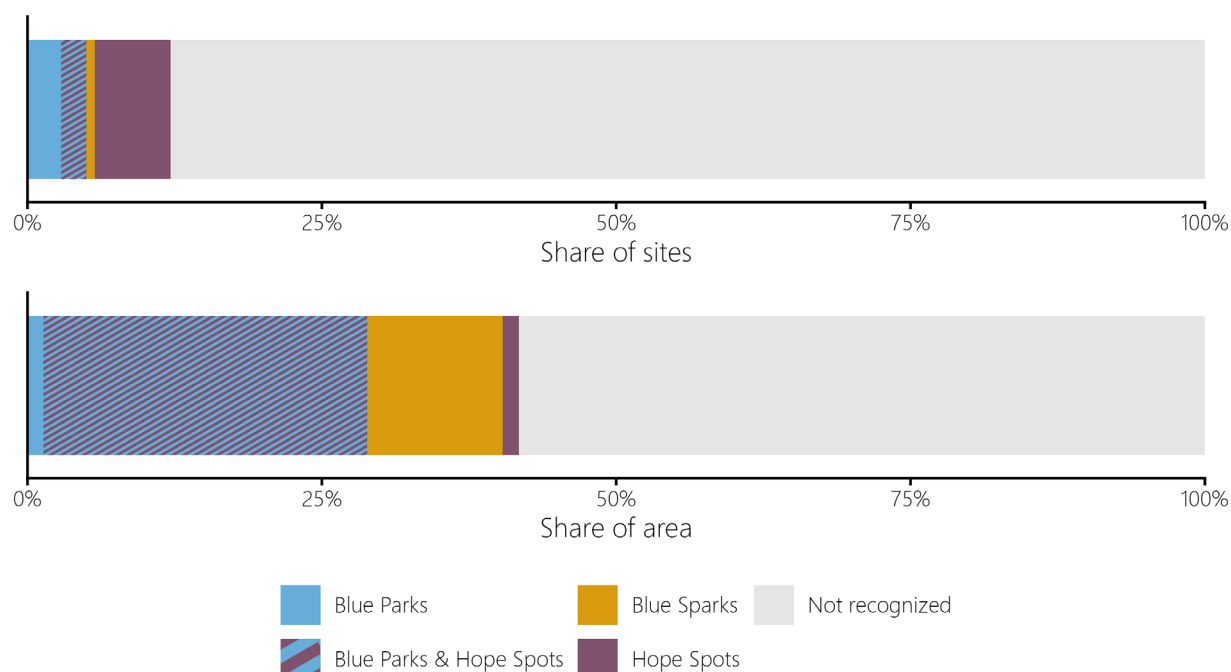


Figure 25: Share of Blue Action sites and area per award combination.

Table 22: Internationally recognized sites from the Blue Action portfolio and the number of project sites they map to.

International site name	Country	International standard	Recognized site name	Number of project sites
Bacalar Chico National Park	Belize	Hope Spots	Mesoamerican Reef	1
Blue Hole Natural Monument	Belize	Hope Spots	Mesoamerican Reef	1
Corozal Bay Wildlife Sanctuary	Belize	Hope Spots	Mesoamerican Reef	1
Gladden Spit and Silk Cayes Marine Reserve	Belize	Hope Spots	Mesoamerican Reef	1
Glovers Reef Marine Reserve	Belize	Hope Spots	Mesoamerican Reef	1
Halfmoon Caye Natural Monument	Belize	Hope Spots	Mesoamerican Reef	1
High Protection for Biodiversity (Marine Reserve) 2	Belize	Hope Spots	Mesoamerican Reef	1
High Protection for Biodiversity (Marine Reserve) 3	Belize	Hope Spots	Mesoamerican Reef	1
Laughing Bird Caye National Park	Belize	Hope Spots	Mesoamerican Reef	1
Lighthouse Reef Atoll	Belize	Hope Spots	Mesoamerican Reef	1
Placencia Lagoon	Belize	Hope Spots	Mesoamerican Reef	1
Port Honduras Marine Reserve	Belize	Hope Spots	Mesoamerican Reef	1
Sapodilla Cayes Marine Reserve	Belize	Hope Spots	Mesoamerican Reef	1
South Water Caye Marine Reserve	Belize	Hope Spots	Mesoamerican Reef	1
Spawning and Aggregation Sites	Belize	Hope Spots	Mesoamerican Reef	1
Turneffe Atoll Marine Reserve	Belize	Hope Spots	Mesoamerican Reef	1
Golfo de Tribugá - Cabo Corrientes Regional Integrated Management District	Colombia	Hope Spots	Tribuga Gulf	2
Old Providence McBean National Park	Colombia	Blue Parks	El Parque Nacional Natural Old Providence McBean Lagoon	1

Drawing the Map: A Site-Based Review of Blue Action Fund's Grant Portfolio

International site name	Country	International standard	Recognized site name	Number of project sites
Cocos Island National Park	Costa Rica	Blue Parks & Hope Spots	Cocos Island; Parque Nacional Isla del Coco	3
Galapagos Marine Reserve	Ecuador	Blue Parks & Hope Spots	Galapagos Islands; Reserva Marina de Galápagos	2
Marine Protected Area Hermandad I No Take	Ecuador	Blue Sparks	Reserva Marina Hermandad	1
Marine Protected Area Hermandad II No Longline	Ecuador	Blue Sparks	Reserva Marina Hermandad	1
Ayau-Asia Islands Marine Recreational Park	Indonesia	Blue Parks	Kawasan Konservasi Perairan Kepulauan Raja Ampat	1
Dampier Strait Marine Recreational Park	Indonesia	Blue Parks	Kawasan Konservasi Perairan Kepulauan Raja Ampat	1
Kofiau-Boo Islands Marine Recreational Park	Indonesia	Blue Parks	Kawasan Konservasi Perairan Kepulauan Raja Ampat	1
Mayalibit Bay Marine Recreational Park	Indonesia	Blue Parks	Kawasan Konservasi Perairan Kepulauan Raja Ampat	1
Misool East-South Marine Recreational Park	Indonesia	Blue Parks & Hope Spots	Misool Marine Reserve	1
Raja Ampat Islands Marine Recreational Park	Indonesia	Blue Parks	Kawasan Konservasi Perairan Kepulauan Raja Ampat	1
Kisite Marine National Park	Kenya	Blue Parks	Kisite-Mpunguti Marine Park & Reserve	1
Mpunguti Marine National Reserve	Kenya	Blue Parks	Kisite-Mpunguti Marine Park & Reserve	1

4.3.2. Diagnostic 14: Coverage of marine area toward 30×30

How much of the marine area of ODA countries does the Blue Action portfolio cover relative to the 30×30 target?

The Blue Action portfolio covers 521,582 km², combining the targeted area for running projects with the achieved area for completed projects. This figure can be compared to the marine area of ODA countries as a reference, allowing us to express Blue Action's geographical scope as a share of that area and of the 30% benchmark implied by the 30×30 target of the Global Biodiversity Framework (Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, 2022). The reference area – the exclusive economic zones and territorial seas, out to 200 nautical miles, of the ODA countries that have a coastline – was pre-computed from the Maritime Boundaries Geodatabase as 53,413,441 km² (Table 23). The portfolio covers 0.98% of it. Against the 30% benchmark that the 30×30 target implies, 16,024,032 km², the portfolio reaches 3.25% (Figure 26).

Table 23: Blue Action portfolio area, the total marine area of ODA countries, the 30% benchmark, and the portfolio's share of each.

Quantity	Value
Blue Action portfolio area (km ²)	521,581.619
Total marine area of ODA countries (km ²)	53,413,441.000
30% benchmark of ODA marine area (km ²)	16,024,032.300
Portfolio share of ODA marine area	0.98%
Portfolio share of 30% benchmark	3.25%

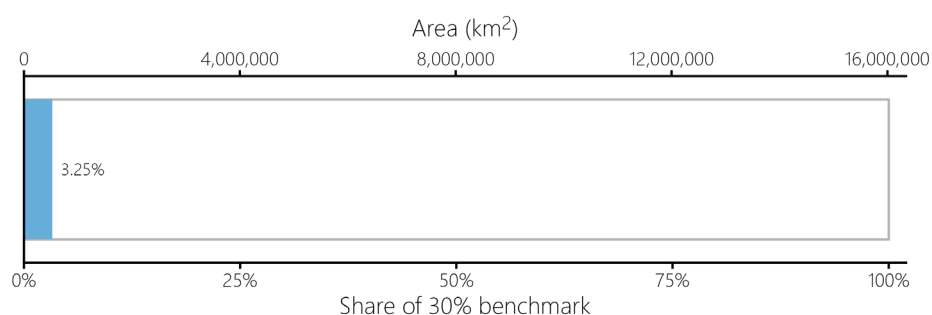


Figure 26: Blue Action portfolio area as progress toward the 30% benchmark of ODA countries' marine area.

5. Summary

This report applied an analytical framework of 14 portfolio diagnostics to Blue Action Fund's Site-Specific Information database as of 18 June 2026 and described the funded portfolio along three lines: its reach and scope, its ambition and impact, and its strategic positioning against international benchmarks. For each header, we summarize selected key findings.

Reach and scope. 254 unique geographic sites supported by Blue Action span 25 countries and 521,582 km² of marine and coastal area. The portfolio has grown steadily, from 35 sites in 2018 to 252 by 2026. About four fifths are marine protected areas and one fifth are other effective area-based conservation measures. A majority are pre-existing sites whose management the projects aim to strengthen (167 sites, 59.6%) rather than newly created or extended sites (113 sites, 40.4%). The balance between the two types of sites varies widely by country: every site is newly created or extended in São Tomé and Príncipe and the Solomon Islands, while in Kenya, the Philippines, and South Africa every site already existed, though most countries in the portfolio have both types of sites. Site sizes span several orders of magnitude: the median site covers about 110 km², while 10 very large sites above 10,000 km² together hold roughly three quarters of the summed site area. A typical project supports 5 sites, and projects range from 1 to 25 sites. Governance of sites differs across countries: overall, about a third of sites (91) are governed by indigenous peoples and local communities, yet this share is concentrated in a few countries, mainly Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, Mozambique, and Madagascar, and absent in most others.

Ambition and impact. These are assessed mainly through the MPA Guide, which places each site on two scales, its level of protection and its stage of establishment. A useful reference point when combining both scales is the region where biodiversity benefits begin to accrue, meaning sites that are at least Minimally Protected and at least Implemented. The portfolio's targets are ambitious, with about 80% of sites aiming for this goal. For projects still running, the planned change points clearly upward, as 97 of 166 sites (58.4%) are set to improve on both scales. Among completed projects, sites generally improved and largely met their targets: 92 of 114 (80.7%) improved on at least one scale from baseline, while the total area achieved slightly exceeded the total area targeted (an area delivery ratio of 1.04) and two thirds met or exceeded their targets on both scales (75 sites, 65.8%). Delivery is uneven, however. Newly created or extended sites reached only 0.68 of their targeted area, against 1.23 for pre-existing sites, so the shortfall sits with projects aiming to establish new protected areas. Management plans cover close to 90% of the completed area, of which most predates the projects, with 67.0% from plans already in place on large established sites and a further 22.0% adopted during the projects.

Strategic positioning. Against international standards, 34 project sites (12.1%) hold a recognition of quality or effectiveness. These account for a larger share of area (41.7%), because recognition concentrates above all in the Galapagos Marine Reserve, which holds both a Blue Park award and a Hope Spot. Hence, both the overall area and the internationally recognized area concentrate in a handful of large sites. Hope Spot status is the most common recognition by number of sites (24 sites), but Blue Park (14) and Blue Spark (2 sites) status have also been awarded to Blue Action sites. The global 30×30 target calls for protecting 30% of the ocean by 2030, which for the marine area of ODA countries, where Blue Action works, amounts to about 16 million km². The portfolio covers 3.25% of that area.

In sum, the diagnostics describe a broad and ambitious portfolio that is largely delivering its establishment, protection and area targets. This report and its underlying analytical framework of 14

portfolio diagnostics (Appendix A2) should be understood as a starting point. Since analyses are documented in detail and replicable, they can be repeated as new data enter the SSI database. Similarly, the framework and methodological approach can be revised and extended as new questions and ideas emerge.

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Appendix

A1. Data cleaning and processing

Data cleaning and processing steps were applied to the dataset provided by Blue Action on 18 June 2026 before running the portfolio analysis:

- Removed the 2 site records that Blue Action identified as never having completed a project (Excel file rows 76, "Diani-Chale Marine National Reserve", and 265, "Son Tra OECM"), reducing the dataset from 282 to 280 records.
- Harmonized inconsistent site names and corrected spelling mistakes:
 - Set the International name of the site with Local name "Parque Nacional Isla del Coco" to "Cocos Island National Park".
 - Set the two International name spellings "Gulf of Tribuga Integrated Management District" and "Golfo de Tribugá - Cabo Corrientes Regional Integrated Management District" to the latter, and the two Local name spellings "Distrito de Manejo Integrado Golfo de Tribuga" and "DRMI Golfo de Tribugá Cabo Corrientes" to the latter.
 - Removed the double space from the International name "Mpunguti Marine National Reserve"
 - Corrected the International name "Spawning and Aggregation Sites" to "Spawning and Aggregation Sites"
- Set Target surface area w/o overlap (km2) equal to Target surface area (km2) for 4 sites with no overlap (column overlap? indicates "No") where the values with and without overlap slightly differed by a few decimals due to rounding inconsistencies.
- Set Result surface area (km2) and Result surface area w/o overlap (km2) to 0 for the 8 completed sites whose Stage of Establishment End of the project (result) was "Proposed/Committed" but still erroneously carried a nonzero result area.
- Set Result surface area w/o overlap (km2) equal to Result surface area (km2) for 1 completed, implemented site (Bangatan Locally Managed Marine Area) reporting no overlap but a result area without overlap of 0, after confirmation with Blue Action.
- Recoded Adoption year of present management plan (if applicable) to an integer year: entries stating a status rather than a year ("n/a", "N/A", "NA", "*", "-", "tba", "In development", "not yet developed", "yet to be adopted") were set to NA (which reads as the absence of a management plan during analysis); remaining entries containing one or more years (e.g., "2019 - 2023", "Current management plan is 2020-2025.") were reduced to the first year mentioned.
- Corrected the value "Pre-proposed" to "Pre-Proposed" in Stage of Establishment Beginning of the project (baseline) for 2 sites.
- Corrected the value "Not protected" to "Not Protected" in Level of Protection Beginning of the project (baseline) and Level of Protection End of the project (result) for all sites to which the category applied.

A2. Analytical framework

Diagnostic 1: Site count

Description: Reports how many marine and coastal sites Blue Action has supported since its inception and how they can be broken down by country, Protected Area category and Call for Proposals. It also reports how the number of sites has developed over time to the current year.

Rationale: A simple measure of reach and scope that demonstrates how many locations have benefited from conservation support.

Data: Required variables are Include in 'Total no. Blue Action sites'?, Country, Protected Area category, Call for Proposals, Project start date.

Quantitative definitions and calculations:

- Absolute frequency of sites, defined as number of rows (or: of unique combinations of project identifier and site number), after filtering Include in 'Total no. Blue Action sites' for sites with entry "1".
- Absolute and relative frequencies after stratification by Country, Protected Area category, and Call for Proposals. The variable Protected Area category is transformed to only have categories "OECM" and "MPA", where the latter includes all recognized IUCN Protected Area Categories (Dudley, 2008), i.e., all non-missing non-"OECM" entries.
- Cumulative absolute frequency of sites for each year from earliest year in the data to the current year, after filtering Include in 'Total no. Blue Action sites' for sites with entry "1". Years are extracted from Project start date.

Reporting outputs: Tables with absolute and relative frequencies. A graphic of the cumulative number of sites over time.

Limitations: Numbers of sites with and without stratification do not match due to different filtering rules (see also section 3).

Diagnostic 2: Total protected area

Description: Reports the total protected surface area (km²) that Blue Action has supported since its inception. It also reports how this area has accumulated over time to the current year.

Rationale: A measure of reach and scope that quantifies the marine and coastal area benefiting from conservation support.

Data: Required variables are `Status`, `Target surface area w/o overlap (km2)`, `Result surface area w/o overlap (km2)`, `Project start date`.

Quantitative definitions and calculations:

- Sum of the supported surface area over all sites, taking the targeted area in `Target surface area w/o overlap (km2)` for running projects (where `status` is "Running") and the result area in `Result surface area w/o overlap (km2)` for completed projects (where `status` is "Completed").
- Cumulative sum of the supported surface area for each year from the earliest year in the data to the current year. Years are extracted from `Project start date`.

Reporting outputs: A total surface area in km². A graphic of the cumulative surface area over time.

Limitations: The total combines targeted area (for running projects) with achieved area (for completed projects). The over-time view dates each site's area to its project start year, which may precede the year the area was designated or achieved.

Diagnostic 3: Distribution of site sizes

Description: Reports how site sizes are distributed across size categories, in number of sites and in km², and the largest and smallest site in the portfolio. It also reports how many sites each project contains and summary figures for a typical site and project.

Rationale: Conveys the scale and diversity of supported sites and how they are spread across projects. The extremes serve communication purposes; the size and per-project distributions give insight into site selection, resource allocation and grant strategy, like the efficiency in reaching multiple locations with a grant.

Data: Required variables are `Status`, `Target surface area (km2)`, `Result surface area (km2)`, `International name`, `Country`, `Blue Action Project no..`

Quantitative definitions and calculations:

- Site size is taken as the targeted area in `Target surface area (km2)` for running projects (where `status` is "Running") and the result area in `Result surface area (km2)` for completed projects (where `status` is "Completed"). These variables include overlap, as site size is a per-site characteristic and we are not summing for an area total (see also section 3).
- Distribution of site size across size categories, as absolute and relative number of sites and summed km² per category. Categories are in orders of magnitude: 0, (0,1], (1,10], (10,100], (100,1000], (1000,10000], and >10000 km². These represent size ranges commonly used for grouping MPAs (e.g., Bohorquez et al., 2019).
- Largest and smallest site by site size; the smallest excludes sites with a size of zero.
- Number of sites per project, with project identified by variable `Blue Action Project no..`
- Summary figures for a typical site and project: median and mean site size (both excluding sites with a size of zero) and the median number of sites per project.

Reporting outputs: Bar charts of the size distribution by number of sites and by km². A table of the largest and smallest site identified by their `International name` and `Country`. A histogram of the number of sites per project. Summary statistics for a typical site and project.

Limitations: Site size uses the with-overlap area, so summed km² per category counts shared area more than once and is not comparable to the portfolio total in Portfolio Diagnostic 2. Site sizes combine targeted area (running projects) with achieved area (completed projects). In some calculations, we exclude sites where area is zero, as they would lead to trivial results (smallest sites always those with zero area) and skewed summary statistics (median and mean site size pulled toward zero). But conditioning on non-zero area excludes certain types of sites, which has to be kept in mind during interpretation: Sites with zero result area were not yet officially designated protected areas by project end.¹⁴

¹⁴ All values of zero in this analysis refer to result area, not target area. This is because information on target area is only used for *running* projects in this analysis. But a value of zero target area including overlap is used *retrospectively* to highlight sites that were not included in the project scope during the design phase, but benefited during project implementation. It hence cannot occur for running projects.

Diagnostic 4: Distribution by governance type

Description: Reports how sites are distributed across IUCN governance types (see Borrini-Feyerabend et al., 2013), overall and broken down by country and by Call for Proposals.

Rationale: A measure of reach and scope that characterizes the governance arrangements under which the supported sites operate.

Data: Required variables are Governance type, Country, Call for Proposals.

Quantitative definitions and calculations:

- Absolute and relative frequency of sites per Governance type.
- Absolute and relative frequency of sites per Governance type after stratification by Country and by Call for Proposals.

Reporting outputs: Tables of absolute and relative frequencies, overall and per Country and per Call for Proposals. Stacked bar charts of the governance type composition per Country and per Call for Proposals.

Limitations: The diagnostic counts sites and is not weighted by area, so it does not show the share of protected area under each governance type.

Diagnostic 5: Distribution by site type

Description: Reports how supported sites are distributed across the two site types "New/Extended" (a site newly established or expanded during the project) and "Effectively managed" (a pre-existing site whose management effectiveness the project aims to enhance), in number of sites and in km², overall and broken down by country and by Call for Proposals.

Rationale: A measure of reach and scope that indicates whether the portfolio focuses on creating new protected area or on improving existing protected area.

Data: Required variables are Status, Type of target site, Target surface area w/o overlap (km²), Result surface area w/o overlap (km²), Country, Call for Proposals.

Quantitative definitions and calculations:

- Supported surface area is taken as the targeted area in Target surface area w/o overlap (km²) for running projects (where status is "Running") and the result area in Result surface area w/o overlap (km²) for completed projects (where status is "Completed").
- Absolute and relative frequency of sites, and absolute and relative supported surface area, per Type of target site.
- Absolute and relative frequency of sites, and absolute and relative supported surface area, per Type of target site, after stratification by Country and by Call for Proposals.

Reporting outputs: Tables of absolute and relative frequencies and surface area, overall and per Country and per Call for Proposals. Stacked bar charts of the site-type composition per Country and per Call for Proposals, by number of sites and by surface area.

Limitations: A site that is both effectively managed and extended is recorded as two sites (two rows in the SSI database), one per type, so it contributes to both site-type categories.

Diagnostic 6: Targeted protected area for new MPAs

Description: Reports the aggregated target surface area (km²) of new and extended protected areas, overall and split by Protected Area category.

Rationale: Conveys the intended scale of new protected area the portfolio aims to create, supporting internal planning and vision-setting.

Data: Required variables are Type of target site, Protected Area category, Target surface area w/o overlap (km²).

Quantitative definitions and calculations:

- Aggregated target surface area, defined as the sum of Target surface area w/o overlap (km²) over sites where Type of target site is "New/Extended".
- Absolute and relative target surface area after stratification by Protected Area category, which is transformed to only have categories "OECM" and "MPA", where the latter includes all recognized IUCN Protected Area Categories (Dudley, 2008), i.e., all non-missing non-"OECM" entries.

Reporting outputs: Tables of the aggregated target surface area, overall and per Protected Area category, with absolute and relative values.

Limitations: Figures are targeted area only and do not reflect the area actually achieved, including for completed projects (the result information is not used).

Diagnostic 7: Distribution by targeted level of protection and stage of establishment

Description: Reports how the portfolio's sites are positioned, at their target status, on the MPA Guide's level of protection and stage of establishment (Gorud-Colvert et al., 2021), both jointly and on each scale separately.

Rationale: A measure of ambition that shows where on the MPA Guide the portfolio aims to position its sites in terms of level of protection and stage of establishment,

Data: Required variables are Level of Protection Objective of the project (target), Stage of Establishment Objective of the project (target).

Quantitative definitions and calculations:

- Absolute and relative frequency of sites per combination of Level of Protection Objective of the project (target) and Stage of Establishment Objective of the project (target), i.e., the joint distribution.
- Absolute and relative frequency of sites per Level of Protection Objective of the project (target), and per Stage of Establishment Objective of the project (target), i.e., the two marginal distributions.

Reporting outputs: Bubble chart that shows joint frequencies for each combination of level of protection and stage of establishment together with bar charts of the two marginal frequencies. A table of the absolute and relative frequency of sites for every combination of level of protection and stage of establishment. All levels of each scale are shown, including those with no sites.

Limitations: The diagnostic counts sites and is not weighted by area, and reflects targeted status only, not baseline or achieved status. For sites that were not included in the project scope during the design phase, but benefited during project implementation and were therefore added to the SSI database, the site-specific target could only be entered after project implementation and might not represent a true initial target.

Diagnostic 8: Targeted improvement in level of protection and stage of establishment

Description: Reports, for running projects, how far sites are planned to advance from baseline to target on the MPA Guide's level of protection and stage of establishment, in number of sites and in km².

Rationale: Indicates the portfolio's ambition and its intended impact on management effectiveness.

Data: Required variables are Status, Level of Protection Beginning of the project (baseline), Level of Protection Objective of the project (target), Stage of Establishment Beginning of the project (baseline), Stage of Establishment Objective of the project (target), Target surface area w/o overlap (km²).

Quantitative definitions and calculations:

- All calculations are restricted to running projects (where status is "Running"). For each site, the level of protection at baseline and at target is taken from Level of Protection Beginning of the project (baseline) and Level of Protection Objective of the project (target), and the stage of establishment at baseline and at target from Stage of Establishment Beginning of the project (baseline) and Stage of Establishment Objective of the project (target), each as an ordinal category on its MPA Guide scale. The supported area is taken from Target surface area w/o overlap (km²).
- Per scale, the frequency of sites and area sum at each level, separately at baseline and at target, together with the number of sites and area sum moving from each baseline level to each target level.
- Frequency of sites and area sum per combination of level of protection and stage of establishment at target, and the number of sites and area sum for every observed combination of baseline and target positions on the two scales jointly, i.e., the joint baseline-to-target transitions, from which the marginal transitions are recoverable.
- Absolute and relative frequency of sites, and absolute and relative area sum, cross-classified by whether the targeted level of protection is higher than the baseline level of protection and whether the targeted stage of establishment is higher than the baseline stage of establishment, giving the sites and area planned to improve on level of protection only, on stage of establishment only, on both, or on neither.

Reporting outputs: Per scale, a slope chart of the baseline-to-target transitions with marginal bar charts at baseline and at target, in number of sites and in km². Bubble charts of the joint frequencies for each combination of level of protection and stage of establishment at baseline and at target, in number of sites and in km², highlighting the upper-right quadrant (at least "Minimally Protected" and at least "Implemented") where biodiversity benefits begin to accrue (Gorud-Colvert et al., 2021), with a table of the joint baseline-to-target transitions in number of sites and km². A table of the absolute and relative number of sites and area planned to improve (defined as at least one unit increase on the ordinal scale) on level of protection, on stage of establishment, on both, or on neither. All levels of each scale are shown, including those with no sites. Plots are labeled with the underlying numbers of sites and area.

Limitations: The figures reflect planned change for running projects, that is, targeted positions rather than achieved outcomes. Both scales are ordinal, so a one-unit improvement does not necessarily represent the same real-world impact at different points on a scale. In the area views,

each site is weighted by its targeted area, which is zero for sites whose area is fully subtracted as overlap with another site.

Diagnostic 9: Achieved improvement in level of protection and stage of establishment

Description: Reports, for completed projects, how far sites actually advanced from baseline to project end on the MPA Guide's level of protection and stage of establishment, in number of sites and in km².

Rationale: Indicates the impact of completed projects on management effectiveness.

Data: Required variables are `Status`, `Level of Protection Beginning of the project (baseline)`, `Level of Protection End of the project (result)`, `Stage of Establishment Beginning of the project (baseline)`, `Stage of Establishment End of the project (result)`, `Result surface area w/o overlap (km2)`.

Quantitative definitions and calculations:

- All calculations are restricted to completed projects (where `status` is "Completed"). For each site, the level of protection at baseline and at project end is taken from `Level of Protection Beginning of the project (baseline)` and `Level of Protection End of the project (result)`, and the stage of establishment at baseline and at project end from `Stage of Establishment Beginning of the project (baseline)` and `Stage of Establishment End of the project (result)`, each as an ordinal category on its MPA Guide scale. The supported area is taken from `Result surface area w/o overlap (km2)`.
- Per scale, the frequency of sites and area sum at each level, separately at baseline and at project end, together with the number of sites and area sum moving from each baseline level to each result level.
- Frequency of sites and area sum per combination of level of protection and stage of establishment at project end, and the number of sites and area sum for every observed combination of baseline and result positions on the two scales jointly, i.e., the joint baseline-to-end transitions, from which the marginal transitions are recoverable.
- Absolute and relative frequency of sites, and absolute and relative area sum, cross-classified by whether the level of protection at project end is higher than at baseline and whether the stage of establishment at project end is higher than at baseline, both as moves up the ordinal scale, giving the sites and area that improved on level of protection only, on stage of establishment only, on both, or on neither.

Reporting outputs: Per scale, a slope chart of the baseline-to-end transitions with marginal bar charts at baseline and at project end, in number of sites and in km². Bubble charts of the joint frequencies for each combination of level of protection and stage of establishment at baseline and at project end, in number of sites and in km², highlighting the upper-right quadrant (at least "Minimally Protected" and at least "Implemented") where biodiversity benefits begin to accrue (Gorud-Colvert et al., 2021), with a table of the joint baseline-to-end transitions in number of sites and km². A table of the absolute and relative number of sites and area that improved (defined as at least one unit increase on the ordinal scale) on level of protection, on stage of establishment, on both, or on neither. All levels of each scale are shown, including those with no sites. Plots are labeled with the underlying numbers of sites and area.

Limitations: The figures reflect achieved change for completed projects only. Both scales are ordinal, so a one-unit improvement does not necessarily represent the same real-world impact at different points on a scale. In the area views, each site is weighted by its achieved area, which is

zero for multiple sites that were not yet officially designated as protected areas by project end, or whose area is fully subtracted as overlap with another site.

Diagnostic 10: Target delivery for site count and protected area

Description: Reports, for completed projects, how the protected area achieved compares with what was targeted, and how many sites met their target, overall and by site type.

Rationale: Measures performance by comparing actual outcomes against planned targets.

Data: Required variables are `Status`, `Type of target site`, `Target surface area w/o overlap (km2)`, `Result surface area w/o overlap (km2)`, `Blue Action Project no.`.

Quantitative definitions and calculations:

- All calculations are restricted to completed projects (where `Status` is "Completed"). Targeted and achieved area per site are taken from `Target surface area w/o overlap (km2)` and `Result surface area w/o overlap (km2)`.
- Overall and per `Type of target site`: number of sites, summed targeted area, summed achieved area, their difference, the area delivery ratio (summed achieved area over summed targeted area), and the median per-site delivery ratio (achieved over targeted area, each site weighted equally).
- Absolute and relative number of sites, and area, that met or exceeded their targeted area (achieved area at least the targeted area).
- Per project (`Blue Action Project no.`): number of sites, summed targeted area, summed achieved area, and their difference.

Reporting outputs: A table of the number of sites, targeted area, achieved area, their difference, the area delivery ratio, and the median per-site delivery ratio, overall and per `Type of target site`. A table of the absolute and relative number of sites and area that met or exceeded their targeted area. A scatter plot of achieved against targeted area, per site and per project, overall and per `Type of target site`, with a reference line for exact delivery and sites of zero targeted area or zero achieved area highlighted. A bar chart of the distribution of the per-site delivery ratio, overall and per `Type of target site`, with sites of zero targeted area shown separately.

Limitations: The delivery ratio is undefined where targeted area is zero; such sites are shown as a separate category but excluded from the ratio summaries, while remaining in the area sums, and they trivially count as meeting their target. Targeted area is zero for sites added to the SSI database during implementation rather than at the design stage, and achieved area is zero for multiple sites that were not yet officially designated as protected areas by project end. In both cases, the area may also be zero because it is fully subtracted as overlap with another site.

Diagnostic 11: Target delivery for level of protection and stage of establishment

Description: Reports, for completed projects, how fully sites delivered their targets on the MPA Guide's level of protection and stage of establishment, in number of sites and in km².

Rationale: Measures performance by comparing actual outcomes against planned targets.

Data: Required variables are Status, Level of Protection Objective of the project (target), Level of Protection End of the project (result), Stage of Establishment Objective of the project (target), Stage of Establishment End of the project (result), Target surface area w/o overlap (km²), Result surface area w/o overlap (km²).

Quantitative definitions and calculations:

- All calculations are restricted to completed projects (where status is "Completed"). For each site, the level of protection at target and at project end is taken from Level of Protection Objective of the project (target) and Level of Protection End of the project (result), and the stage of establishment at target and at project end from Stage of Establishment Objective of the project (target) and Stage of Establishment End of the project (result), each as an ordinal category on its MPA Guide scale. The supported area is taken as the targeted area in Target surface area w/o overlap (km²) at target and the result area in Result surface area w/o overlap (km²) at project end.
- Per scale, the frequency of sites and area sum at each level, separately at target and at project end, together with the number of sites and area sum moving from each target level to each result level.
- Frequency of sites and area sum per combination of level of protection and stage of establishment at project end, and the number of sites, the targeted area sum and the result area sum for every observed combination of target and result positions on the two scales jointly, i.e., the joint target-to-end transitions, from which the marginal transitions are recoverable.
- Absolute and relative frequency of sites, and absolute and relative area sum, cross-classified by whether the level of protection at project end is at least its target and whether the stage of establishment at project end is at least its target, giving the sites and area that met or exceeded the target on level of protection only, on stage of establishment only, on both, or on neither.

Reporting outputs: Per scale, a slope chart of the target-to-end transitions with marginal bar charts at target and at project end, in number of sites and in km² (targeted area at target, result area at project end). Bubble charts of the joint frequencies for each combination of level of protection and stage of establishment at target and at project end, in number of sites and in km², highlighting the upper-right quadrant (at least "Minimally Protected" and at least "Implemented") where biodiversity benefits begin to accrue (Gorud-Colvert et al., 2021), with a table of the joint target-to-end transitions in number of sites, targeted area and result area. A table of the absolute and relative number of sites and area that met or exceeded the target (result at least equal to target on the ordinal scale) on level of protection, on stage of establishment, on both, or on neither. All levels of each scale are shown, including those with no sites. Plots are labeled with the underlying numbers of sites and area.

Limitations: The figures reflect target delivery for completed projects only. Both scales are ordinal, so a one-unit difference between result and target does not represent the same real-world impact at different points on a scale.

Diagnostic 12: Management plan adoption

Description: Reports, for completed projects, how many sites have a management plan and how many adopted one during the project period, in number of sites and in km².

Rationale: Assesses improvements in site governance.

Data: Required variables are `Status`, `Adoption year of present management plan (if applicable)`, `Project start date`, `Final end date`, `Result surface area w/o overlap (km2)`.

Quantitative definitions and calculations:

- All calculations are restricted to completed projects (where `status` is "Completed"). Each site is classified from `Adoption year of present management plan (if applicable)` into one of four statuses: no management plan (no year recorded), a pre-existing plan (adoption year before the project start year), a plan adopted during the project (adoption year between the project start and end years), or a plan adopted after the project ended (adoption year after the project end year); the start and end years are taken from `Project start date` and `Final end date`. The supported area is taken from `Result surface area w/o overlap (km2)`.
- Absolute and relative frequency of sites, and absolute and relative area sum, per management-plan status.

Reporting outputs: A single table of the absolute and relative number of sites and area in each management-plan status (no plan; pre-existing; adopted during the project; adopted after the project ended), from which both the share of sites with any plan and the share that adopted one during the project can be read. Bar charts of the number of sites and the area by status.

Limitations: The figures cover completed projects only and concern plan adoption, not updating: the data request asks only for the year a plan was adopted, so any later updating, though also of interest, cannot be assessed. The adoption year is recorded as free text, so two cleaning rules apply: entries naming a status rather than a year, such as "in development", "not yet developed", or "yet to be adopted", are read as no plan, and entries giving several years or a time span are reduced to the first year, in line with the question requiring a single year as the response ("year of present management plan").

Diagnostic 13: International recognition

Description: Reports the extent to which project sites and area have received international recognition of effectiveness. This includes the following schemes of international standards:

- Marine Conservation Institute's *Blue Park*¹⁵ or *Blue Spark*¹⁶ awards (Marine Conservation Institute, 2025).
- Mission Blue *Hope Spot* status¹⁷.
- IUCN *Green List* standard¹⁸.

Rationale: Highlights the fund's impact on internationally acknowledged high-quality sites, showing contribution to globally recognized conservation success.

Data: Required variables are International name, Local name, Country, Status, Target surface area w/o overlap (km2), Result surface area w/o overlap (km2), Blue Action Project no., Target site no.. The diagnostic also draws on four external reference lists, one per scheme, each a table of name and country of the recognized site, scraped from the awarding body's public web source.

Quantitative definitions and calculations:

- The four reference lists are scraped in machine-readable form from the awarding bodies' public web sources, with *Hope Spots* limited to "launched" and "designated" nomination status. Blue Action sites are matched to them by a fuzzy matching function using the International name, Local name, and Country. The proposed matches are confirmed by hand, and recognitions the matcher cannot find by name, for instance a region-level recognition whose name overlaps no site name, are added manually.
- The supported area is taken as the targeted area in Target surface area w/o overlap (km2) for running projects (where status is "Running") and the result area in Result surface area w/o overlap (km2) for completed projects (where status is "Completed").
- Absolute and relative frequency of sites, and absolute and relative area sum, holding any recognition versus none.
- Absolute and relative frequency of sites, and area sum, holding each individual recognition; a site can hold several recognitions, so these overlap and do not partition the portfolio.

Reporting outputs: A table of the number and share of sites and area with any international recognition. A table of the number and share of sites and area per scheme. A list of the recognized sites, each identified by country, with their matched site and scheme and the number of project sites they map to. A stacked bar chart of recognized versus not recognized sites and area, broken down by scheme (combination).

Limitations: The schemes differ in their priorities and criteria. For example, the IUCN Green List certifies sites as "achieving ongoing results for people and nature in a fair and effective way", and

¹⁵ <https://marine-conservation.org/blueparks/>

¹⁶ <https://marine-conservation.org/blue-sparks/>

¹⁷ <https://missionblue.org/hope-spots/>

¹⁸ <https://iucn.org/resources/conservation-tool/iucn-green-list-protected-and-conserved-areas>

the Blue Park Award “synthesizes the large interdisciplinary body of MPA effectiveness science and operationalizes it for real-world conservation efforts through a rigorous set of criteria”. A Hope Spot is a “place in the ocean critical to its health, biodiversity, or connectivity”, “grounded in science and shaped by community priorities” and reviewed by the Hope Spot Council, whose experts “ensure rigorous standards and lasting conservation impact”. A Blue Spark marks a collaboration that helps “create effective marine protected areas that meet Blue Park Standard”, that is, working toward a Blue Park Award rather than an award already achieved. International recognition of a project site in the database is detected by automated name matching, a procedure that is more efficient than a manual search but makes errors. Therefore, it ultimately depends on the manual confirmation of proposed matches and the manual addition of recognitions the matcher cannot find by name. A more reliable automated detection of recognized sites in the portfolio would require geospatial methods, like the comparison of shapefile boundaries or coordinates of internationally recognized sites with those of Blue Action project sites. The reference lists are external and change over time, so the figures reflect the lists at the time of download from the web.

Diagnostic 14: Coverage of marine area toward 30×30

Description: Reports how much of the marine area of countries receiving Official Development Assistance (ODA) is covered by Blue Action's portfolio, as a share of that area and of the 30% benchmark implied by the 30×30 target of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (2022).

Rationale: Measures strategic contribution to the 30×30 target, indicating how Blue Action's work aligns with international biodiversity commitments.

Data: Required variables are `Status`, `Target surface area w/o overlap (km2)` and `Result surface area w/o overlap (km2)`. Two fixed constants also enter the calculation, both based on Blue Action's prior geospatial analysis (Maritime Boundaries Geodatabase 2023, analyzed in QGIS): the total marine area of ODA countries, 53,413,441 km², and the 30% benchmark of that, 16,024,032 km².

Quantitative definitions and calculations:

- The portfolio area is the total supported area without overlap, taking `Target surface area w/o overlap (km2)` for running projects (where `status` is "Running") and `Result surface area w/o overlap (km2)` for completed projects (where `status` is "Completed").
- The total marine area of ODA countries is the combined area up to 200 nautical miles from the coast, that is, its exclusive economic zone (EEZ) together with its territorial seas, of ODA-recipient countries with a coastline (removing from the global Maritime Boundaries Geodatabase all non-ODA countries based on the OECD's list of ODA recipients 2024-2025, excluding also joint regimes or overlapping claims unless all involved countries are on OECD's list, as well as removing Kazakhstan and Palestine due to political difficulties). The 30% benchmark is 30% of that area.
- Portfolio area as a share is computed once with the total marine area of ODA countries and once with the 30% benchmark of that area as denominator.

Reporting outputs: A table reporting the portfolio area, the total marine area of ODA countries, the 30% benchmark, and the portfolio's share of each. A bar showing the portfolio area as progress toward the 30% benchmark, drawn as the filled share within the full target.

Limitations: The denominator and benchmark are fixed constants computed once outside this workflow. They are not recomputed here and would need updating as maritime boundaries or the ODA-recipient list change. The portfolio is assumed to lie entirely within the marine area of ODA countries, where Blue Action works by design. The portfolio area combines targeted area for running projects with achieved area for completed projects.

A3. Confirmed question set

The table below shows the confirmed question set, i.e., the agreed set of questions from which the analytical framework presented above was further developed. The *Diagnostic* column shows which portfolio diagnostic in the analytical framework and in this analysis report answers each question. For reference and clarity, we rephrase these questions in section 4 at the beginning of each Diagnostic's set of results. The *Initial* column names the corresponding question or questions in the initial question set, or is "New" for a confirmed question that does not appear there. The initial question set was a list of questions proposed by Blue Action at the start of the consultancy.

No.	Question	Diagnostic	Initial
1	How many marine and coastal sites has Blue Action supported since its inception a) Per country, b) MPA [all categories pooled] / OECM, c) Call (= region) How has this developed over time to the present moment? (cumulative perspective)	1	1
2	What is the total protected surface area (km ²) supported (without overlap)? How has this developed over time to the present moment? (cumulative perspective)	2	2
3	What is the largest and smallest site in our portfolio? What is the distribution of site sizes and site count per project across the portfolio? a) Per km ² b) Per number of sites	3	5, 7
4	How are projects distributed across the MPA Guide levels of protection (minimally, lightly, highly, and fully protected) and stages of establishment (committed, designated, implemented and actively managed) based on their target status?	7	3, 4
5	What is the distribution of sites per governance type a) Per country b) Call (= region)	4	6
6	What is the distribution of sites per Type of target site (New/Extended vs Effectively managed) (in number of sites, in km ²)	5	New
7	Among all projects, what is the aggregated target area (km ²) of new MPAs (target info only; no result data, no overlap)?	6	8
8	Among non-completed projects, how many sites plan to improve their level of protection / stage of establishment from baseline to project end and to which extent? (in number of sites, in km ²)	8	10, 11
9	Among completed projects, how many sites improved their level of protection / stage of establishment from baseline to project end and to which extent? (in number of sites, in km ²).	9	10, 11
10	Among completed projects, to what extent did closed projects achieve their stated targets in terms of number of sites, in km ² . How does the result data compare to the target data of closed projects? (in number of sites, in km ²)	10	9, 12
11	Among completed projects, to what extent did closed projects achieve their stated targets in terms of level of protection and stage of establishment?	11	12
12	How many sites adopted or updated a management plan during the project period and what's the equivalent in km ² ?	12	11
13	How many sites/ km ² is Blue Action supporting that have received international recognition of effectiveness (ie hope spots, receivers of Blue Park Awards and greenlisted sites)?	13	13
14	What percentage of the EEZs of ODA countries is covered by Blue Action's support toward the 30% target?	14	14