

A sense of Place



**Target 5: At least 75 per cent of the most important areas for plant diversity of each ecological region protected, with effective management in place for conserving plants and their genetic diversity**

*“We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.”*

Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac



Elizabeth Radford

Important areas for plant diversity may occur both inside and outside designated protected areas. In either case, the key challenge will be to ensure that appropriate management measures are taken to maintain and enhance plant diversity in these areas.

**What is an endemic species?**

An endemic species is one that is unique to a defined geographic location, such as an island or a country. Species that are indigenous to a place are not endemic to it if they are also found elsewhere. Endemic species are especially likely to develop on biologically isolated areas such as islands and on mountain tops because of their unique eco-geography.

**Where are we now?**

To date, more than 66 countries have taken steps to identify important areas for plant diversity and many have ongoing programmes to address conservation issues as well as documenting the sites. The organizations carrying out the assessment of IPAs vary from country to country but they include wildlife and conservation organizations, universities, government departments, botanic gardens, and other groups.

The number of identified IPAs varies widely. For example, by 2010, Mozambique had a preliminary list of 28, the Seychelles had 29 and the UK had identified more than 150 sites important for plant diversity.



Z. Ghrabi-Gammar

This target has two components: identifying the areas important for plant diversity (also known as Important Plant Areas), and then assuring effective protection of at least 75 per cent of these areas.

An Important Plant Area (IPA) can be defined as a site exhibiting exceptional botanical richness and/or supporting an outstanding assemblage of rare, threatened and/or endemic plant species and/or vegetation of high botanic value.



Adam Harrower



**Find out more:**

[www.plantlife.org.uk](http://www.plantlife.org.uk)



Christopher K. Willis

**Plant micro-reserves**

Plant micro-reserves are small areas in which there is a significant presence of rare, threatened or endemic plant species. While all areas are smaller than 20 hectares, most of them are no larger than 1 or 2 hectares. These small areas can be highly efficient in protecting endemic plant species.

The protection of species important for the surrounding community is also of importance to the micro-reserve concept. For example, the ancient town of Alcoi, in the Alicante province of Spain has been an important centre for textiles and dyeing since the Middle Ages. The plant micro-reserves near Alcoi aim to record and conserve ancient dye plants such as Madder (*Rubia tinctoria*), as well as the other 350 or so crops historically cultivated in Valencia, some 50 of which are still in cultivation today.



Hayan Hmidan



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