The project titled ‘Establishment of a Plant Micro-reserve Network in Cyprus for the Conservation of Priority Species and Habitats’ (PLANT-NET CY) is implemented under the EU LIFE+ programme. Its main objective is to improve the conservation status of four priority plant species and two priority habitat types of the EU Habitats’ Directive that are found exclusively in Cyprus, through the establishment, monitoring and management of a network of five Plant Micro-Reserves (PMRs). The PMRs approach was initially developed about 15 years ago in Valencia (Spain) and since then it has been successfully implemented in several other parts of Europe. This concept is now widely accepted as one of the most effective practices towards the conservation of plant diversity in small land plots that are of peak value in terms of plant richness, endemism or rarity. The project introduces an integrated approach for the conservation of the targeted species and habitats through monitoring of all environmental parameters affecting the targeted species and their habitats, implementing specific in situ conservation actions, implementing complementary ex-situ conservation actions and promoting public awareness and controlled public involvement in the conservation activities. The project is expected to secure the protection and sound management of the targeted species and habitats and increase the participation of local people/stakeholders in the design and implementation of conservation initiatives. Moreover, PLANT-NET CY brings together scientists who have been involved in the PMRs approach over the last 15 years to facilitate networking and exchange of scientific information and best practices.

Keywords: Plant Micro-Reserves, priority species, priority habitats, plant conservation, Cyprus.

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