

IMPORTANT PLANT AREA BOUNDARIES IN WALES (UK)

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Following publication of a list of 23 Important Plant Areas (IPAs) in Wales (UK), work is now underway to define boundaries around these sites. All criterion A, B and C qualifying features for these IPAs have been matched to either individual sites (criterion A features) or existing protected areas, such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) for criterion B and C features. These are defined as the "core areas" of the IPAs. Some IPAs are very small and discrete, especially those that qualify on one criterion alone.

In such cases, the IPA boundary can match that of the statutorily designated site; an example is Stanner Rocks in Radnorshire. Most IPAs, however, are comprised of several qualifying features. They present a mosaic of sites where internationally threatened species and habitats occur either inside or outside existing SSSIs and SACs. The IPA boundary can bring these fragmented sites together into one unit. However, placing a definite boundary around such a unit can be difficult; landowners become nervous of such boundaries and the area is better defined by a boundary that has some useful and ecological meaning.

One solution is to set concentric "zones of opportunity" around each IPA core area. These zones are defined by the potential for habitat restoration (restricted by soil type, climate, geology, topography) and their distance from the IPA core area. An example of such an IPA boundary is illustrated with the Cambrian Mountains Woodland IPA, in which the potential for Atlantic Oak woodland restoration is limited by the distribution of "typical brown podzol" soils and distance from the IPA core areas.

NETWORKING FOR A NEW ITALIAN REDLIST INCLUDING LOWER AND HIGHER PLANTS

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Various International agreements for the conservation of biodiversity such as the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and the European Plant Conservation Strategy invite contracting parties to achieve key targets by 2010, one of these is red lists update for threatened species.

In Italy a first attempt to apply IUCN criteria and categories dates back to the '90ies with the publication of the "*Libro rosso delle piante d'Italia*" (Conti *et al.*, 1992), including not only vascular plants, but also bryophytes and lichens (Nimis, 1992). This was followed by an update for lichens (Nimis, 2003) and for vascular plants and bryophytes at the local level (Regional administrative or biogeographical regions) (Conti *et al.*, 1997, "*Liste rosse*"; Gentili *et al.*, 2006, Arch. Geobot. 9). The situation is different for fungi. An appeal has been launched to urge mycologist listing threatened macromycetes giving some examples as Data Deficient (Venturella *et al.*, 1997). A redlist project was proposed in a specific meeting named "*The Harmonisation of Red Lists for threatened species in Europe*" (Venturella *et al.*, 2004).

In Italy a networking is needed in order to apply properly the recently published IUCN (2001) criteria and categories, discussing the problems and finding joint solutions critically reviewing the 2006 IUCN guidelines. This partnership is contributing to implement target 2 of the GSPC and is bringing together Italian botanists raising the status of REDLISTING as a key conservation procedure for plant conservation. Since 2006 key working groups of the Italian Botanical Society (S.B.I.) have been working together assessing the conservation status of 30 target species of the Italian native flora, including lower and higher plants in order to promote a new Italian Red List, 10 years after the last one (Conti *et al.*, 1997). The experimental phase has recently been concluded and the first results are here presented.

RapidList: IUCN'S NEW TOOL FOR PRELIMINARY PLANT ASSESSMENTS

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Target 2: Preliminary plant assessments

Target 2 of the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) calls for a preliminary assessment of the world's plant species by 2010. At its meeting in Dublin, Ireland, 23-25 October 2005, The CBD Global Partnership for Plant Conservation called on botanical institutions worldwide to: "Participate in a new initiative led by IUCN to complete preliminary assessments of the world's threatened flora as an essential step in achieving its conservation". IUCN has now developed and released an online tool to conduct preliminary assessments. The tool, called RapidList, has been designed specifically for this process and the logic is based on the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria (version 3.1).