



IBAT Species Report FAQs

Below is a set of frequently asked questions designed to help users better understand how the IBAT Species Report, Estimated STAR, and the broader IUCN RHINO approach work together to support biodiversity risk screening, local calibration, and nature-positive planning. These FAQs highlight how Estimated STAR provides a global overview of potential impacts and opportunities, how this information can be strengthened through local verification, and how companies can use the RHINO framework to set targets, monitor threat abatement, and track progress toward reducing extinction risk. They are intended to help users understand the role of the Species Report within a wider, evidence-based process for assessing, validating, and monitoring biodiversity impacts and opportunities. The questions below are grouped into the following categories:

- Ground validation
- Baselineing
- RedList data deficiencies
- IFC Performance Standard 6
- IUCN RHINO Approach
- STAR
- IBAT platform

Ground Validation Questions:

- **During your presentations you mentioned that the tool assesses "expected impact", or you said about "potential reduction in extinction risk". I am not an expert, but I understand that these are not actual, real impacts of specific investments, activities of companies at the asset level, but rather estimates of impact?**

Yes, Estimated STAR assesses potential opportunities and impacts. To assess actual impacts requires STAR calibration, target-setting, and monitoring (as part of the RHINO approach), to track progress towards Realised STAR.

- **You mentioned you rely on IUCN Red List species assessments; do you consider how outdated these assessments are when you include this information in the species report?**



Tools like IBAT provide global screening information, not local impact data. That's exactly why IUCN RHINO includes stage [A2 Evaluate](#): companies must verify which species are present and which threats are impacting the site using local surveys, expert consultation, Indigenous knowledge, AoH maps, eDNA, camera traps, remote sensing and other tools.

Once this local data is collected (A2.1 and A2.2), the estimated, potential impacts from IBAT's Estimated Species Report are replaced with real, site-specific impacts, producing a calibrated baseline in A2.3. There will be a calibration module and corresponding report in IBAT available in Q1 2026.

- **This study showed that biodiversity risk screening tools, in finance, including IBAT, fail to meet the need for local project risk screening. Here is the study: <https://forest-journal.com/index.php/JFBR/article/view/biodiversity-risk-screening-tools-esrs> how can businesses consider projects, investments at local levels? Can IBAT help in the process, and if yes, then how, given limitations at local, asset level scale?"**

Local screening is always going to need local data and capacity, but certainly IBAT can help. Two major innovations currently underway will be particularly important: a) downscaling "Area of Habitat" maps for species from the IUCN Red List to 1km², and, based on these, generating a much higher spatial resolution version of Estimated STAR (ie, 25x higher resolution than the previous 5km² version); b) incorporating functionality to support STAR calibration, target-setting, and monitoring (as part of the RHINO approach), which, crucially, shifts the focus of local monitoring from biodiversity parameters per se to tracking progress in local abatement of the specific threats which are driving the local contribution to extinction risk.

Baselining Questions:

- **Can we use Species reports in the future (say 1 year from implementation of mitigation measures) in the same project sites to compare or use as reference for nature positive monitoring?**

To monitor progress towards nature positive outcomes, we recommend using the IUCN [RHINO](#) approach, which involves building from the initial Estimated STAR reports to undertake local calibration, target-setting, and identification of appropriate indicators for local monitoring. As changes to the global distribution and extinction risk of species will be affected by factors outside of a company's control.

IUCN RHINO tracks change using target and realised STAR, which captures the reduction of locally confirmed threats over time. This allows STAR to respond directly to on-the-ground mitigation, restoration, and management actions even when global Red List assessments are not updated as frequently. In IUCN RHINO, the sensitivity of STAR comes from local threat validation and changes in threat scope and severity, not from global reassessments.

- **Amazing to have a metric to define species threats, however, how can a company use this metric to track change overtime? I see the limitations that the RedList is not commonly updated, so how sensitive is this metric to response on the ground? Or is it supposed to define actions and priorities, while other fields surveys of species abundance or pressure indicators demonstrate outcomes?**

The latter is correct: Estimated STAR provides the broad context, which then needs to be calibrated, and used to support target-setting and identification of locally-relevant indicators for monitoring threat abatement and restoration – it is these which are sensitive to response on the ground, while still being informative regarding progress towards global extinction risk reduction.

- **What happens if there is an update to the IUCN species information, does that change your baseline used in STAR?**

The Red List is currently updated two or three times every year, and so yes, these will provide successive "vintages" (i.e. the version of Red List that underlies the STAR version) of Estimated STAR. Once a STAR calibration has been conducted using a particular "vintage" (version) of Estimated STAR, then it is recommended to track progress against the calibrated values.

Red List Data Deficiency Questions:

- **I noticed that one of your case study sites appears to be in Russia. Could you please elaborate on how the company can plan to manage stakeholder engagement and ensure reliable data verification in that context? How reliable is STAR database in such locations? Which organization collects the data and verifies their quality?**

Estimated STAR, derived from the global IUCN Red List, is applicable everywhere. There is spatial variation in its uncertainty, reflected in the Red List DD (Data Deficient) category; we are currently seeking resources for method development to reflect the DD in STAR. Much of the greatest concentrations of DD species are in tropical mountains e.g., PNG, eastern DRC, etc (not in high-latitude countries like Russia). As for local calibration, target-setting, and reporting: while IBAT



supports these processes, it does not (currently) provide any service for verifying them.

- **In areas with sparse data, such as parts of northern Saudi Arabia, the reliability of available information can be a challenge, which increases the uncertainty matrix. I had the opportunity to generate a STAR report, but some concerns were raised by the audience during a session. How confident are the results?**

IFC Performance Standard 6 Questions:

- **While the focus seems to be on nature positive outcomes, it seems like this could be used by developers to do an early critical habitat screening when selecting potential sites. Any thoughts? It doesn't directly review against IFC's criteria of critical habitat triggers, but it could give an indication.**

The same underlying data used to develop Estimated STAR are also used for PS6 screening in IBAT, i.e., the area of habitat of species assessed as CR or EN on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species are used in both methodologies. Data on Key Biodiversity Areas and on Protected Areas are also essential in PS6 screening and are also mobilised through IBAT to support this. IBAT provides a PS6 report specifically for this purpose.

IUCN RHINO Approach Questions:

- **Where do we find the IUCN RHINO direct impact track shown?**

An overview of the Direct Impact track can be found [here](#). Functionality to support this (specifically and initially through Calibrating STAR) will be available in IBAT before end 2025.

- **Will there be an approach for RHINO that would be industry specific especially in terms of project impact (i.e. difference between utility solar, onshore wind, offshore wind, floating solar)?**

Currently, RHINO classifies impacts into three tracks: direct; value chain; and investor (see <https://www.iucnrhino.org/get-started>). If there is demand for further disaggregation within these, this could be explored in the future.

- **Can RHINO be applied to marine areas once marine STAR is available in IBAT?**

Yes. IUCN has several RHINO pilots currently underway for calibrating STAR in marine environments. A marine STAR layer is currently under development and will be available through IBAT in future.



- **What qualifies as a nature-positive outcome for a certain company? Are there associated KPIs that helps us better understand if the target/outcome is being achieved or not?**

Under RHINO, a nature positive outcome for a given company would be documentation of full Realised STAR, based on demonstration abatement of the threats or restoration of area of habitat for the species in question. The KPIs would be defined locally dependent on the threats to the species documented to be relevant through Calibrated STAR.

- **Why has the choice been made to do all these assessments based on reducing the risk of extinction instead of restoration?**

Both threat abatement and restoration are viable contributions towards reducing extinction risk, and hence Realising STAR. However, threat abatement tends to be more urgent, less uncertain, and tends to deliver more immediate impacts, and so for many users, the primary pathways towards nature positive outcomes are through abating threats.

- **Generally, if a business is interested in using the STAR metric in one of their operating sites. What would this require if there is no baseline available? I would imagine a site assessment by different specialists...how long would this generally take. Also, if there is a baseline available, can this be used and how old can this baseline be?**

An Estimated STAR report can be generated for a given operating site automatically through IBAT. Local calibration, target-setting, and identification of locally-relevant indicators for monitoring threat abatement and restoration is a more involved process. Current pilots indicate that a year of collaboration with a relevant conservation organisation is sufficient to deliver these steps. Much current work is under way to explore ways to reduce time needed for the RHINO approach, most importantly by using remotely sensed data.

- **Is the IUCN RHINO approach linked to the SBTN framework? If yes, how?**

SBTN proposes using Estimated STAR to prioritise materiality of sites; but in general, RHINO supports establishment of science-based targets for living nature (biodiversity), SBTi does so for climate, and SBTN does so for non-living nature (land, water, oceans).

- **How could we use STAR data for the measurement of progress towards nature positive for reporting. Could you please speak to a specific example?**

RHINO harnesses STAR data for measurement of progress towards nature positive outcomes through STAR calibration, target-setting, and identification of locally relevant indicators for monitoring threat abatement and restoration. Specific examples already available for pilot sites in Brazil with Anglo-American (<https://www.iucnrhino.org/anglo-american>) and Susano (<https://www.iucnrhino.org/suzano>), and many more pilots are underway.

- **Which specific STAR data could be a baseline and future metric that we could report on?**

Under RHINO, Estimated STAR data provides the starting point for establishment of a baseline, which is then refined through STAR calibration. This then allows target-setting and identification of locally-relevant indicators for monitoring threat abatement and restoration, and thus for tracking progress towards delivery of Realised STAR.

- **When will the RHINO value chain roadmap be completed and made available?**

The next iteration of the value chain roadmap will require a close look at the availability of global land use / crop production data sets (e.g. TESSERA) and some exploratory analyses to identify key commodity production risk areas. There are also people who have already done these analyses (e.g. the update to ENCORE). This would enable us to come up with a timeline and a more precise description of what the value chain toolkit would do.

- **What happened after STAR? Any further monitoring if the conservation interventions are effective, and if not, do you redeploy the analysis?**

RHINO approach supports this whole process: local calibration of STAR, target-setting, and identification of locally relevant indicators for monitoring threat abatement and restoration, to be tracked as site-level threat abatement and restoration actions are deployed.

- **What is the action to be taken if a threatened species is determined to be present after eDNA analysis at a site?**

Local STAR calibration can be supported by many different lines of evidence for the presence of a given Threatened or Near-Threatened species at a site: this can include traditional surveys, expert elicitation, and indigenous & local knowledge, as well as high-tech approaches like camera trapping and eDNA. Once STAR has been calibrated, the next steps in the RHINO process towards delivering nature positive outcomes are target-setting and identification of locally relevant indicators for monitoring threat abatement and restoration.

- **For a company, being able to quantify and demonstrate that site level actions are contributing to nature positive goals at the landscape/national scale is often a priority. How does one 'scale down' / demonstrate that trends at landscape/national level (reduction in extinction risk) are linked to actions at a company's site and not to other interventions outside the company's control? If that is possible at all.**

This operation across scales is the heart of the RHINO approach and is only possible through use of STAR. Estimated STAR is derived from the global IUCN Red List (which provides alignment to national and global goals for extinction risk reduction) plus area of habitat for Threatened/Near-threatened species, which allows estimation of the potential contribution of a given site or operation towards these goals. Local calibration, target-setting, and identification of locally relevant indicators then allows companies to track progress towards the threat abatement and restoration necessary and sufficient to realise their contributions towards the global goal.

- **Can companies / anyone, report their successes back to IBAT? E.g. Could companies report how many fishing nets they removed and IBAT captures this data?**

IBAT does not currently have such functionality.

- **If we look at the NPI 4 universal metrics, will habitat also have an ecosystem type identification / baseline / uplift measures?**

Yes, ecosystem methods (aligned with the NPI ecosystem extent and condition metrics), paralleling STAR (aligned with the NPI extinction risk metric), are under development as part of the RHINO approach.

- **I work on developing reforestation and ecosystem restoration projects, would it make sense to use STAR to assess the potential reduction of extinction in our project sites and determine if our activity is having a positive impact?**

Absolutely – STAR can certainly be used, through the RHINO approach, to demonstrate contributions towards the global goal of extinction risk reduction achieved through restoration.

- **In the shared case study - are we saying that the windfarm itself and access roads etc. did not impact the local habitat at a significant level from ecosystem / land use change?**



The case-study was just a very high-level example of a process, in real world examples there will be far more considerations including access roads and wider impacts.

- **Will there be further development on Target STAR (particularly things like what values might be realistic for this, the timescales that should be considered, etc?)**

Yes, methods for STAR calibration, target-setting, and identification of locally-relevant indicators for monitoring threat abatement and restoration are all currently being refined on the basis of feedback from the pilots underway. Development of further functionality is anticipated in IBAT, with associated training, webinars, etc, as this effort proceeds.

- **How does the IBAT species report relate to an environmental impact assessment - for example a wind farm normally would require these and a biodiversity specialist study?**

The IBAT Species report compliments an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), it can be used for an early desktop screening, and the calibration module can combine site level data from an EIA with IUCN Red list data to align with Global targets.

- **How well does this tool work where you might have a complex value chain or may not know where every supplier is in a country or have thousands of smallholder suppliers?**

The idea behind the value chain toolkit is not necessarily that you'd be able to work your way through a complex value chain, but that you'd be able to formulate questions for your suppliers about whether they are sourcing from an area of potentially high contributions to species extinction risk. The answer to these questions, provided by the supplier, would enable you to say to the supplier either a) if you are sourcing from an area of potentially high contributions to species extinction risk, what are you doing or what do you propose to do about the risks? or b) can you tell us why you do not have the information about your sources, and if your answer is unsatisfactory, why should we continue buying from you?

STAR Questions:

- **Is it possible that STAR-r values would be low in highly intact ecosystems but also in highly degraded areas that both would have limited restoration potential?**



Yes, STAR restoration scores may be low in both cases, but the STAR-t values would likely differ.

- **What data layers are used for the threats categories?**

The Red List categories are applied by Red List assessors following a standard set of guidelines <https://www.iucnredlist.org/resources/categories-and-criteria>. Red List assessors use a wide range of different data sources to assess species extinction risk against the IUCN Red List categories and criteria.

- **How does STAR deal with the different assessments (global, regional) and eventually the national assessments?**

STAR uses global Red List assessments from the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. This is necessary to make the metric globally scalable and comparable. It is possible in theory to produce a version of STAR using national or regional Red List assessments, but this is currently beyond the scope of IBAT.

- **Does STAR use the global proportion of the species' population or its habitat?**

STAR uses the global Area of Habitat (AoH) as a proxy for the global population. This is because species global populations are typically unknown. There is an assumption that species populations are uniformly distributed within their AoH.

- **What landcover data are you using to refine the IUCN species ranges, and how frequently is this updated?**

The current version of STAR uses the Copernicus Land Cover 2019 (raster 100 m), global, yearly – version 3, with a crosswalk to the IUCN Habitat Classification Scheme. This land cover product is nominally updated annually although there has been a delay in getting the last few years of data published. We are expecting an update in early 2026 that we will incorporate into the next STAR version.

- **How often do you plan to update the STAR layer?**

We plan to update the STAR layer annually.

- **What are the confidence percentage of data coming out of these reports?**

We follow the precautionary principle and so commission errors (where we erroneously estimate a species to be present) are more likely than omission



errors (where we erroneously estimate a species to be absent). The IBAT Estimated Species Report is intended as an early screening tool, to be followed by calibration to confirm the presence of species and the intensity of threats at the location.

- **How frequently are the species data collected in the field and to which database are these data submitted?**

This is up to the user. IBAT does not collect or collate field data. However, there is some guidance on monitoring in the IUCN RHINO Technical Source Document, available at <https://www.iucnrhino.org/resources>. IBAT will soon launch a species calibration module where users can generate a Calibrated Species Report based on local knowledge and data.

- **Does the STAR include species that have not yet been assessed by the Red List?**

STAR only includes species that are assessed as globally threatened or near-threatened on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. The current version includes mammals, birds, amphibians, and reptiles.

- **Is it possible to weight the STAR score, by adding different future climate scenarios for a region?**

STAR doesn't currently account explicitly account for climate change scenarios, although climate change is included as a threat in the report, which is based on IUCN Red List assessments.

- **Which habitat suitability data and ecosystem health database is used to create that habitat maps?**

The current version of STAR uses the Copernicus Land Cover 2019 (raster 100 m), global, yearly – version 3, with a crosswalk to the IUCN Habitat Classification Scheme.

- **And am I right, that the barrier effect is not counted in this model? Like we saw on a slide that VU species habitat was divided by a project area, so the minor part could be unsuitable for a species but it missed it in assessment.**

STAR does not currently account for edge effects.



- **How does STAR deal with migratory species that will only be present at certain seasons, or may be excluded by dams etc.**

STAR doesn't currently make any special adjustments for migratory species, although this is an area of active development.

- **What would be the caveats of using this for evaluating the potential of protected areas in reducing extinction risk?**

STAR can be used to assess the threat abatement potential of protected areas in the same way as for any other site.

- **Are there plans to add plants to STAR ?**

There are plans to add trees to STAR in 2027.

- **Are there any plans where a "confirmed" presence would increase the weight of the occurrence of a given species?**

In the forthcoming Calibrated Species report, it will be possible to record species as "confirmed present" or "unconfirmed". It will then be possible to see the STAR score for confirmed vs unconfirmed species. Conversely, estimated species recorded as absent will be removed from the report.

- **Is the threat abatement layer the inverse of the restoration potential?**

The STAR restoration layer is not inverse – but complementary to – the STAR threat abatement layer. The STAR restoration component applies a similar logic to the STAR threat abatement component, but for habitat that has been lost and is potentially restorable (that is, restorable AOH). For a particular species at a particular location, the STAR restoration (STAR-R) score reflects the proportion that restorable habitat at the location represents of the global area of remaining habitat for that species. Importantly, a multiplier is applied to STAR-R scores to reflect the slower and lower success rate in delivering benefits to species from restored habitat compared with conserved existing habitat. More detailed explanations of STAR-T and STAR-R can be found here: [IBAT | Species Threat Abatement and Restoration](#)



- **Depending on the level in the food chain, the status of a species and the threats that weigh on that same species, will it be possible to obtain the status of other species linked to it (prey, predators, symbiotic organisms)?**

STAR does not currently account for food webs or trophic cascades.

- **For lesser-studied groups such as freshwater fish in Southeast Asia, many species names listed in the IUCN Red List are outdated, and several taxa have since been transferred to different genera. How does IBAT handle these nomenclatural changes? Should users manually update the species names? If so, what are the recommended steps?**

STAR uses the species taxonomy from the IUCN Red List. If the taxonomy is outdated, then the best course of action would be to contact the relevant Red List Authority (e.g. the Freshwater Fish Specialist Group).

IBAT Questions:

- **When is the calibrated STAR module being released by IBAT?**

It will be available in Q1 2026

- **Will IBAT/IUCN provide guidelines to recalibrate the STAR metric at site level, including quantification of pressures (artificialization, collisions, IAS, etc.)**

Yes, there will be additional supporting materials developed to support this process.

- **Can STAR metrics be utilized for Site-prioritization?**

Yes, this is how the Disclosure Preparation Report works by scoring the biodiversity significance of different sites across a portfolio and ranking them by priority.

- **Is there an initiative to update the PAs database to have full coverage in countries such as India? Many companies in India will be utilizing the IBAT tool but unless the total number of PAs is incorporated in the database, the full extent of risk is not reflected.**



India fully restricts their protected and conserved area data. The Protected Planet Team have been working with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) of India for some time on an update of their nationally designated protected and conserved area data. The update is quite complicated, and because of this is taking some time but they are making good progress.

- **What are the differences between the new Species reports and the old STAR reports?**

The new species Reports include:

- The individual score contributions of each species
- IUCN Threat classification scheme level 3 data where available
- Upgraded narrative text, graphs and new metrics such as percentiles for improved interpretation
- Reptile species are included
- 1km resolution
- Text from the Red list

A full overview of the new Species report is available here: [IBAT | IBAT launches Species report with updated richer insights](#)

- **Is it possible to upload a SHP or KMZ file in IBAT?**

Yes, you can upload a shapefile, KMZ, KML or an excel of coordinates.

- **What would be the threshold to be considered sensitive according to the star metric?**

In IBAT we use the median score as the threshold for sensitivity

- **In the context of the A1 step, do users need to manually add each asset location?**

Yes, but you can upload up to 3000 projects into IBAT simultaneously via shapefile, KMZ, KML or an excel of coordinates

- **Is it possible to download the Raw STAR layer?**

Yes the raw layer is available, but it does not include the full matrix of score contributions behind each cell



- **Can you define a specific area of influence (ex. 5km radius beyond the site area?)**

Yes, you can set a buffer of your choice

- **What would be needed to gather shapefiles for each species identified in the IBAT report from IUCN and align them with our study area?**

You can create a GIS download of Red List data through IBAT to gather shapefiles of species overlapping your site

- **How does the report data differ from the Species report and the Proximity report in regard to the IUCN Red List?**

The proximity Report Includes all species with ranges overlapping a user defined buffer, the Species Report only includes species with AOH (Area of Habitat) overlaps, and only includes threatened or near threatened mammals, amphibians, birds and reptiles.

- **Is the species report included in the disclosure report?**

No, these reports are separate but work well together in complement. The disclosure preparation report is used for high level portfolio screening and the species report for more site-specific insights

- **Does the new Disclosure report allow us to choose the buffer, or it is still set?**

You can choose a 5,10,20 or 50km buffer

- **Hello, I feel that Flora species are not well represented in the platform. Is there any plan to improve that?**

Whilst flora species are not yet in STAR, they will be coming, and plants are included in other IBAT reports and downloads.

- **Is there any training programme available by IBAT?**

Yes, we offer free training to all users, please get in contact at ibat@ibat-alliance.org



- **Are there any plans to integrate GBIF data to IBAT? How should one treat the internal bias of citizen science records, where species that are easy to identify are recorded more often?**

There are no current plans to integrate GBIF data to IBAT.

- **Does the report data included in the Species report download include all IUCN Red List species within the specified buffer distance or only select categories?**

The Species Report only includes species with AoH overlaps, and only includes threatened or near threatened mammals, amphibians, birds and reptiles.

- **It is possible to compare sites with different areas of influence (buffers)?**

Yes, you can choose different buffers in different IBAT reports and STAR is comparable across sites of different sizes.

- **I have several polygons in some project sites; would it be possible to use centroids?**

In this case, it would be more useful to use different polygons, or perhaps a larger buffer. You could treat them as separate sites or combine them into a larger polygon.

Other Questions:

- **Is there a list of potential funders who want to invest in nature positive tasks? We are looking for funding to do ecological impact assessments alongside health care efforts that will be used at scale - I am worried about the impact should this not be considered but we have funding only to do this in one of 3 trial sites. Does this fall into the capacity of STAR?**

This does not fall into the capacity of STAR or IBAT.

- **Does this tool specifically include NatureServe G1 and G2 species within the US?**

The STAR metric is based exclusively on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, to ensure a globally consistent standard. However, most, if not all, of the G1 and G2 listed amphibians, birds, mammals and reptiles will be incorporated



into STAR because they are most likely also in a threatened category on the IUCN Red List. The NatureServe data would certainly have been used for some of the IUCN listings, especially amphibians and reptiles where they were directly involved.

- **Will this replace use of BII?**

BII is used to tell you how much of how much nature is left in a specific area – how intact is it?

STAR is an action-oriented tool that supports you in where and how you can best reduce species extinction risk.

The **IBAT Alliance** is a collaboration between four of the world's largest and most influential conservation organizations: BirdLife International, Conservation International, the International Union of Conservation for Nature (IUCN), and the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC). Founded in 2008, we developed the IBAT tool which provides commercial access to the most globally authoritative biodiversity datasets – the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™, the World Database on Protected and Conserved Areas (WDPCA) and the World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas (WDKBA) – to support positive action for nature through the IBAT platform, a web-based mapping and early-risk screening tool. It also supports organizations with related disclosures. www.ibat-alliance.org ibat@ibat-alliance.org