



Belarus - Belovezhskaya Pushcha

Estonia - Osmussaar

Czech Republic - Krkonoše

Slovakia - Pastiersko

Romania - Muntii Bucegi

Slovenia - Prevojske Gmajne

# Important Plant Areas

## What are Important Plant Areas (IPAs)?

IPAs are the most important places in the world for wild plant diversity, that can be protected and managed as specific sites. To ensure the conservation of all the world's most important plant areas the IPA programme aims to identify and protect a network of the best sites for plant conservation, identified using globally consistent criteria. The criteria include rarity and threat: endemism, species richness and threatened habitats.

## The IPA Programme contributes to:

- Fulfilling target 5 of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation: "Protection of 50% of the most important areas for plant diversity assured by 2010"
- Reducing significantly the loss of biodiversity by 2010 - a target of the World Summit on Sustainable Development
- Implementing the EU Natura 2000 Network, the Bern Convention and Emerald Network, the Ramsar Convention, PEBLDS and PEEN

## The Project

In May 2005 a three year project on producing IPA inventories in seven central and eastern European countries was successfully concluded. The countries involved were: Belarus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia.

796 IPAs covering an area of 14,739,174 hectares were identified.



This project was carried out with the support of the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality through the PIN-MATRA funds of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.

At the same time IPAs were identified in south east Europe (funded by REC and the Ministry of Science and Environmental Protection of Serbia). IPA projects are also being developed in Russia and the CIS region through the IUCN Office for Russia and CIS.



## Threats to IPAs in central and eastern Europe:

- 44% by poor forestry practices
- 38% by unsustainable tourist development
- 29% by agricultural intensification
- 27% by land abandonment
- 25% by development (transport, urban, industry)
- 21% by poor water management systems
- 21% by habitat fragmentation
- 17% by invasive plant species
- 15% by eutrophication

21% of IPAs have absolutely no legal protection.

## Plantlife International's key recommendations for IPAs:

- IPAs should be recognised as priority sites in local, national and regional conservation policies and action and there should be a special emphasis on threatened IPAs.
- Poor forestry management, and the loss of wild plant diversity associated with intense agriculture and land abandonment must be addressed.
- Development (especially tourism and recreation, urban and transport) at IPAs should not contradict biodiversity conservation aims.
- IPAs must be integrated in monitoring frameworks and adequate funds must be provided.

For a complete list of the top 10 recommendations for protecting IPAs, and more project results please see the full report at: <http://www.plantlife.org.uk/IPAREport.htm>



Serbia - Deliblatska Pescara

Slovakia - High Tatras

Montenegro - Bijeli Nerini

*Primula minima*

Bulgaria - *Paeonia peregrina*

Russia - forest steppe in Siberia



Plantlife International is an NGO dedicated to the conservation of wild plants in their natural habitats.

Contact: 14 Rolleston Street, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 1DX, United Kingdom  
[www.plantlife.org.uk](http://www.plantlife.org.uk), email: [enquiries@plantlife.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@plantlife.org.uk)



Planta Europa is the Network of independent organisations, non-governmental and governmental, working together to conserve European wild plants and fungi. The Planta Europa Network comprises 60 member organisations from 34 pan-European countries.

Contact: 14 Rolleston Street, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 1DX, United Kingdom  
[www.plantaeuropa.org](http://www.plantaeuropa.org), email: [plantaeuropa@plantlife.org.uk](mailto:plantaeuropa@plantlife.org.uk)