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BEECH POWER

World Heritage Beech Forest Knowledge Exchange Platform



UNESCO World Heritage Beech Forests

The UNESCO World Heritage "Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe" is the largest serial World Heritage property, with 94 component parts in 18 countries in total. It covers areas in Albania, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, North Macedonia, Poland, Romania, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland and the Ukraine. Further precious beech forest areas in other countries could follow. These beech forests are part of the European ecological identity and tell a European story.

The European beech, growing exclusively in Europe, is an exceptional species that helped to shape the whole continent. After the last ice age, around 12,000 years ago, beech started to expand from its refuge in Southern Europe to cover large parts of the European continent, and with this journey followed a huge variety of species. Beech forests, therefore, became a fundamental piece of the ecological mosaic in Europe.

However, human intervention caused beech forests, especially old-growth, natural forest ecosystems to largely disappear. To protect these valuable ecosystems a selection of them was first recognized by UNESCO as a natural World Heritage in 2007, in Slovak Republic and Ukraine.



Our biodiversity is in decline. As a result of unsustainable human activities, the global population of wild species has fallen by 60% over the last 40 years. There are many drivers of this loss including intensification of agriculture, increased land uptake, overexploitation of natural resources, including deforestation.

It is therefore important to value, enhance and promote shared heritage of the UNESCO World Heritage Beech Forests. This includes the support of regional sustainable development around World Heritage Beech Forests as well as fostering the process of knowledge exchange and capacity building on an inter-regional transnational level.

Beech Forests of the Carpathians and Other Regions of Europe



Online knowledge exchange platform

The BEECH POWER Online exchange platform was initiated by partners involved in the BEECH POWER project and supported by the Coordination Office of the UNESCO World Heritage site 'Ancient and Primeval Beech Forests'. Anyone interested in assisting the UNESCO World Heritage Beech Forests can join the platform.



The benefits of the platform

The platform aims to support communication and cooperation between protected area management teams and responsible public authorities of protected areas comprising the World Heritage component parts. It provides members with free access to several World Heritage relevant documents and can be continuously updated with new information and data on World Heritage Beech Forest and the different component parts under the following topics:

- Strategic, adaptive & proactive ecosystem-based planning;
- Legal and regulatory framework; Research & monitoring;
- Training & capacity building;
- Stakeholder involvement & governance; Communication, education & public awareness;
- Sustainable development, tourism.

Beech Forest component parts to discuss and learn about approaches and innovative practices in the different fields of management. Furthermore, it enables all users to share information on their component parts and offers possibilities for future cooperation through the development of joint projects and initiatives, strategies and capacity building activities.

The aim of the BEECH POWER project with the creation of this platform is to promote the relevant actors' interests and concerns, to create a platform for initiating a dialogue and to enable cooperation that will be of benefit for the entire network of World Heritage Beech Forests and beyond - through the exchange of knowledge and good practices.

The project team acknowledges the close cooperation with the Coordination office of the World Heritage site. It is highly appreciated that the platform can be further hosted on their project folder to be used and further developed.



DISCOVER MORE ABOUT BEECH POWER

World Heritage BEECH Forests:
emPOWERing and catalyzing an
ecosystem-based Sustainable Development

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