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# ECOTOURISM POTENTIAL OF BIODIVERSITY FROM CRIULENI DISTRICT, REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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The biodiversity of the living world, through the richness of floristic and faunal species, has always been the points of tourist attraction. A special interest for tourists who practice ecological tourism, presents the protected natural areas of this district. Thus, according to the field studies and in accordance with the Law on the fund of natural areas protected by the state no. 1538-XIII of 25.02.98, in the Criuleni district, the following protected natural areas of interest for the practice of ecological tourism are: **I. Monuments of nature (A. Geological and paleontological: *Fossil soils on the Transnistrian terraces; Goian outcrop*; *Surprises cave*** (The fauna of the cave is made up of several species of bats (mainly of the *Myotys* and *Rhinolophus* genera), but also terrestrial invertebrates such as pseudoscorpions, arachnids, myriapods, terrestrial crustaceans et al. There are also several species of flora in the cave. Saprophytic fungi grow here (including a species of phosphorescent mushrooms); **B. Hydrological: *The mineral springs from Onitcani village* (**The protection zone is sprinkled with clumps of trees, the adjacent land being covered by forest plantations**)**; **C. Botanical - Representative sectors with forest vegetation: *Poplar forest* (**from trees comprises 94 specimens of *Populus alba*, 2 of *Ulmus laevis* and 1 of *Pyrus pyraster*, from shrubs are present *Prunus spinosa, Swida sanguinea, Crataegus monogyna* and *Rosa canina*); ***Pogoreloe*** (15 species of trees were identified – *Acer campestre, Acer negundo, Acer platanoides, Acer tataricm, Carpinus betulus, Cerasus avium, Fraxinus excelsior, Morus alba, Populus alba, Pyrus pyraster, Quercus robur, Salix alba, Tilia cordata et al.;* 12 species of shrubs including *Corylus avellana, Crataegus monogyna, Euonymus europaea et al.*); **Secular trees - 3 in number**. According to Annex no. 3 of the Law on the fund of natural areas protected by the state, in Criuleni district there are 3 secular trees - 2 pedunculate oaks and a poplar from Canada. **II. Forest nature reserves: *Dubăsari*, *Zoloceni*, III. Monuments of landscape architecture: *The park from Bălăbăneşti village*** (from trees, the species are still preserved are: *Sophora japonic*a, *Quercus imbricaria, Koelreuteria paniculata, Maclura aurantiaca, Pinus silvestris, Pinus strobus* et al., and from planted shrubs – *Rosa canina* and *Syringa vulgaris*), ***The park from Miclesti village*** (among the species of trees and shrubs attested in the park are: *Acer platanoides, Acer pseudoplatanus, Acer campestre, Aesculus hippocastanum, Juglans regia, Fraxinus excelsior, Populus alba, Populus pyramidalis, Ulmus pumila, Ulmus laevis, Cerasus avium, Tilia tomentosa, Buxus sempervirus, Pyrus communis, Robinia pseudoacacia, Abies nordmanniana, Pinus nigra, Picea abies, Biota orientalis*).

Thus Criuleni district has a rich ecotourism potential consisting of objectives and natural complexes taken under state protection: 3 monuments of geological and paleontological nature, 1 monument of hydrological nature, 2 monuments of botanical nature represented by representative sectors with forest vegetation, 2 forest nature reserves, 2 monuments of landscape architecture – rich in a significant variety of floristic and faunal species, as well as 3 secular trees.

***Keywords:*** biodiversity, ecological tourism, landscape architecture, protected natural areas.