

OVERVIEW OF FUNGI SPECIES IN PRESPA NATIONAL PARK (ALBANIA)

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ABSTRACT

This paper includes a list – a preliminary inventory of macromycete species in NP Prespa. The source of these data is exclusively based on our own field studies performed in October 2012. Fungi play a critical role in National Park. They are key in recycling dead vegetation and making the nutrients available for the next generation of plant life. They act also as plant pathogens and they form symbioses with the vast majority of herbaceous and woody plants, allowing them to colonize poor soils and pull otherwise unavailable nutrients from the soil.

There are very few published data on fungi in Albania. Area of National Park Prespa was never studied from the mycological standpoint and there are no previously published data on fungi from this area. Our field studies have included sites with representative vegetation, represented by meadows and pastures, forests of oak belt, forests of beech belt and specific forest stands with three species of junipers.

Valuable results were obtained within a short period of time, a large number of specimens were collected and it was possible to assess habitat quality with high level of precision. The 174 listed species-level taxa of fungi were recorded. Although it is still not possible to determine with precision the final number of species recorded for the first time at territory of Albania, it seems that it is the case with most species recorded at the territory of National Park during our research.

Key words: Fungi inventory, Prespa NP, Albania