

Repubblica di Albania, Republika Shqipërisë



⊗EU

Ratification/Participation: ✓CBD ✓PEBLDS ✓Bern C. ✓Ramsar C. ✓CITES ✓CMS ⊗Landscape C. ✓Aarhus C. ⊗Civil Liability C. ⊗C. on the Protection of Environment through Criminal Law

1. Overview of biodiversity

Status and trends

Although a low number of species has become extinct during this past century, the rate of loss of Albania's biodiversity during the last 50 years is believed to be increasingly high.

- Two species of plants and four species of mammals have become extinct
- 17 bird species no longer nest in the country's territory

The number of rare and endangered species of plants and animals is high and expected to increase. The number of vertebrate species included in the Albanian Red Book is around 273 species, or 36% of the vertebrates of the country. During the last 30 years, approximately 122 species of vertebrates (27 mammals, 89 birds, and 6 fishes) and four species of plants have lost more than 50% of their population.

Main threats to biodiversity

- Uncontrolled deforestation
- Overgrazing in mountainous areas and other sources of erosion
- Uncontrolled land-use including the rapid urbanization of scarce productive arable land
- Illegal activities (hunting and fishing)
- Degradation of coastal and freshwater resources

These factors are the main long-term concerns for natural resource management in Albania. In the massive immigration from less developed regions to more developed ones (from rural to urban areas), the biological and landscape diversity have become victims of this sudden and uncontrolled development. Construction and development of private lands have led to violations of official land-use plans.

2. Progress in nature conservation

✓ There is a Law on Biodiversity protection (approved in 2006) and a Law on Protected Areas (approved in 2002).

✓ NBSAP was approved in 2000.

✓ Regular review of implementation is mandatory (every 5 years) but has never been done.

⊗ Interministerial mechanisms (The National Council for Nature and Biodiversity) were used to review implementation in the beginning but this has not happened since 2002.

- No estimation about the percentage of the NBSAP has been implemented.
- Since there is no information about implementation it is hard to say what shortcomings are.

10% of national terrestrial area is protected.

0% of national marine area is protected.

⊗ There is no National Forest Programme according to the MCPFE Approach. Nor are there any national programs for the forests in Albania. Some efforts have been made in cooperation with FAO but no finalizing has been done in this direction.

⊗ All high nature value areas in agricultural ecosystems in the country have not been identified.

⊗ Only few of these are under management (mostly areas included in the national network of protected areas).

⊗ No national ecological network as part of PEEN has been identified but there was a study made in cooperation with ECNC in this regard for the indicative map of PEEN in the SEE countries, including Albania.

⊗ All core areas of the national ecological network are not adequately conserved.

⊗ The national ecological network does not give guidance to all major national land use and planning policies; and to the operations of relevant economic and financial sectors.

⊗ The pan-European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species is not implemented. In 2007 the IAS action plan was elaborated.

⊗ Very few examples are present of partnerships established with the finance and business sectors to increase investments in biodiversity activities.

⊗ No National Communication, Education and Public Awareness action plan, in line with the CBD's Global Initiative on CEPA, is implemented.

From the legal point of view there are efforts in protecting habitats and species but little has been made on the ground. The legislation has been improved during the last 10 years, also in the approximation process of Albania with the EU (based on the European Directives). The establishment of the Ministry of Environment (MoE) for the first time in September 2000 was a sign of a clear political willingness to see environment issues as a priority, including nature conservation. Until now this institution has increased its human capacities and has made some efforts in protecting biodiversity losses, but very few achievements can be counted. The increase of the surface of protected areas is the most positive achievement of the work of the MoE, arriving until now to 10.43% of the national territory. On the other hand, the management and protection of these areas is most of the time inexistent or inadequate. From a legal point of view (including regulation and licensing process) it is very developed, but in reality no prevention efforts are made. In the last 10 years many projects have been implemented or are under implementation that are related mostly to nature conservation such as the Lake Ohrid Conservation Project, MedWet Coast, Lake Prespa Integrated Management, Lake Shkodra Integrated Management, the Forestry project, the Nature Resources Development Project, the Wetland inventory, etc.

3. Involvement of civil society in nature conservation

10–100 NGOs dealing with nature conservation in Albania.

5–25 NGOs dealing with national level policy forming in biodiversity field.

100< NGOs dealing with environmental education and awareness-raising.

10-100 NGOs carrying out nature conservation projects on the field.

Level of environmental awareness of the population is moderate.

4. Socio-economic baseline data

Human Development Index, ranking (1st best) 69 of 179 countries, is 0.801 where 1.0 is the best.

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