



Status of Forest Biodiversity in the Western Balkans

Country/territory: Kosovo

13th – 15th of November,
Skopje, North Macedonia

How forest biodiversity has been addressed by forest policy in your country/territory?

- Forestry Development Strategy (FDS) 2021-2030, addresses issues related to biodiversity.
- Studies have shown that 13 endemic species of plants and 200 species that grow in the Balkan region are present in Kosovo. About 24 species are threatened by human activities. There are also 46 mammal species of regional and global importance. As a result of the destruction of wetlands and the pollution and degradation of rivers, some species of water birds have already been lost.
- Most of the forest area in Kosovo consists of mixed forest stands (21% of the forest area consists of 4-5 different types of wood). About 85% of forests regenerate vegetatively through stump shoots. About 0.5% is regenerated through seeds and only 1% of forests are classified as virgin (unexplored) forests. In South-Eastern Europe, the average figure of forests untouched by man is 6%. The afforestation rate is also significantly lower than in neighboring countries at 1%.
- Non-indigenous species, which pose a threat to the natural forests of Kosovo, cover 0.6% of the forests. The main species is acacia originating from the southeast of the USA, which was first brought to Europe, then to Kosovo, in order to control erosion. Acacia covers 2,400 ha and together with Larch and Pseudocuga, the total area with non-native species is about 3,200 ha.

Does forest biodiversity is part of the national forest inventory and forest management planning process?

- Yes, forest biodiversity is indeed considered in the national forest inventory and forest management planning process in Kosovo, but it faces challenges and limitations. The Kosovo Forest Agency (KFA) is responsible for forest management, and it incorporates biodiversity aspects into its planning to some extent, especially through efforts to inventory and monitor forest resources.
- The National Forest Inventory (NFI) in Kosovo gathers data on forest species composition, structure, and distribution, which indirectly supports biodiversity conservation by providing information about various forest habitats and their condition. However, direct biodiversity metrics—such as specific species counts, genetic diversity, and ecosystem health indicators—are often less detailed or not included in typical inventories due to resource constraints.
- In forest management planning, biodiversity considerations focus primarily on sustainable forest management (SFM) principles, which aim to balance economic, ecological, and social functions of forests. The plans include provisions for maintaining forest cover, promoting native species, and preventing practices like illegal logging.

Describe which data has been collected by National Forest Inventory or FMP process as part of biodiversity monitoring:

The NFI provides a systematic approach to monitor forest health, extent, and composition on a national scale, while FMPs offer detailed information at a local or management-unit level. The types of data collected for biodiversity monitoring purposes generally include:

Forest Structure and Composition

- Tree species
- Tree age and size
- Tree density
- Forest types and habitats

Deadwood and Habitat Features

- Volume of deadwood
- Microhabitats

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Biodiversity Indicators

- Species diversity
- Invasive species presence

Forest Health and Disturbances

- Forest health assessments
- Disturbance events

Soil and Environmental Conditions

- Soil characteristics
- Climatic data

Do you have any instruction or biodiversity guidelines that support forest biodiversity monitoring?

Please describe content in bullet points or give a pictures or link to document:

Some of the documents dealing with biodiversity issues

- Assessment Report for the Sector of Non-Wood Forest Products and Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Year 2020
- Non-Wood Forest Product and Medicinal Aromatic Plant Sector Assessment Report Year 2018
- Strategy and Action Plan for Biodiversity 2011 – 2020
- National Strategy on Non-Wood Forest Product Sector of Republic of Kosovo ([Case study 9: National NWFPs strategy Kosovo \(PDF, 1.2 MB\)](#)).
- [With forests, Kosovo* is getting closer to sustainable, inclusive development](#)
- KOSOVO BIODIVERSITY ANALYSIS [PA00WCZP.pdf](#)

Is there any intention or projects that foreseen introduction of forest biodiversity monitoring?

If yes, please give short content of project objectives:

Last year, through the FAO project, titled for a sustainable forestry in Kosovo, the drafting of the Multifunctional Management Plans began. The phase of data collection in the Radusha management unit has been completed. It is thought that by the Spring of next year, two management units will be covered with such plans.

