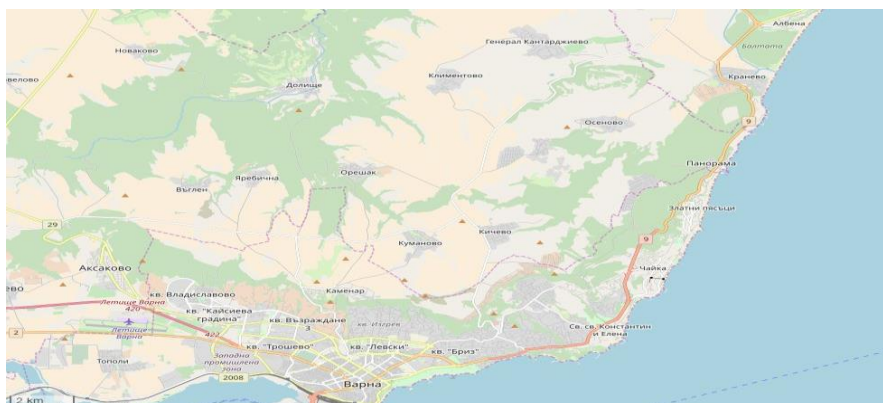


## Baltata Managed Reserve

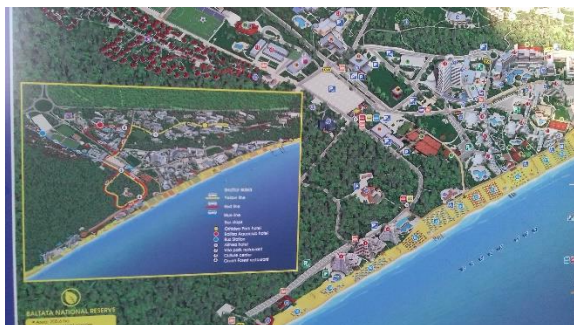


The **Batova River** originates from the village of Kumanovo from the Frangene Plateau, which is located outside the territory of the Balchik State Hunting Farm. It starts as a small stream, which at first runs parallel to the seashore. From the village of Oreshak Aksakovo Municipality, the shape of the valley becomes tortoise, the slopes becoming more leeward at the bottom. In the village of Batovo, the river makes a turn and runs in the eastern direction, as the village of Obrochishte preserves the valley shape and then the river flows into the Black Sea near the Baltata - the form becomes trapezoidal. In general, the river valley extends from the springs to the estuary, where it reaches a width of 10 m. The total length of the Batova River is 39 km, the seabed and the lower stream passing through the area of Balchik State Hunting Farm - 25 km. The bottom of the river in the lower stream is muddy.

The Batova River is characterized by:

A) Spring high water, from the end of February to May. It is due to the melting of the snow cover, where the water level rises and floods large spaces, especially under the village of Obrochishte, and the northern part of the Baltata forest is flooded with smaller springs. The minimum run-off is 200-300 l / s.

B) Summer low waterfall - starting in July and lasting until the end of September. It is characterized by small water quantities of groundwater and summer precipitation. In the past, the Batova River ran through the Baltata Reserve in several sleeves, but in 1930-1935 a canal was drilled through which it flows into the Black Sea. The northernmost dense forest in Bulgaria is formed along the bottom parts of Batova River, where the Baltata reserve is maintained.



**Baltata Reserve** is located in the area of Kranevo village, Balchik Municipality, and covers the lower reaches of the Batova River, right next to Albena resort. The reserve is located about 11 km from the town of

Balchik. The Baltata was declared as reserve by Order No. 1784 dated 03.07.1962 by the Council of Ministers with an area of 183.2 ha. In 1999 it was re-categorized as a Managed Reserve with an area of 203.2 ha, Order No RD - 96 / 16.02.2006 in order to preserve the natural state of a dense forest with its adjacent flora and fauna. Total area is now 2046.865 dka. Management Plan - Order № ПД-1126 / 29.10.2004 г.

### **Biodiversity**

**Flora:** A total of 263 species of *higher plants* belong to 184 genera and 62 families have been identified for the "Balata" Reserve and its buffer zone. The plant species, subspecies and varieties of nature protection value are 28 in number, 16 of them are included in the "Red Book" of Bulgaria and in some of the international conventions and directives to which Bulgaria is a party. These are the lianas: the Greek horn, the forest vine, the tall log. This subgroup also includes the supendemic type of palisade ash. The widespread distribution for both territories is the marsh, whose population is extremely dense and in good condition. The endemic species are 5 and the relics - 7. From the found 116 medicinal plants, 7 species are of conservation status. *Fern plants* represent 5% of families. They are represented by one genus - horsetail. In the area of the reserve there are 6 species of bushes and *leaf lichens*.

**Mushrooms,** 13 species, play an important role in the functioning of forest ecosystems in the process of decomposition and mineralization of dying wood.

**Fauna: Invertebrates** include 337 terrestrial and aquatic groups - many of which are found only here. *Ichthyofauna* includes 16 species of *fish*, 4 species (two types of prickly, arterial, common scab and carp) are included in the Bulgarian Red Book with the category "protected species". The baboon has the highest number among the other fish species.

From the *Amphibians and Reptiles*, specific for the region are the crest, the green toad, the tree frog and the big water frog, as well as the green lizards, the wall lizard, the lice, the mosquito, the viper. Special attention should be paid to the turtle, because it is vulnerable species - its habitats are close to the roads.

**Ornithofauna:** A total of 183 species of birds (of which 95 species are breeding in the area) were found in the Baltata R. and its buffer zone, 167 of them are with nature-protected status. The rusty and white heron, the black and white stork, the gray crane, the mallard duck, the eagle, the woodpecker, the woodpecker, the tigers, the snakes, the black-headed nether are of particular interest.

**Mammals:** There are 35 species of mammals - the insects, the bats, rodents, predators and clover-hoofed animals. The most common are hedgehog, mole, bat, squirrel, rabbit, water rat, nutria, jackal, fox. Priority is given to the otter.

