

Scoring System for the Assessment of the Relative Ecological Importance of Sites

Criteria	Weighting	Description	Score	Description
Naturalness	15%	Habitats that are natural or with least modification by human activities in the past history will have higher conservation value. Truly natural habitats (i.e. not modified by man) are usually highly valued. However, most areas of the territory have been modified. Generally, those habitats less modified will tend to be rated higher.	0	Build-up or highly degraded areas with little conservation value.
			1	Man-made or intensively modified by human, e.g. agricultural land.
			2	Semi-natural or moderately modified, e.g. disturbed woodland.
			3	Truly natural or relatively free from human modification, e.g. natural woodland.
Habitat diversity	15%	Generally, the greater the number of major habitats, the greater the overall importance of the site as a whole. Major habitat types include woodland, inter-tidal mudflat, mangrove stand, natural stream course, freshwater marsh, etc.	0	Containing no major natural habitats or habitats which are highly degraded.
			1	Containing only one major habitat type.
			2	Containing two to three major habitat types.
			3	Containing four or more major habitat types.
Non-recreatability	10%	Habitats which are difficult to be recreated are valued higher. This evaluates the complexity of the habitat types, the time and effort needed to recreate the ecosystem and the degree of uncertainty in recreating the habitats.	0	Easy to recreate, but recreated habitats would have little conservation value e.g. landscaped areas.
			1	Easy to recreate, e.g. fishponds, abandoned agricultural land.
			2	Possible to recreate but it takes much time and effort, e.g. secondary forests.
			3	Very difficult or impossible to recreate regardless of time and effort, e.g. inter-tidal mudflats, natural woodlands, streams.

Species diversity & richness	30%	The more diverse the species assemblages and communities of a site, the higher is its conservation value.	0	Insignificant diversity (as a reference, 5% of total number of recorded species in Hong Kong of a particular taxa group) for all taxa groups.
			1	Low diversity (5% < diversity 20%) of at least one taxa group.
			2	Moderate diversity (20% < diversity 50%) of at least one taxa group.
			3	High diversity (>50%) of a particular taxa group or moderate diversity of at least three taxa groups.
Species rarity / endemism	30%	The more rare / endemic species the site supports, the higher is its conservation value.	0	Not known to support any population of rare or endemic species.
			1	Support populations of rare species of at least one taxa group.
			2	Support a population of endemic species, or populations of rare species of two to three taxa groups.
			3	Support a population of extremely rare species or rare endemic species, or populations of rare or endemic species of more than three taxa groups.