

**PROTECTED AREA COMPONENT IN MACEDONIA WITHIN THE
FRAME OF THE BALKAN LYNX RECOVERY PROGRAMME**

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One of the important factors for species conservation is the proclamation of the protected areas. Thus, the Balkan Lynx Recovery Programme includes both lynx conservation and preservation of its natural areas. In the frame of the project, three mountain ranges in Macedonia are chosen to be part of the Protected Area initiative. Two of them, Shar Planina Mt. and Jablanica Mt., are trans-boundary protected sites (Shar Planina in the border zone between Kosovo and Macedonia, and Jablanica between Albania and Macedonia) and are part of the European Green Belt Initiative. Ilinska-Plakenska Mts. are connecting the western and south-western parts of the “Macedonian” Green Belt and are bio-corridors for many vertebrate and invertebrate species.

In the frame of the Protected Area component, several activities have been started. Most of them consist of data collection on flora, fauna and fungia. For that purpose, in July 2006, a fifteen day field trip was organized on Jablanica Mt. A report for the natural values of Jablanica Mt. was produced. Socio-economic assessments have been started on Jablanica and Shar Planina Mts.

Summary reports with the natural values of these mountains, which have been and will be produced, will serve as an effective tool for further steps in the proclamation of the protected areas.