

Conference "Climate Change, Social Stress and Violent Conflict"
November 19 and 20, 2009, Hamburg, Deutschland

“PROTECTED” AREAS AS POTENTIAL VIOLENT CONFLICT THEATRE

Guillermo Andres Ospina

Anthropologist, Sustainable Development Master

Researcher *Grupo de Estudios Sociales Comparativos (GESC)*

Coordinator Society and Environment Team

Universidad del Cauca, Popayán - Colombia

gospina@unicauca.edu.co



“Protected” areas changing!

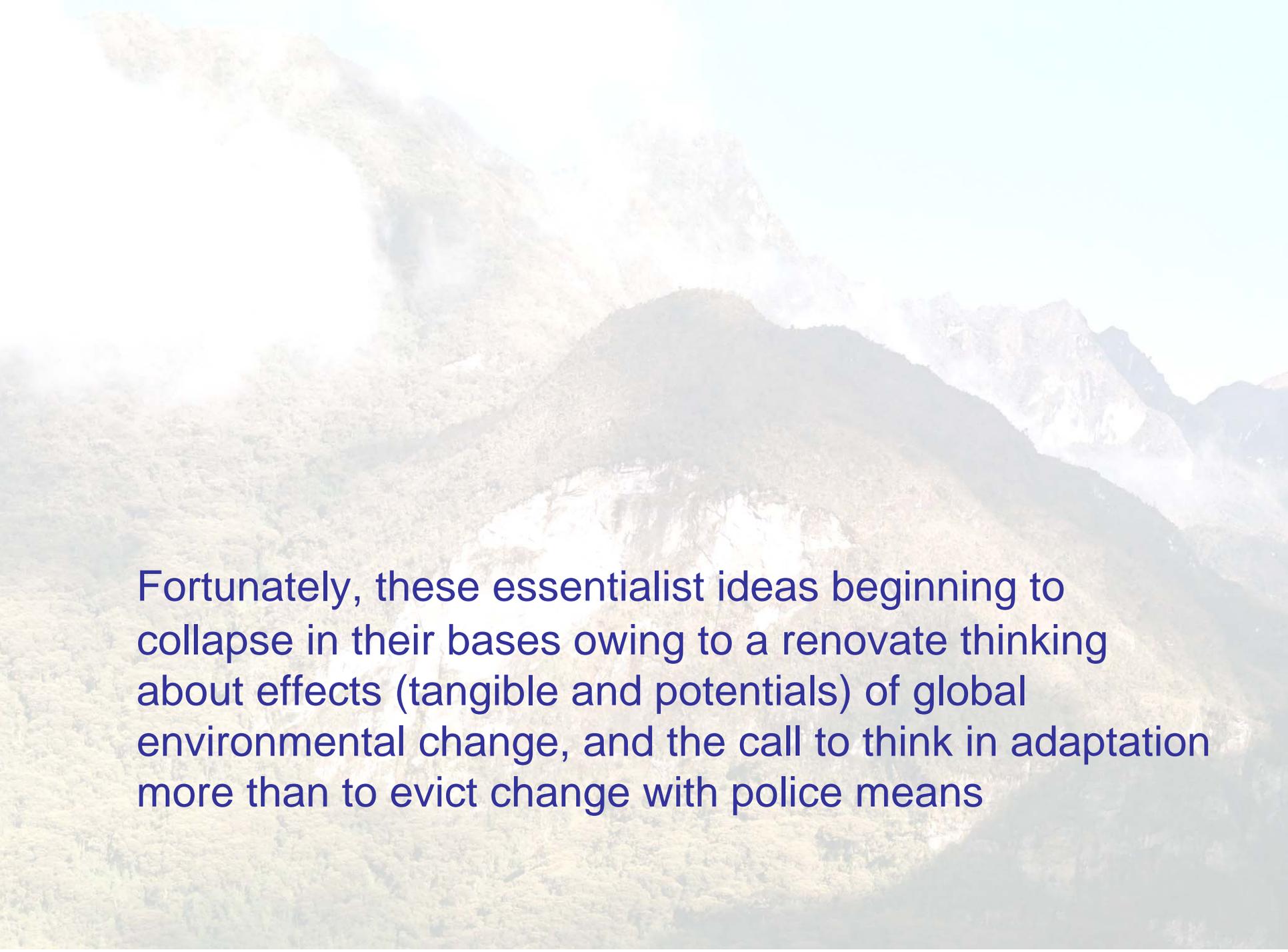
In the broader sense, *conservation* and *protected area* ideas have as pre-requisite the recognition of a “nature” at danger and threatened by “no-rational” forms of human interventions



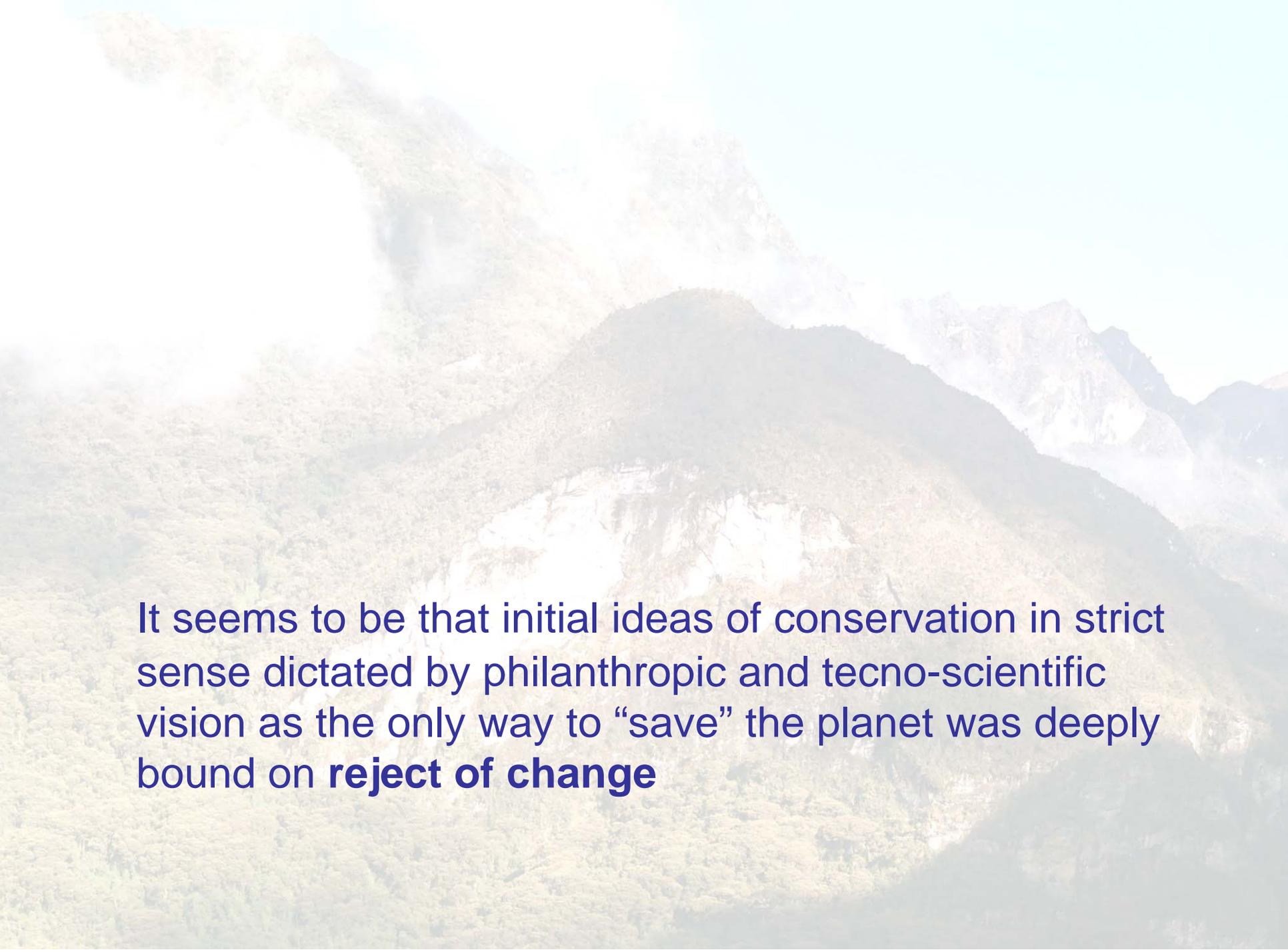
Feelings of **human responsibility** with nature at danger support a global political position, establishes parameters for what must be protected as well as the strategies and means to become effective this protection



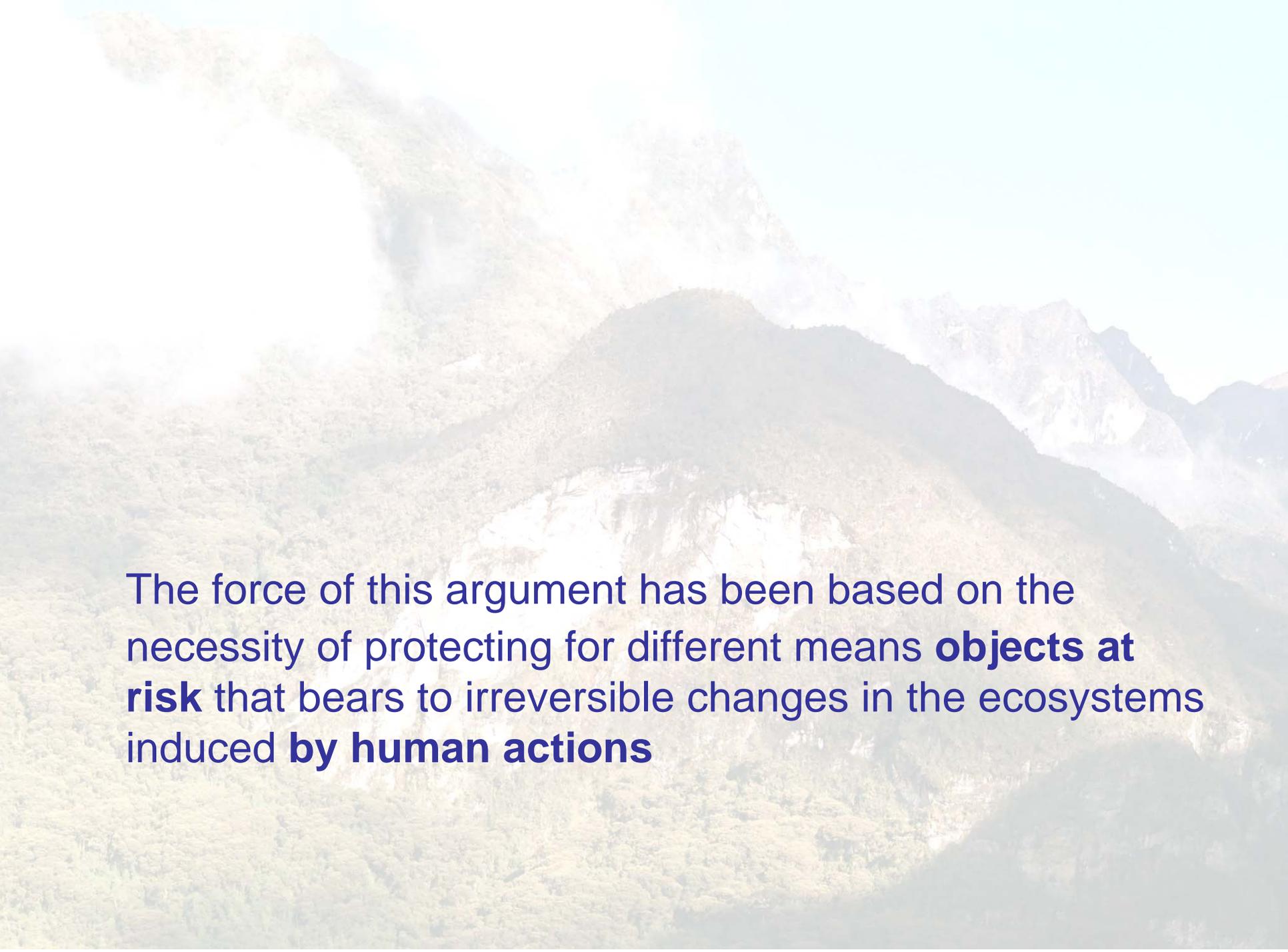
Initial ideas demands for conservation [preservation] to “pristine nature” in their “pure state” (*wilderness*), “virgin” to perpetuity and untouched, intangible...



Fortunately, these essentialist ideas beginning to collapse in their bases owing to a renovate thinking about effects (tangible and potentials) of global environmental change, and the call to think in adaptation more than to evict change with police means



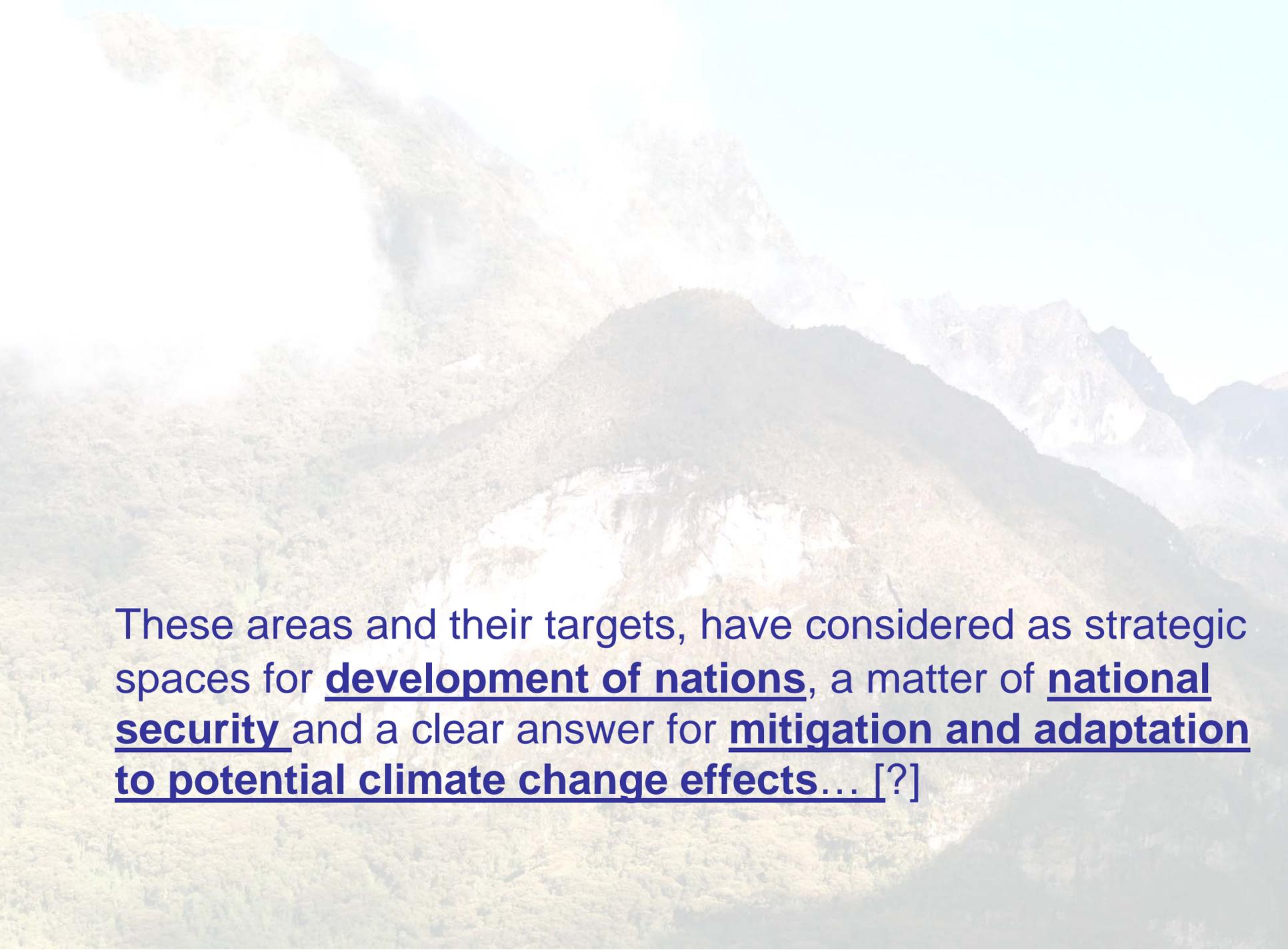
It seems to be that initial ideas of conservation in strict sense dictated by philanthropic and tecno-scientific vision as the only way to “save” the planet was deeply bound on **reject of change**



The force of this argument has been based on the necessity of protecting for different means **objects at risk** that bears to irreversible changes in the ecosystems induced **by human actions**



Extent of protected areas at global scale is considered around 21.5 millions squares km represented in 117.905 places under different national and international categories (WDPA 2006)

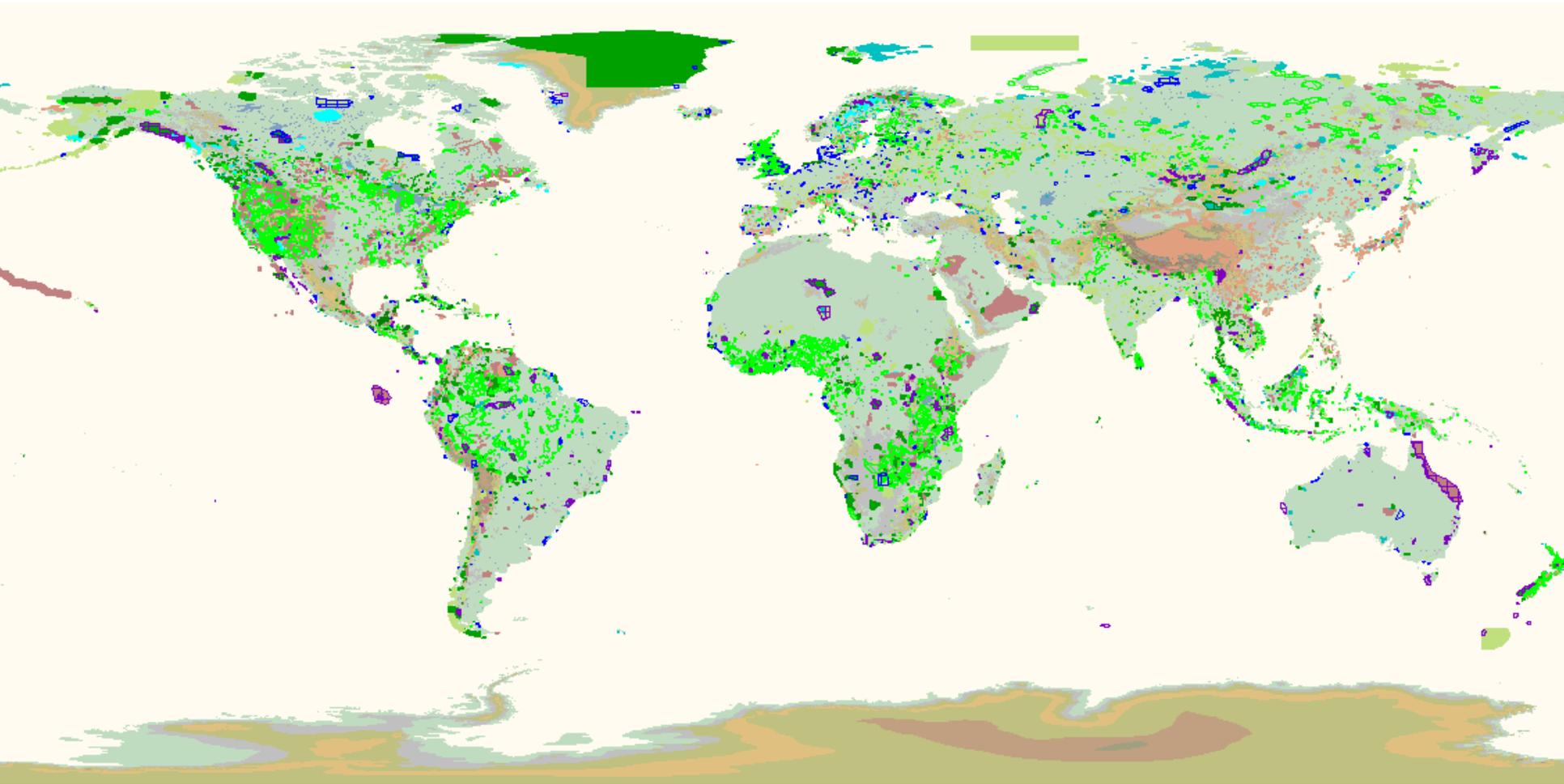


These areas and their targets, have considered as strategic spaces for **development of nations**, a matter of **national security** and a clear answer for **mitigation and adaptation to potential climate change effects... [?]**

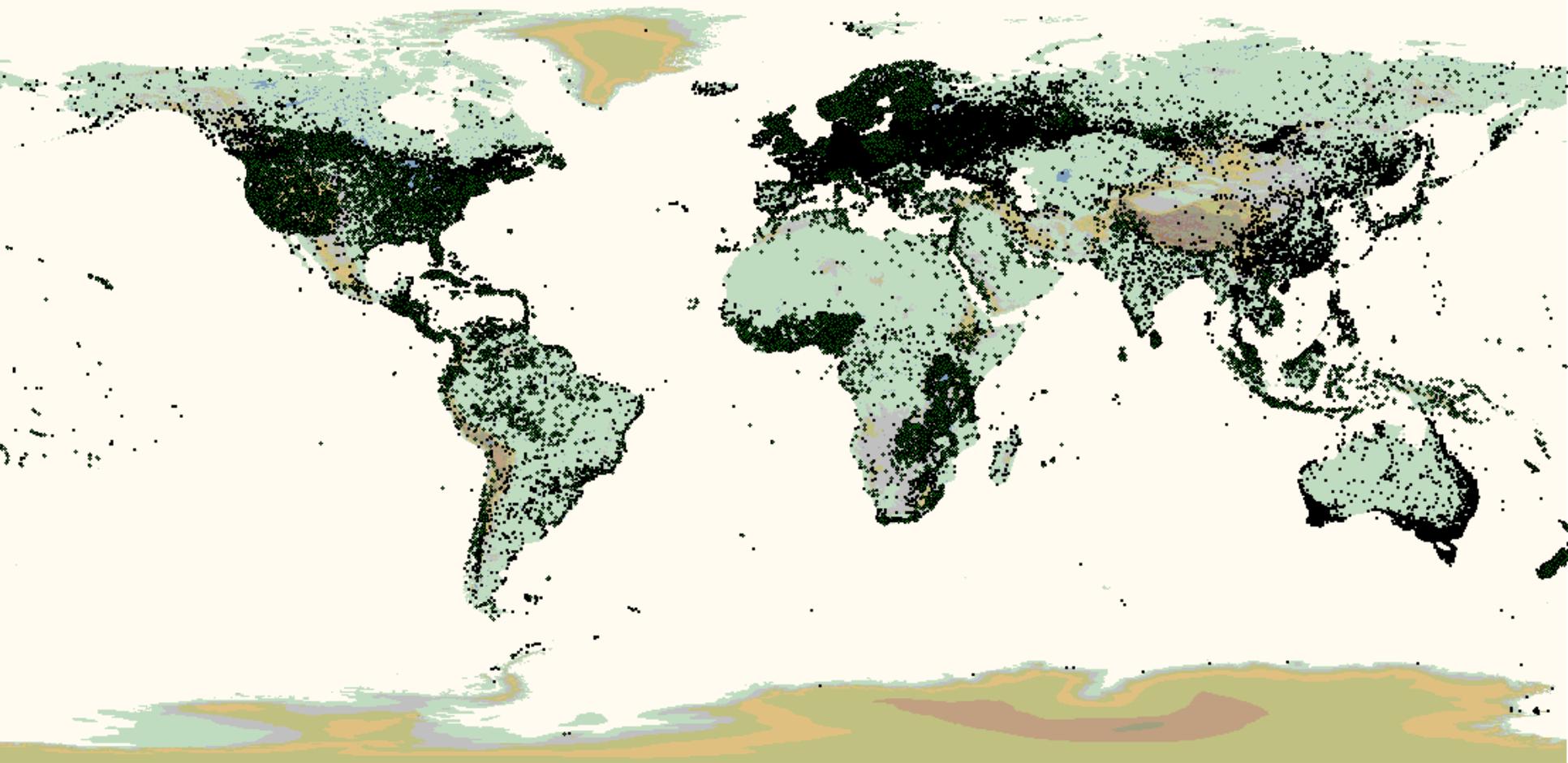


168 signatory countries of the Convention on Biological Diversity have assumed the commitment of emitting politicians focused to biodiversity conservation, declare and guarantee protected areas management

Scale and representation matters



Polygons of protected areas under IUCN categories, other national Categories and international sites



Points distribution representing protected areas under IUCN categories, international places and other areas under national categories

Global distribution of protected areas by geopolitical region

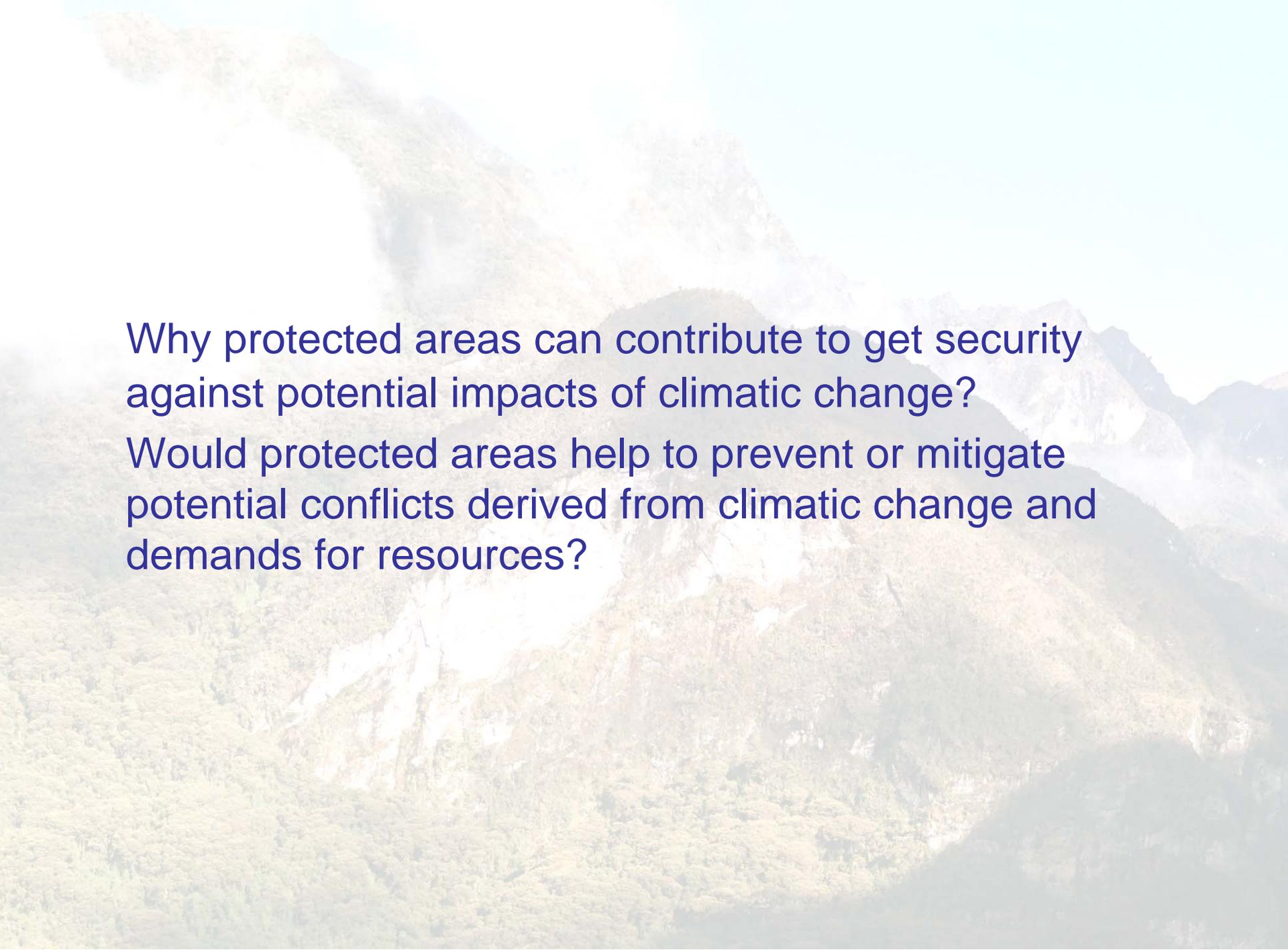
Region	Total sites	Total protected area (km ²)	Total protected land area (km ²)	Total land area (km ²)	Percentage land area protected (km ²)	Total number of marine sites (km ²)	Total protected marine area (km ²)
Central America	677	151,058	133,731	521,600	25.6	103	17,327
South America	1507	2,217,725	2,056,559	9,306,560	22.1	114	161,166
North America	13,414	4,450,119	4,231,839	23,724,226	17.8	754	218,280
East Asia	3265	1,930,651	1,904,342	11,799,212	16.1	285	26,309
South-East Asia	2674	791,681	715,218	4,480,990	16	390	76,463
Eastern and Southern Africa	4117	1,838,144	1,825,918	11,487,920	15.9	155	12,226
Caribbean	973	80,770	36,469	234,840	15.5	370	44,301
South America (Brazil)	1280	1,321,751	1,305,864	8,547,400	15.3	88	15,887
Europe	43,837	699,761	634,248	5,119,172	12.4	829	65,513
Australia/New Zealand	9550	1,400,292	831,420	8,011,930	10.4	422	568,872
Western and Central Africa	2583	1,302,812	1,293,206	12,804,860	10.1	43	9606
Pacific	404	418,641	54,949	553,058	9.9	240	363,692
North Africa and Middle East	1247	1,251,034	1,226,928	12,954,170	9.5	136	24,106
North Eurasia	17,719	2,006,914	1,789,006	22,110,050	8.1	82	217,908
South Asia	1478	344,248	339,058	4,487,510	7.6	184	5190
Antarctic	66	70,233	3470	14,024,832	0	59	66,763
World	104,791	20,275,834	18,378,755	150,168,330	12.2	4254	1,893,609

Source: Chape et al (2005, p448)

- Central America (25.6%)
- South America (22.1%)
- North America (17.8%)
- East Asia (16.1%)
- South-East Asia (16%)
- Southern Africa (15.9%)
- Caribbean (15.5%)
- Brazil (15.3%)
- Europe (12.4%)
- Australia/New Zealand (10.4%)
- Western and Central Africa (10.1%)
- Pacific (9.9%)
- North Africa and Middle East (9.5%)
- North Eurasia (8.1%)
- South Asia (7.6%)
- Antarctic (0%)

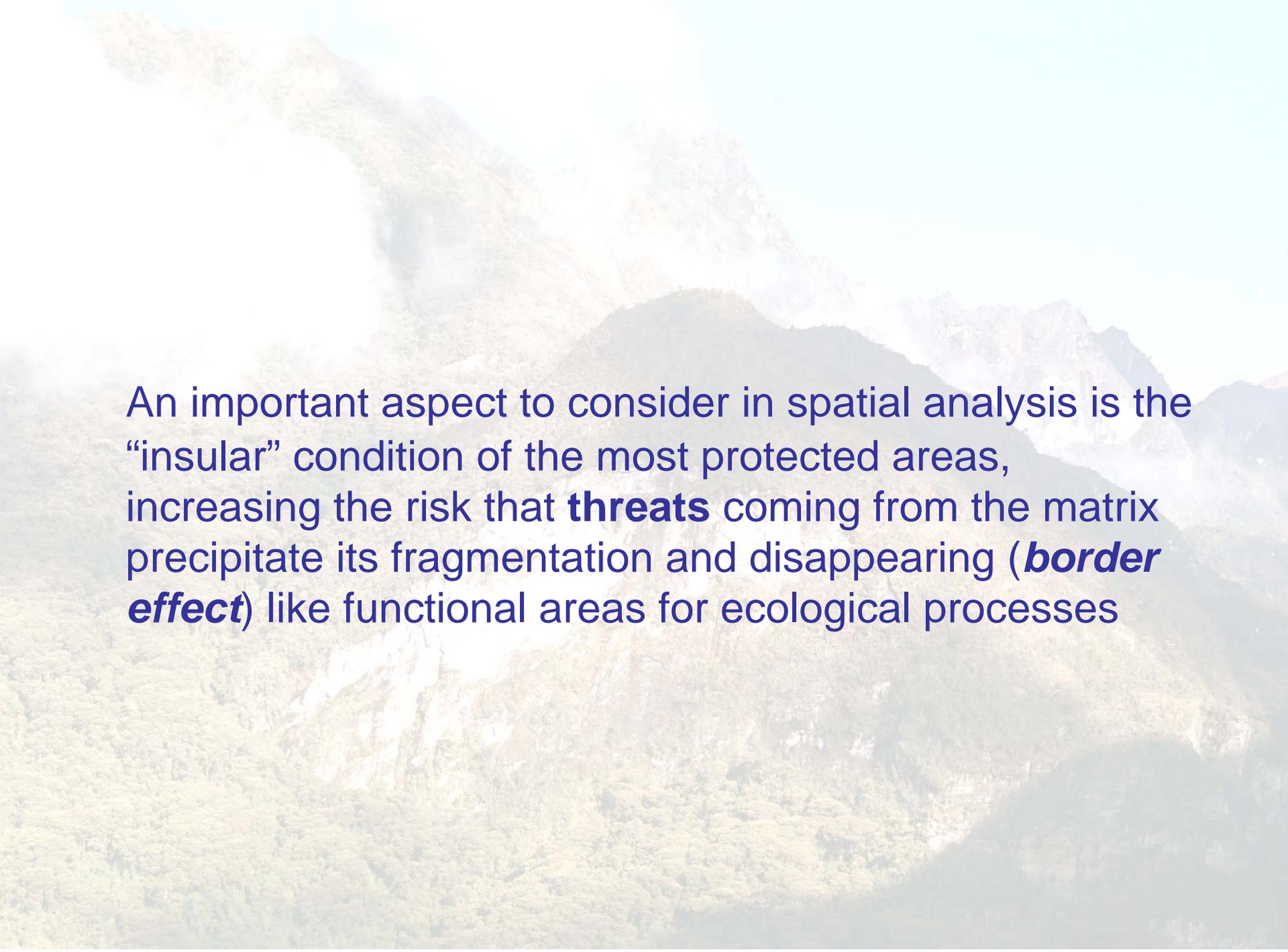
By number of sites **Europe** summarize 43,837, **North Eurasia** 17,719 and **North America** 13,414

(Chape et al. 2005 cited in Lockwood 2006).

A scenic view of a mountain range with a dense forest in the foreground and a clear blue sky. The mountains are rugged and rocky, with some snow patches visible. The forest is lush and green, covering the lower slopes of the mountains. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

Why protected areas can contribute to get security against potential impacts of climatic change?

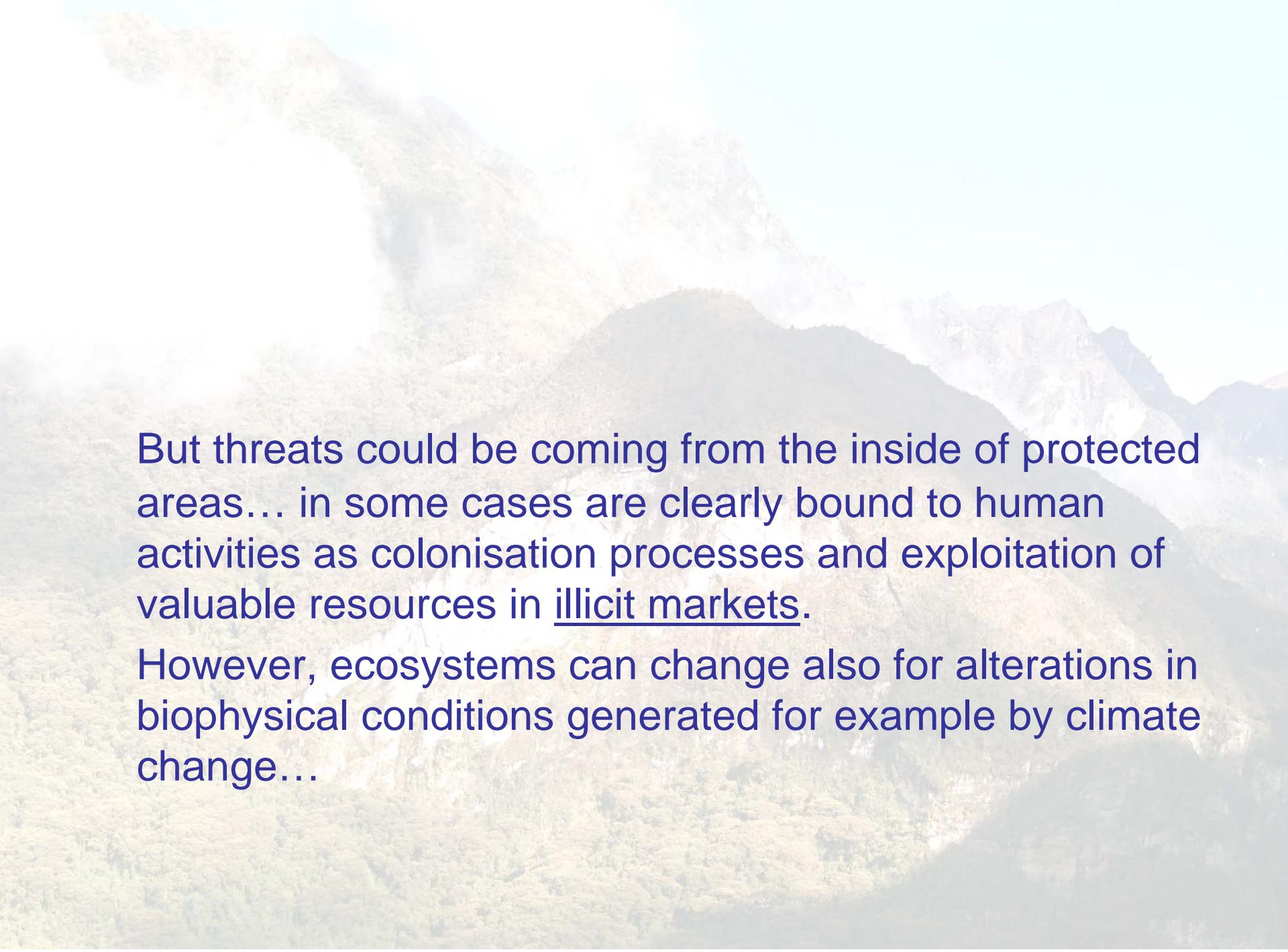
Would protected areas help to prevent or mitigate potential conflicts derived from climatic change and demands for resources?



An important aspect to consider in spatial analysis is the “insular” condition of the most protected areas, increasing the risk that **threats** coming from the matrix precipitate its fragmentation and disappearing (***border effect***) like functional areas for ecological processes

Insular system example: protected areas under IUCN categories, other national Categories and international sites





But threats could be coming from the inside of protected areas... in some cases are clearly bound to human activities as colonisation processes and exploitation of valuable resources in illicit markets.

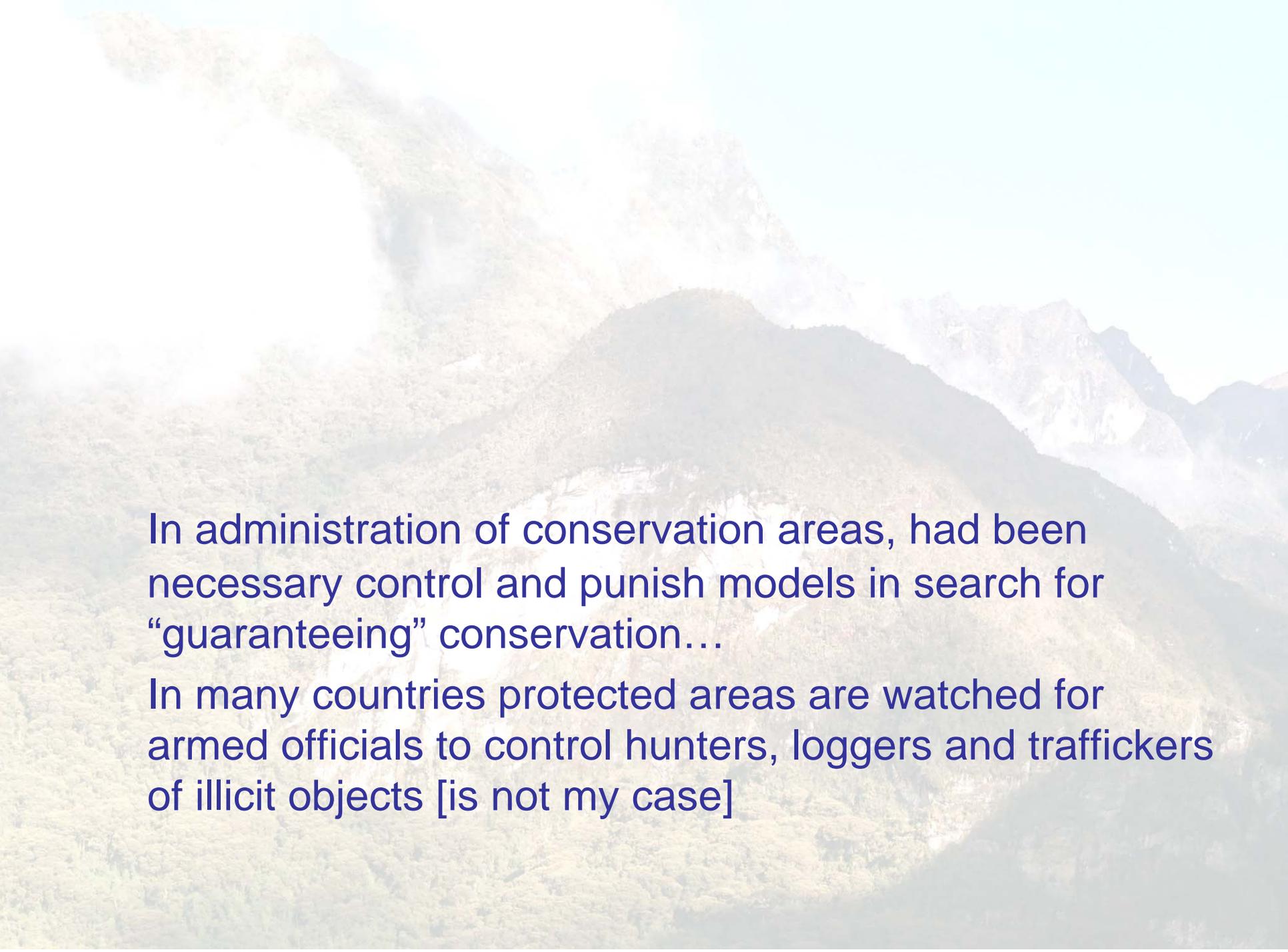
However, ecosystems can change also for alterations in biophysical conditions generated for example by climate change...

“Wilderness” in conflict

When pristine natures (*wilderness*) become a conflict matter?

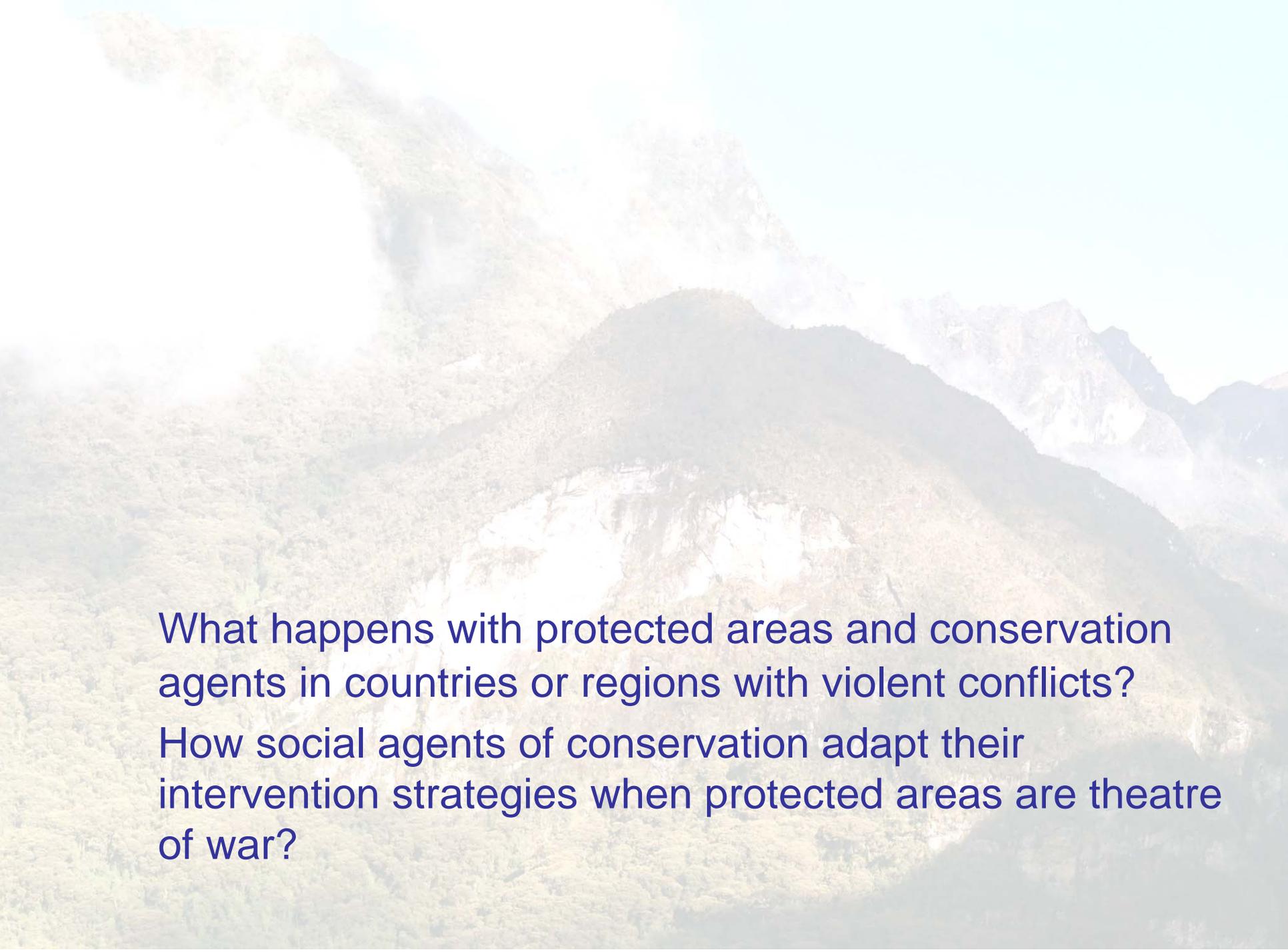
In a wide sense, the classic conflict faced by conservation idea [in strict sense], has derived from two opposed visions respect nature:

- by one hand, the vision of those who consider the nature as resource (animals, plants, minerals, etc.) with use value and/or change value to service of human necessities;
- for the other, the vision of those who claim the necessity and human responsibility of conserving the nature (biodiversity) for their intrinsic value

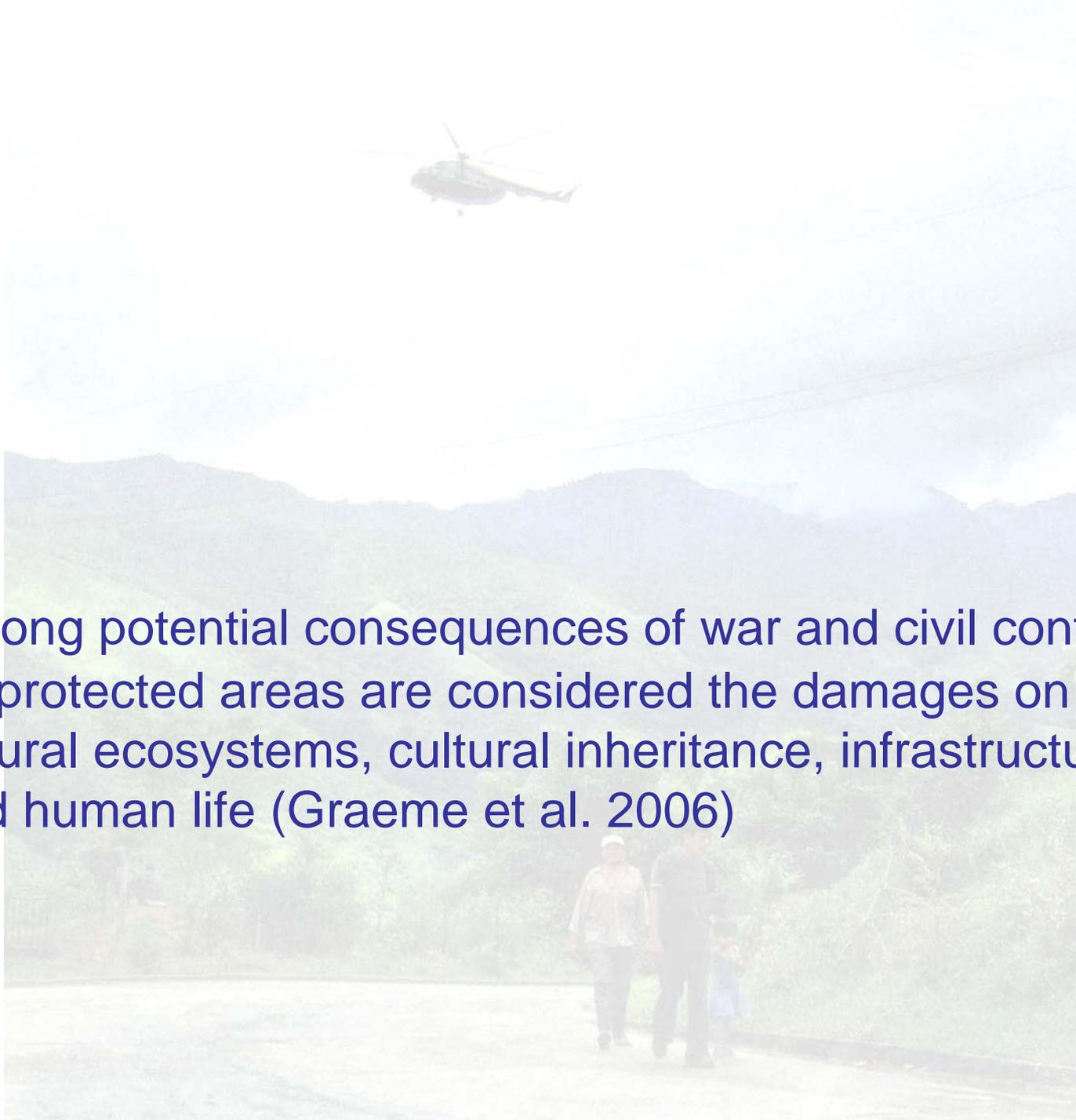


In administration of conservation areas, had been necessary control and punish models in search for “guaranteeing” conservation...

In many countries protected areas are watched for armed officials to control hunters, loggers and traffickers of illicit objects [is not my case]



What happens with protected areas and conservation agents in countries or regions with violent conflicts?
How social agents of conservation adapt their intervention strategies when protected areas are theatre of war?



Among potential consequences of war and civil conflict on protected areas are considered the damages on natural ecosystems, cultural inheritance, infrastructure and human life (Graeme et al. 2006)



Biophysical and social characteristics of protected areas offer an ideal theatre to armed actor's participating in violent conflicts as a strategic geopolitical position (**refuge**) in terrain control to confrontation and disputes, particularly in irregular war or guerrilla's warfare

Buhaug, Gates and Lujala (2009) using a functional model show that “geographic factors such as location, terrain and natural resources, interact with rebel fighting capacity and together play a crucial role in determining the duration of conflict”

La última trinchera de las Farc

A pesar de una ofensiva sin precedentes del Ejército, el Cañón de Las Hermosas, entre Tolima y Valle, se convirtió en el último escondite de 'Alfonso Cano' y de varios de los máximos jefes de la guerrilla de las Farc. Pero el problema no es sólo militar, sino geográfico. / País p. 2

Conserving in war

Advances in Colombian case study: National Parks in violent conflict context

La última trinchera de las Farc

A pesar de una ofensiva sin precedentes del Ejército, el Cañón de Las Hermosas, entre Tolima y Valle, se convirtió en el último escondite de 'Alfonso Cano' y de varios de los máximos jefes de la guerrilla de las Farc. Pero el problema no es sólo militar, sino geográfico. / Pais p. 2

To talk about conservation and protected areas in Colombia, its necessary consider the incidence of internal armed conflict, like a direct threat impacting the governance of **sites located in remote** regions key to armed actors and their confrontation dynamics

La última trinchera de las Farc

A pesar de una ofensiva sin precedentes del Ejército, el Cañón de Las Hermosas, entre Tolima y Valle, se convirtió en el último escondite de 'Alfonso Cano' y de varios de los líderes de las Farc. Pero el problema no es solo militar, sino

National parks in Colombia, a country with biodiversity and endemic political violence (corruption, impunity), offer conditions to develop illicit activities such as drugs production, traffic of weapons and refuge of illegal armed groups that control extensive regions inside and beyond national territory (sometimes)

La última trinchera de las Farc

A pesar de una ofensiva sin precedentes del Ejército, el Cañón de Las Hermosas, entre Tolima y Valle, se convirtió en el último escondite de 'Alfonso Cano' y de varios de los máximos jefes de la guerrilla de las Farc. Pero el problema no es sólo militar, sino geográfico. / Pais p. 2

From perception of park's managers affected by problems of **insecurity**, armed conflict is the main limitation for institutional interventions (governance) in protected areas; nevertheless the operative capacity of parks has been increased due to projects of international cooperation

La última trinchera de las Farc

A pesar de una ofensiva sin precedentes del Ejército, el Cañón de Las Hermosas, entre Tolima y Valle, se convirtió en el último escondite de 'Alfonso Cano' y de varios de los máximos jefes de la guerrilla de las Farc. Pero el problema no es sólo militar, sino geográfico. / Pais p. 2

“Impacts of armed conflict in environment are highly variable and **may be positive** in some areas and negative in others” (Ham et al. 2002)

Anti-personal Mines

In the world, were reported in 2007 a total of **5.426 victims** for anti-personal mines, mainly in Afghanistan, Cambodia, **Colombia**, Kosovo and Palestine (Landmine Monitor 2007)

Colombia according with Presidential Program for the Integral Action Against Mines Antipersonal, registered between 1990 and September of 2009 a total **8.034 victims** of mines (5.232 of them had been military) and a total of **1.792 deaths** between civil and military (in press).



La última trinchera de las Farc

Exponential growth of mined fields in the country is disturbing in terms of security.

Until January 2006, had been **geo-referenced points of incidents of mines in 17 protected areas**. The parks that have presented bigger number of incidents for mined fields are *Nudo de Paramillo* and *Sierra de la Macarena*, both present illicit crops and territorial cores to *Paramilitares* (AUC) in the first case and *Guerrilla* (FARC) in the second.

La última trincheras de las Farc

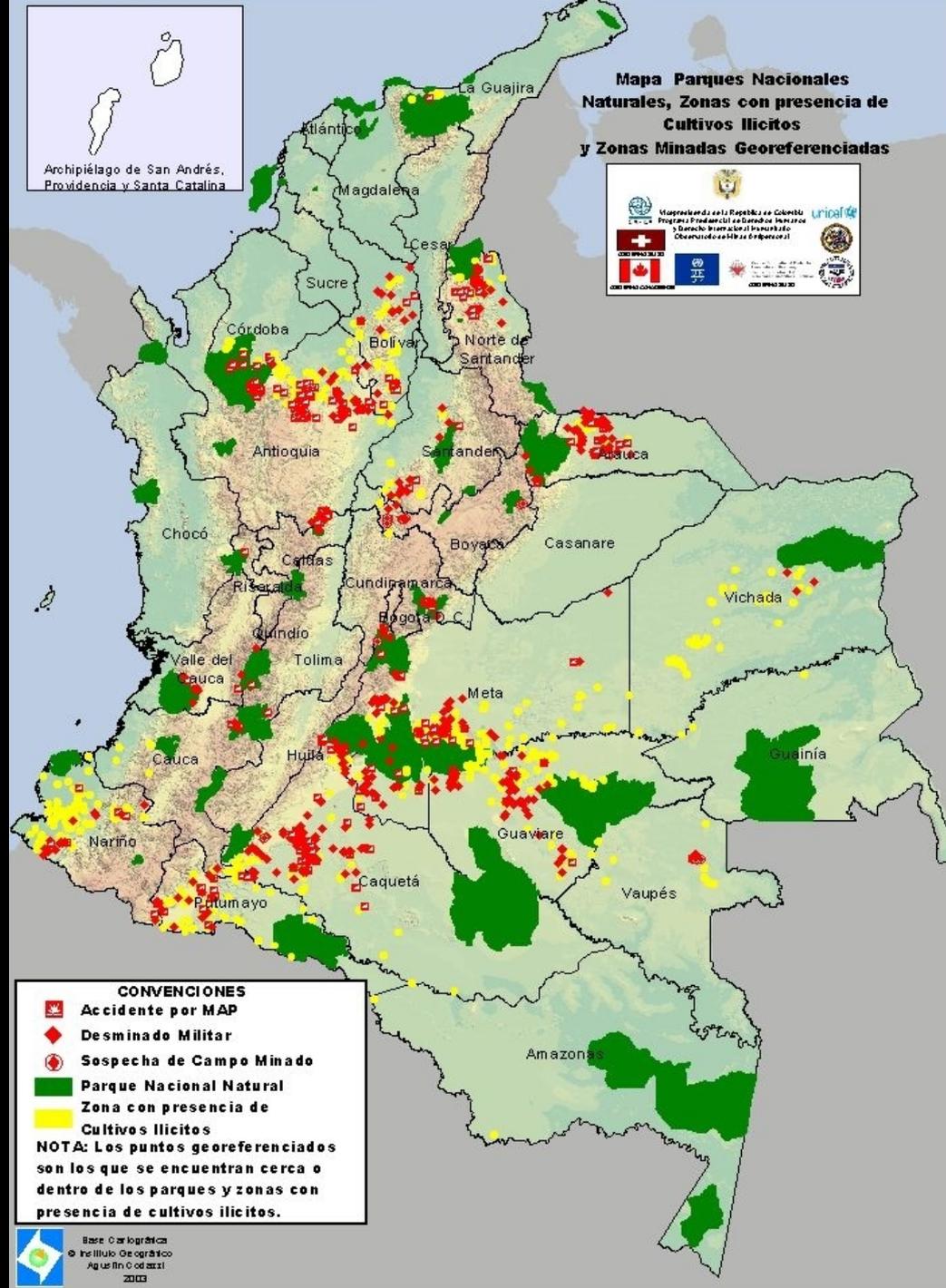
Illicit crops

In 2005 were detected 6.100 hectares of coca in 12 protected areas...

The increase was given in *La Macarena*, *La Paya* and *Paramillo* parks. *Macarena* had 50% of coca crops in whole National Parks System. From 17 protected areas with mined points geo-referenced, eight (8) coincide with illicit crops.



Mapa Parques Nacionales Naturales, Zonas con presencia de Cultivos Ilicitos y Zonas Minadas Georeferenciadas



CONVENCIONES

- Accidente por MAP
- Desminado Militar
- Sospecha de Campo Minado
- Parque Nacional Natural
- Zona con presencia de Cultivos Ilicitos

NOTA: Los puntos georeferenciados son los que se encuentran cerca o dentro de los parques y zonas con presencia de cultivos ilícitos.

La última trincheras de las Farc

Forced displacement

Number of displaced people by conflicts during the last decades up from 17.5 million in 1997 to 25 million people in 2005 (UNHCR, 2006)

In the case of the forced displacement, around **4 million people** they have been displaced in Colombia from 1985 (United Nations).

La última trincherita de las Farc

Land abandonment

Nobody had taste what quantity of hectares have been removed from their owners neither how many can recover to be returned them

A study disclosed in the 2006 by the *Contraloria* points out that in five regions 287.500 displaced families left its lands abandoned: 2,9 million hectares between the 2001 and the 2006

More than numbers...

... **4.8 million hectares** changed of owner for forced displacement between 1995 and 2003 (Codhes).

... **6.8 million hectares** leaved by displaced people (*Accion Social* and the *Comision Nacional de Reparacion y Reconciliacion*).

... **14 million hectares** (*Movimiento de Victimas de Crimenes de Estado*)

Lands taken for paramilitaries, guerrillas or *narcos*.

We don't know how many people really had been displaced or murdered from national parks and surrounding areas for armed conflict actors

The background of the slide is a composite image. On the left, there is an aerial photograph of a forested area with a distinct trench or cleared path. On the right, there is a close-up, high-angle shot of a stack of bullets, showing their brass casings and pointed tips. The overall tone is somber and military-related.

War against... drugs and terrorism?

The potential conflicts over protected areas (and other wild lands non protected yet) unchained by forced displacement and lands abandonment, agricultural border growth (colonisation processes) and territorial disputes to get control over land and people is a wide topic open to investigation

Location	Incompatibility	Opposition organization	Year	Intensity level
Colombia	Govt	FARC (Fuerzas armadas revolucionarias colombianas: Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), ELN (Ejército de liberación nacional: National Liberation Army), EPL (Ejército popular de liberación: People's Liberation Army), M-19 (Movimiento 19 de Abril: 19 April Movement)	1966–79	Minor ¹³⁷
			1980–88	Minor* ¹³⁸
			1989–90	War
			1991	Minor*
			1992–93	War
			1994–97	Minor*
			1998–2002	War
			2003	Minor*
2004-05	War			

From Armed Conflict Dataset Version 4-2006 (UCDP/PRIO) point of view, Colombian conflict intensity had oscillated between Minor and War categories in the last forty years

Name of conflict ¹	Conflict parties ²	Conflict items	Start	Change ³	Int. ⁴
Colombia (AUC)	AUC vs. government	system/ideology, regional predominance, resources	1995	↗	3
Colombia (ELN)*	ELN vs. government	system/ideology, regional predominance, resources	1964	↘	2
Colombia (FARC - ELN)*	FARC vs. ELN	system/ideology, regional predominance, resources	2006	↘	3
Colombia (FARC)	FARC vs. government	system/ideology, regional predominance, resources	1964	•	4
Colombia (various indigenous groups)	various indigenous groups vs. government	system/ideology, resources	2005	↑	3
Colombia - Ecuador	Colombia vs. Ecuador	international power	2005	•	2
Colombia - Venezuela (Monjes islands)*	Colombia vs. Venezuela	territory, resources	1945	•	1
Colombia - Venezuela (system)	Colombia vs. Venezuela	system/ideology, international power	2004	•	2

From Conflict Barometer of the Heidelberg Institute for International Conflict Research (2008) point of view, patterns of change in Colombian conflict depend on the kind of actor

Appendix 1. Armed Conflicts Active in 2008 (*Continued*)

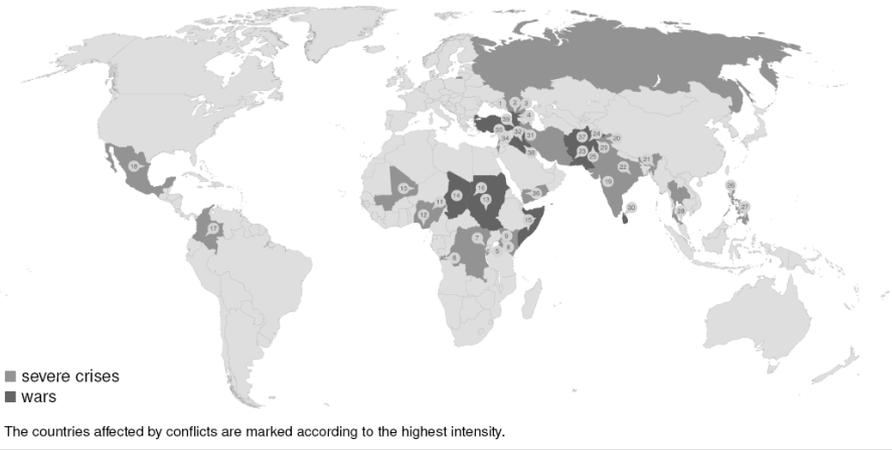
<i>Location</i>	<i>Incompatibility</i>	<i>Opposition organization(s) in 2008</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Intensity in 2008</i>
AMERICAS				
Colombia	Government (1964)	FARC (Fuerzas armadas revolucionarias colombianas: Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), ELN (Ejército de liberación nacional: National Liberation Army)	1964–2008	Minor

Harbom and Wallensteen (2009)

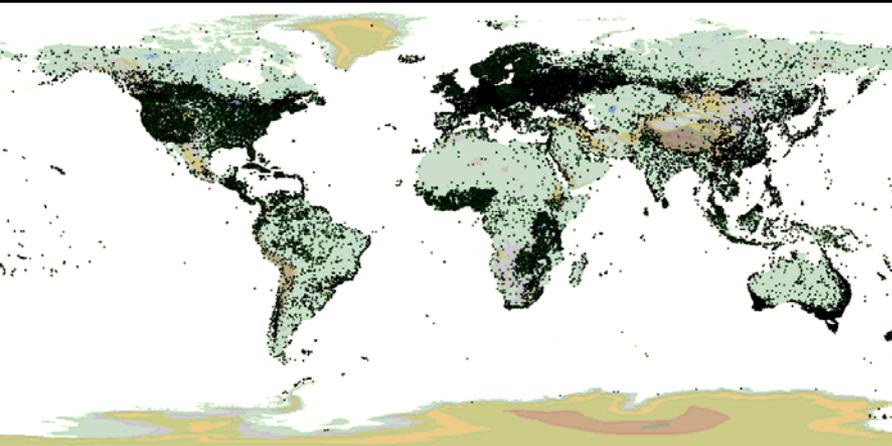
two preliminary questions to discussion:

- 1) Which monitoring strategies we have to know the potential effects of violent conflict on protected areas in relationship with climatic change processes?
- 2) How protected areas can contribute effectively to prevention or resolution of violent conflicts in changing contexts?

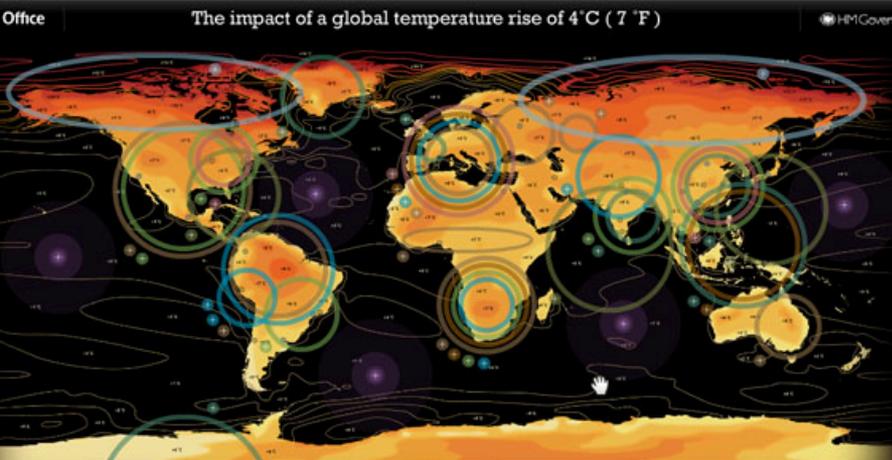
World Map: High-Intensity Violent Conflicts in 2008



Conflict Hot spots



Protected areas Conservation Hot spots



Climate change Hot spots

A possible choice...



May be protected areas could be an opportunity for peace building in regions with local population affected by armed conflict and violence.

Linking local vulnerable populations in conservation strategies, could be an effective way to preventing they become armed to service of death

(a dream? may be....)

**Monitoring cross-scales
(espace/time? How long...)**

***Experience [Erlebnis]* and
keep alive to talk about**

**Methodological distance to
think, write and keep mental
health**

**What about corruption and
impunity?**