



Strengthening Human Resources, Legal Frameworks, and Institutional Capacities to Implement the Nagoya Protocol (UNDP-GEF Global ABS Project)

## BIODIVERSITY IN ALBANIA

Albania is well known for its high diversity of ecosystems and habitats, which comprise maritime ecosystems, coastal zones, lakes, rivers, evergreen and broadleaf bushes, broadleaf forests, pine forests, alpine and sub-alpine pastures and meadows, and high mountain ecosystems. Its rich network of rivers, lakes, wetlands, groundwater, and the Mediterranean Sea are important routes for migratory species of wild fauna. The lakes and rivers contribute significantly to the country's biological and landscape diversity.

These ecosystems are home to many biodiverse species which are under constant threat from climate change, infrastructure development, unsustainable land use practices, urbanization, tourism, deforestation, hunting, fishing, soil erosion, petroleum and mining exploitation, invasive alien species, and pollution.

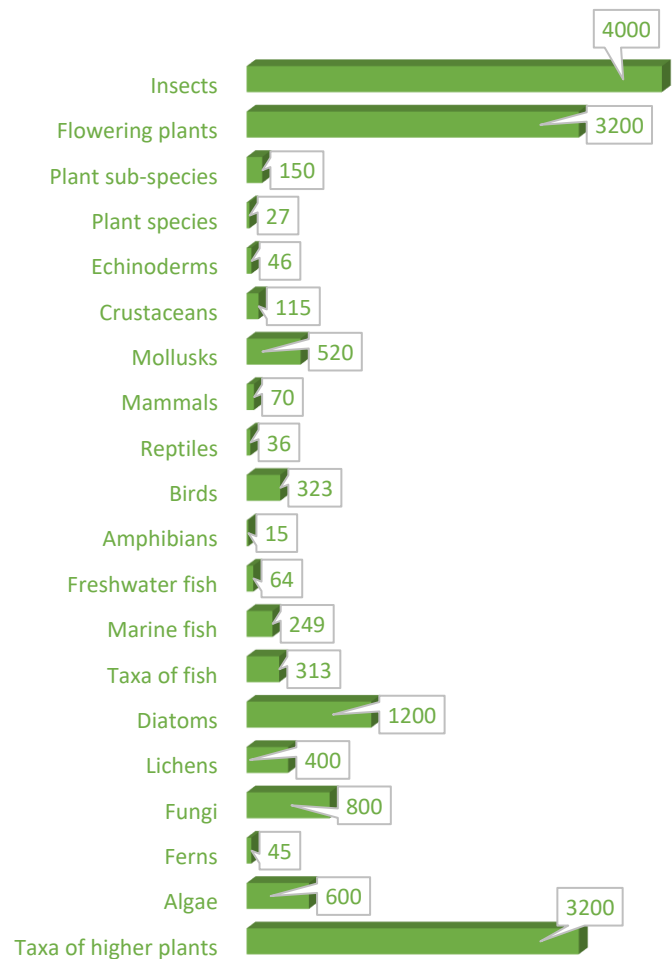
## NAGOYA PROTOCOL AND ABS IMPLEMENTATION

Albania is a Party to the Nagoya Protocol since its accession in October 2014, and has provisions for access to genetic resources in its Biodiversity Protection Act 2006. The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2012-2020, was approved in January 2016. While it emphasizes the importance of Access to genetic resources and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) to the country, there are currently no measures to monitor genetic resources and related user-compliance.

The agricultural sector, which has most of the limited research capacities, is a key productive sector in the country. Biotrade of medicinal and aromatic plants also presents a huge potential, with some 30 intermediary exporting companies operating within the country and a few larger companies performing some value addition activities such as the extraction of essential oils.

However, community structures to sustain these efforts are limited. Shortage of infrastructure, including lack of access road to rural and mountainous areas, is undeniably affecting the preservation of rare genepools and constraining novel business opportunities that may arise from it.

## SPECIES IN ALBANIA



ABS is Genetic Resources for Sustainable Development



In partnership with





## CURRENT UNDP-GEF ABS PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The UNDP-GEF Global ABS Project in Albania was launched through a national inception workshop held in December 2017 and other bilateral meetings held with key stakeholders. Rollout of project activities began in early 2018 and an Inter-Ministerial Working Group on ABS has been established to oversee the development and validation of ABS legal instruments in the country.

In consultation with stakeholders, the project is addressing priority issues identified during the inception workshop, such as awareness-raising and advocacy for mutual support for ABS, strengthening agrobiodiversity efforts in the context of ABS, including options for farmers' rights, and developing inventories of crop wild relatives and local varieties of crops and animal breeds as an important preliminary assessment of the national genetic heritage in Albania.

This is in addition to establishing an inclusive legal framework, strengthening coordination, integrating ABS regulation across sectors, monitoring legal export of endemic species through enhanced border control, and clarifying the roles of relevant government and non-government agencies and institutions in ABS regulation.

## KEY BIODIVERSITY FEATURES OF ALBANIA

- 36% forest cover
- 15% pastureland
- 25% coastal area
- 16,61% protected area
- 30% of Europe's flora
- 42% of Europe's fauna
- 247 natural lakes of different types and dimensions
- 2 biogeographical regions: Mediterranean and Alpine
- 73 vertebrate and 18 invertebrate threatened species

## RECENT BIODIVERSITY PROJECTS IN ALBANIA

Project	Funder	Total budget (US\$)
Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity at Lakes Prespa, Ohrid and Shkoder (Skadar)	German Development Corporation (GIZ)	2,160,000
Development of the Prespa Transboundary Biosphere Reserve	German Development Bank (KfW) Government of Albania	3,840,480 298,080
Innovative Approaches to Protected Areas Management	Italian Cooperation and the IUCN	2,376,000
Natura 2000 Network	Italian Cooperation	4,752,000

## IN-COUNTRY PROJECT PARTNER

Ministry of Tourism and Environment

## REFERENCES

**CBD.** Albania – Country Profile. Available at: <https://www.cbd.int/countries/profile/default.shtml?country=al#facts> Accessed on 15 April 2018.

**Global ABS Project.** Approved Project Proposal, Unpublished.

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