

# **Integrated Conservation of Kopet Dag Eco-region in Iran— With a view to feasibility of establishing a Biosphere Reserve/ TBCA in collaboration with Turkmenistan**

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# Overview

The **Kopet Dag eco-region and mountain range** lies along the interface of two geographic zones:

- the Kara-kum Desert in Turkmenistan and
- the Iranian Plateau,

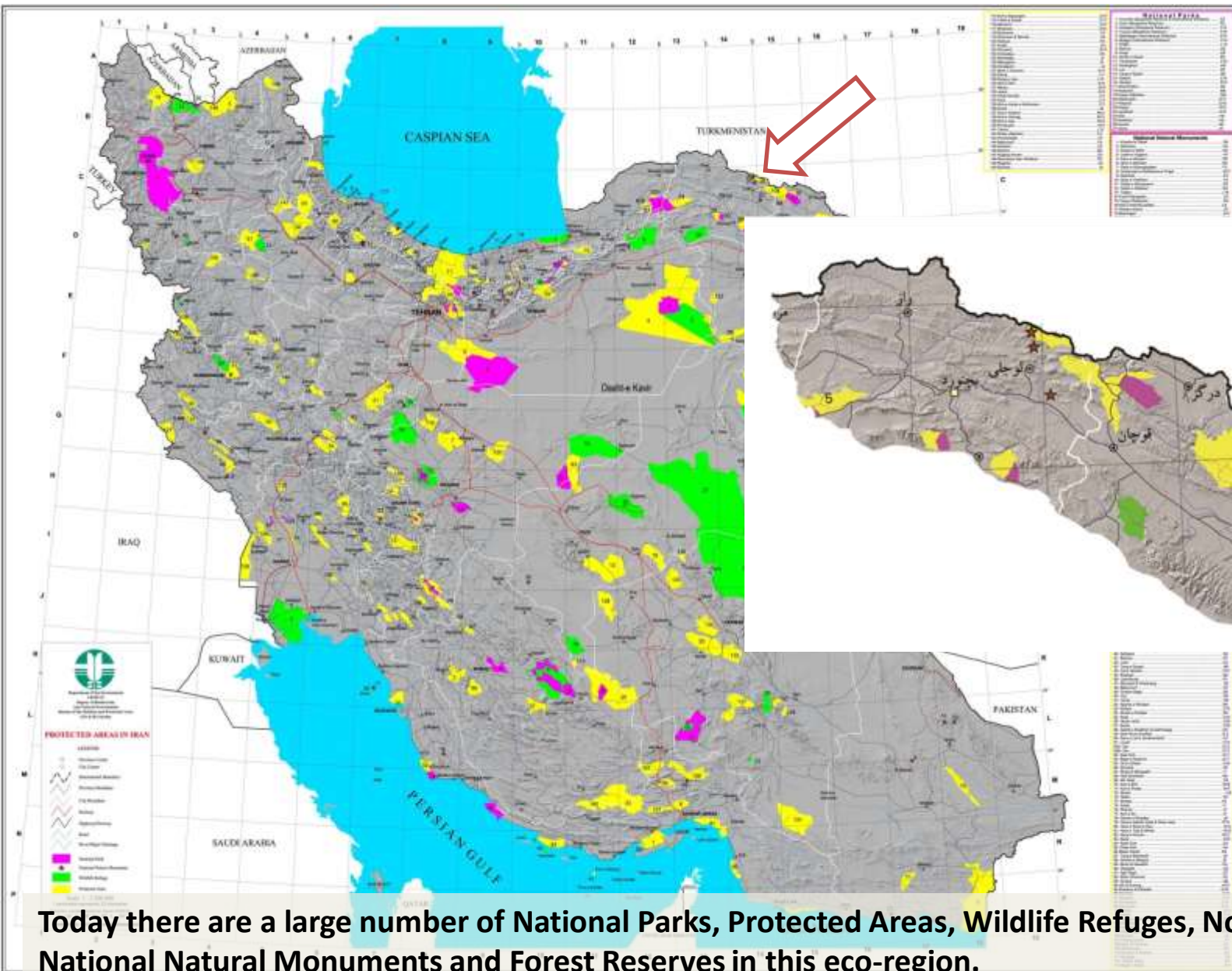
Locating essentially in the Iran-Turanian Biome.



It is a mountain range on the frontier between Turkmenistan and Iran that extends about 650 kilometres (400 mi) along the border southeast of the Caspian Sea.



# Protected Areas in Kopet Dag Eco-region



**Types of protected areas and their protection priority:**

- National Park
- National Natural Monument
- Wildlife Refuge
- Protected Area

Today there are a large number of National Parks, Protected Areas, Wildlife Refuges, No-Hunt Areas, National Natural Monuments and Forest Reserves in this eco-region.

# The Iranian Protected Areas located in Kopet Dag Eco-region

PAs	Type of Management
Golul Sarani	Protected area (former national park)
Tandoure	National park & Protected area
Sarigol	National park & protected area
Salouk	National park & protected area
Ghorkhod	Protected area
Gharchegheh	Protected area
Dorbadam	Protected area
Ors e Sistan	Protected area
Ors e Sarani	National Natural Monument
Misino	Boundary No-hunt Area
Darkesh & Haver	Forest Reserve
Chahar Bid	No-hunt Area
Sanobar e Nazarali	National Natural Monument
Sarv e Gharehbagh	National Natural Monument
Golestan	National Park & Biosphere Reserve
Takht Iran	No-hunt Area
Baghi	No-hunt Area





# Biodiversity Significance of Kopet Dagh

Kopet Dag is a **biogeographic region** with a **significant distribution pattern of flora and fauna** which **defies the political boundaries of nations**.

This eco-region is comprised of **mountainous shrub-like Mediterranean xeric woodlands, juniper woodlands, and riparian forests**.

Many of the endangered species are the primary focus for conservation in this hotspot, include **leopard**, Caspian snow-cock, wild sheep, bezoar (bearded) goat, hyena, Indian porcupine, and a number of other rare species of mammals, birds, snakes, and lizards.

This mountain range is the center of origin of many of the **ancestors of domesticated plant and animal species**.



Fauna and flora of Kopet Dag expresses the mixed character of their **biogeographic connections with Mediterranean and Turanian elements**. The Kopet Dag flora is especially rich in plant diversity, of which **332 species** are endemic.



# Cultural diversity

The **Kormanj (Kurdish)** and **Tukmen tribes** are among the main IPs of this region. The **lifestyle of many of the peoples of this Eco-region** shows strong and unique ties with the elements of the natural systems including for food, water, medicinal plants and spiritual communion.





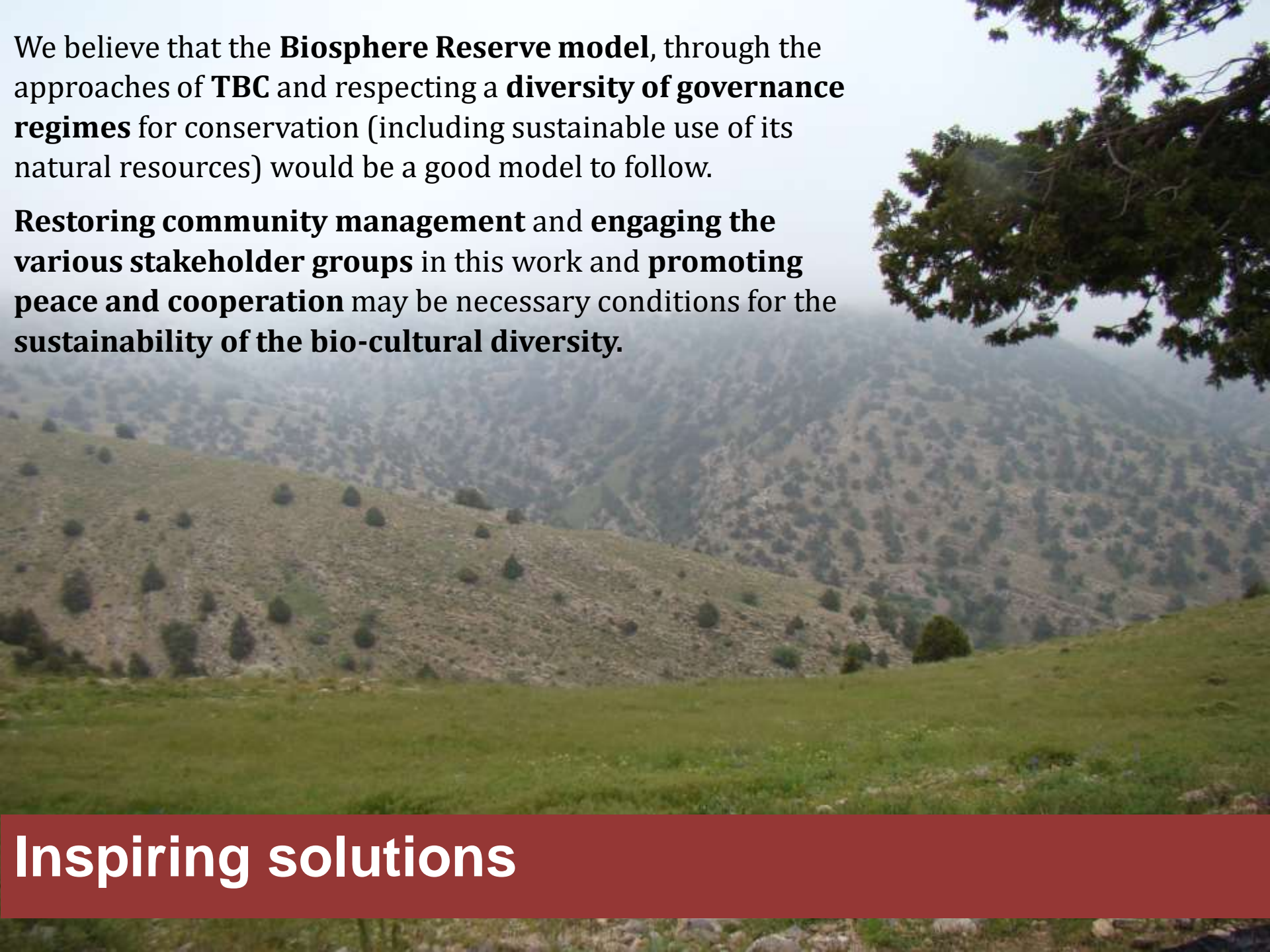
# Threats

This region is facing **unsustainable infrastructure development and tourism, heavy logging and overgrazing** by **outsiders**. when these activities occur in the upper watersheds and rangelands, they cause **soil erosion and mud floods**, destroying ecosystems and habitats.

The weakening of customary laws and governance systems of the tribes have resulted in increased **poaching** and degradation of **bio-cultural diversity**.







We believe that the **Biosphere Reserve model**, through the approaches of **TBC** and respecting a **diversity of governance regimes** for conservation (including sustainable use of its natural resources) would be a good model to follow.

**Restoring community management** and **engaging the various stakeholder groups** in this work and **promoting peace and cooperation** may be necessary conditions for the sustainability of the **bio-cultural diversity**.

**Inspiring solutions**

**The IUCN Protected Area Matrix – a classification system for protected areas comprising both management category and governance type**

Governance Type	A. Governance by government	B. Shared governance	C. Private governance	D. Governance by indigenous peoples and local communities
Management Category	Federal or national ministry or agency in charge Sub-national ministry or agency in charge Government-delegated management (e.g., to an NGO)	Transboundary governance Collaborative governance (various forms of pluralist influence) Joint governance (pluralist governing body)	Conserved areas established and run by individual landowners ...by non-profit organisations (e.g., NGOs, universities) ...by for-profit organisations (e.g., corporate landowners)	Indigenous peoples' conserved areas and territories – established and run by indigenous peoples  Community conserved areas and territories – established and run by local communities
I a. Strict Nature Reserve				
Ib. Wilderness Area				
II. National Park				
III. Natural Monument				
IV. Habitat/ Species Management				
V. Protected Landscape/ Seascape				
VI. Protected Area with Sustainable Use of Natural Resources				



In this action-oriented proposal the first set of activities will be **to examine a mosaic of functions and types of governance and management objectives** for the various habitats and ecosystems of the Kopet Dag eco-region.



In the final stage and also during the implementation of this plan, **discussions/ negotiations will begin with the competent authorities of the two countries**, both on an informal and formal level, as needed.

## The approach

This will be applied especially to:

- (1) identifying and filling the conservation gaps including conservation corridors of connectivity, and**
- (2) engaging indigenous people and local communities** in the governance of a variety of protected areas.

# Conclusions and recommendation

- Fulfillment of **international obligations** (Aichi Targets, IUCN Matrix, PoWPA, NBSAP) through Biosphere Reserve and TBC or peace parks
- Expansion of PAs through **integration with ICCAs** (Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas)
- Promotion of **conservation of nature** and its biological diversity through Biosphere Reserve and TBC,
- Strengthening of **regional cooperation**;
- Assuring **survival of endangered species** (flora and fauna) through consolidation of their habitats including **secure corridors of migration**.





Thank you for your kind attention