

Workshop 1
Poster presentation
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Introduction to the Pannonian habitats and flora and the IPA program in Hungary

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The Pannonian Biographical Region is a discrete unit in Europe due to its climatic characteristics and unique vegetation. It is situated right on the conjunction of two main vegetation zones, the zone of broadleaved forests and the zone of forest-steppes. Under the mixture of continental and pontic-sub-mediterranean climatic and floristic effects unique assemblages of vegetation have developed.

The most characteristic vegetation types of the area are:

1. Forest steppe vegetation on sand (inland sand dunes, pannonian steppic grasslands on sand, juniper-poplar forests).
2. Limestone and dolomite vegetation (rock-grasslands, rocky slopes, thermophilous pubescent oak (*Quercus pubescens*) – manna ash (*Fraxinus ornus*) woods with *Cotinus coggygria*)
3. Pannonian alkali vegetation (salt lakes, *Artemisia*-steppes, salt marshes, tall-forb saline meadows)
4. Pannonian sessile oak (*Quercus petraea*) – turkey oak (*Quercus cerris*) forests
5. Pannonian loess vegetation (loess steppes, tartar maple (*Acer tataricum*) steppe oak woods) is considered as a westernmost continuation of the never-ending steppes of Ukraine and South-Russia.
6. Complementing the typical pannonian vegetation, there are extent beach forests on the higher parts of the mountain ranges. The alluvial mixed forests and riparian forests also cover big areas along the rivers and stream mostly in the plains and in the wider valleys of the hilly regions. There are also remarking examples of rich fens along the plains of the bigger rivers.

The Carpathian basin thanks to its unique vegetation holds 50 endemic species (2%) (plus 64 pontian-pannonian and 30 pannonian-balkanian species) and nearly a hundred of plant species with European or global conservation interest. There are 730 plant species (including mosses and pterophytes) listed in the National Red Data Book as extinct and threatened species.

This data show that there is no successful European conservation project without Hungary. The IPA project would give a good opportunity for both Hungary and the European plant conservation community to work together in saving the diversity of plant life. Although there is no official IPA program to date in Hungary, there is a set purpose in this issue, so the list below reflexes to the main connections to this process.

- The milestones of IPA projects to date in Hungary (CEE workshop November 2003, Expert meeting January 2004, web-page, presentation on national botanical conference, preliminary list of potential IPA species)
- The expected advantages of joining the IPA program for Hungary
- The main challenges of the implementation of the IPA program in Hungary
- Habitat classification systems already applied in Hungary
- Ongoing projects in Hungary in relation of flora and vegetation surveillance and plant conservation