

7. Slovakia – Flora and vegetation zoning

Vegetation depends on soils (soil types and fertility), precipitation, groundwater reserves, temperature differences and the length of sunshine. Our country belongs to the temperate zone of deciduous and mixed forest. It is divided into vegetation zones – altitudinal zones.

Therefore, is the main factor influencing vegetation cover to change within Slovakia.

Vegetation zones vary according to altitude and soil type predominantly.

1. Oak level (100 – 550 m asl.), lowlands, hollow basins, lower mountains, the warmest and driest places, arable land

Tree species: oak, horn-beam, poplar-tree, lime, chestnut, ash-tree, willow

2. Beech zone (550 m – 1100 m asl.), it needs damper climate with more precipitation, unused agriculture land

Tree species: beech, fir, elm, maple, fern, birch, alder-tree

Mountains:

3. Spruce zone – 1100 – 1600 m asl., extends to upper *timberline*, more precipitation, shorter and colder vegetation period, meadows and pastures when deforested

Tree species: spruce, pine, fir, larch, blueberry and cranberry bush

Mountains:

4. Dwarf pine zone – 1600m -1800 m asl., almost no pastures

Tree species: dwarf pine, rowan, blueberry, cranberry

Mountains:

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5. Alpine meadows – over 1800m asl., High Tatras and Low Tatras, psychrophilic grass species, in the highest portions of the High Tatras, snow also during summer

Examples: lichens, mosses, alpine flora (pulsatilla, gentian)

6. Flood-plain forests – on the bottom land, close to rivers

Examples: willow, poplar, alder



Which plant (tree) species grow in the proximity of your residence?

What is the role of vegetation cover for the animals/for the people?

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Name the plants you see on the right side.

Why do the deciduous forests look differently within seasons?

Why are pines, spruces or firs said to be evergreen?

Have you ever been to some alpine meadows? How did you like it?

Why is forestry significant in relation with the industrial production?

Explain the meaning of the so-called deforestation.

How are we, the people, supposed to behave in wilderness?

Why do people like forests?



Keywords

vegetation, altitudinal zones, forest types, tree species, deforestation, meadows, pastures, dwarf pine, lichen, psychrophilic plants, upper timberline, greenery, herbs