# Biodiversity of Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau and its Conservation


## Abstract

*The Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau, as the largest and highest plateau in the world, has always enjoyed the reputation of being "the roof of the world". This unique geographic unit towers over the centre of the continent of Eurasia, linked with the Northwest Himalayas and the Pamir Plateau in the west, screened by the Hengduan Mountains in the east, bounded by the Himalayan Mountains in the south, and connected with the Kunlun Mountains and the Qilian Mountains in the north, with a total area of about 2,500,000sq.km., covering approximately a quarter of the Chinese land area. The Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau, with its vast land surface in the middle of the troposphere, has wide climatic variation caused by the unique plateau atmospheric circulation system resulting from the strong heat-island effect and the great difference in elevation of the peripheral boundary surface. Such unusual natural conditions give rise to a diverse and complex species. The marginal areas of the eastern and southern Plateau are the most active places for species' differentiation. It is an important world centre for the formation and differentiation of mountainous species. Obviously, the Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau is an extremely important area for conservation of biodiversity.*

*Economically, the Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau is not too well developed, and this is seriously affecting the conservation of biodiversity in the region. Based on this situation, regarding establishment of nature reserves in the Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau, the emphases should be given to those which are of significance in zonality and well represent their ecosystems.*