

Important Plant Areas (IPAs) and the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)

Why plants matter

Plants are the foundation of all terrestrial life. They sustain ecosystems, regulate climate, support food security, provide medicines and underpin human wellbeing. Yet they remain 'out of sight' and underrepresented in many conservation policies and investment decisions.

At this CoP where progress towards meeting the 2030 goals is being reviewed and assessed, it is vital we see better integration of plant diversity into national plans and policies to deliver more effective action on the ground.

Why Important Plant Areas

Important Plant Areas (IPAs) are natural or semi-natural sites of global, regional and national significance, identified as hotspots of plant diversity.

IPAs offer a practical, evidence-based framework for plant conservation that safeguards threatened species, supports livelihoods and ecosystem resilience, and helps address climate change, land degradation and biodiversity loss.



Armenia at the Heart of a Global Biodiversity Hotspot: Celebrating 10 years of IPAs

The Caucasus is one of the world's richest and most distinctive botanical regions:

- **Home to over 3,500 plant species**, including unique alpine endemics, ancient fruit cultivars such as wild pears, medicinal and ornamental plants, an invaluable reservoir of biodiversity and genetic resources.
- **32 IPA sites** were identified in Armenia in 2016
- IPAs cover more than **384,200 ha** representing almost 13% of the country's land
- These sites support **198 priority plant species** including:
 - 66 endemic and 74 near-endemic
 - 63 globally threatened,
 - 24 socio-economically useful species,
 - **12 species of ancient wild pears.**

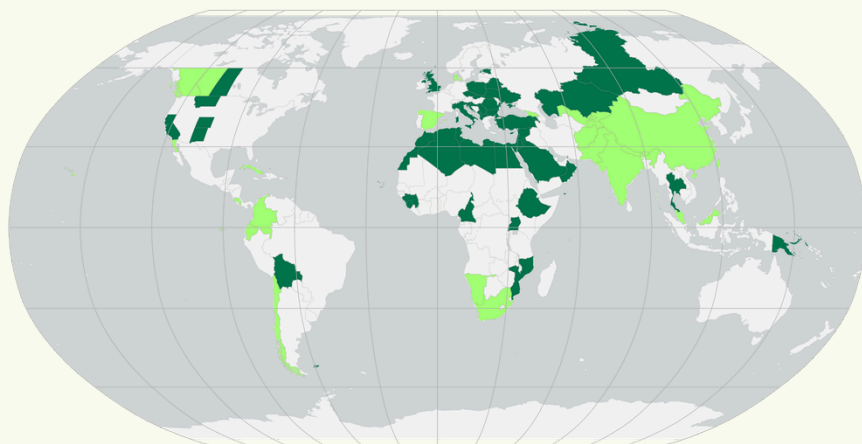
Ten years on, Armenia's IPA network is a practical example of how plant-focused conservation can strengthen protected area planning, support community and expert partnerships, inform restoration and safeguard threatened species and habitats.

Around the world

Since Plantlife International pioneered the IPA Programme in 2001:

- More than 3,000 IPA sites have been identified or pre-identified.
- Nearly 50 countries are using the IPA approach to guide conservation action.
- IPAs are helping safeguard threatened species, unique habitats and vital ecosystem services.

■ IPAs identified and documented
■ IPA programme initiated but sites not fully documented



Countries have identified or pre-identified IPAs since 2001. These sites support rare and threatened plant species, outstanding botanical diversity, and vulnerable habitats.

Why IPAs matter for the GBF

Delivering Target 3 is about quality as well as quantity. Conserving 30% of land and seas by 2030 will only deliver for nature if protected and conserved areas include places of particular importance for biodiversity, ecosystem functions and services.

IPAs help ensure that protected and conserved areas include the world's most irreplaceable plant diversity, providing a science-based approach for achieving ambitious conservation targets.



Strategic Prioritisation

IPAs identify the most important sites for threatened plants and habitats, ensuring conservation efforts are focused where they will have the greatest impact.

Supporting OECMs

Many IPAs occur within working landscapes, community-managed lands and traditional agricultural systems, so that expansion of Protected Areas (PAs), or Other Effective Area-based Conservation Measures (OECMs) covers critical botanical hotspots, avoiding "paper parks", empty land or random sites becoming isolated habitat patches.

Ecological Connectivity & Climate Resilience

IPAs safeguard critical habitats, ecological corridors and climate refugia that enable species adaptation, seed dispersal and long-term ecosystem resilience.

Nature, People & Livelihoods

Using a bottom-up and inclusive approach, from IPA identification to conservation action, IPAs help countries and local communities identify, sustain and conserve ecosystem services, genetic resources, cultural heritage and nature-based solutions that communities depend upon.

Help shape a future where plant conservation drives biodiversity recovery

Website: www.plantlife.org.uk/protecting-plants-fungi/important-plant-areas

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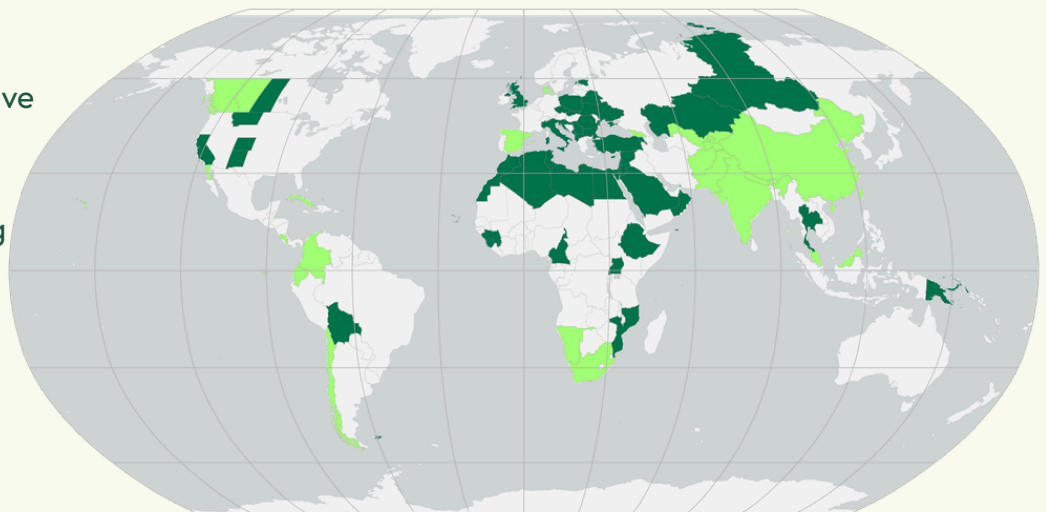
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