

Petrov M. F., Gashchak S. P. Radioecological, Landscape and Geobotanic Features of «Tolsty les» Site as Preconditions for Establishment of Protection Category // Problems of Chernobyl Exclusion Zone. -2013- V.11- P.102-128.

The complex survey of an area with working name «Tolsty Les» situated in western part of the exclusion zone near villages Tolsty Les, Bovische and Lubyanka was carried out in 2012–2013 in order to assess local diversity of landscapes and geobotanic components. Notable richness of rare and unique landscape and floristic components was found out. Comparing with the whole exclusion zone this site has remarkably higher percentage of woodstands older 100 years, especially those which grow on rich soils with normal and high level of water supply (sudubrava, oak forest). The site has number of marshes including mesotrophic and oligotrophic bogs, which favor conservation and distribution of rare plants. At least 8 species of “Red List” plants (*Lycopodium annotinum*, *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*, *Gymnadenia odoratissima*, *Neottia nidus-avis*, *Platanthera bifolia*, *Epipactis helleborine*, *Allium ursinum*, *Iris sibirica*) were found there. The first time in the region, natural recovery of hornbeam, ash and Norway maple on meadows was recorded while as usual these species recover under canopy of other trees. The natural spread of common spruce (species which is on southern edge of its distribution) takes place there also. Long-term absence of forestry activity caused appearance of clearings, recovery of moss cover and associated with it number of rare species-bryophiles. Relatively high percentage of old forests, affected by fungi, dry woods, wind and snow fallen trees favoured support of high faunistic diversity as well. Current level of the anthropogenic impact is very low there. Radioecological situation within the area studied mostly allows unlimited conservation and research activity. Thus the site “Tolsty Les” is a valuable natural and territorial complex within the Chornobyl exclusion zone which is necessary to rate as an object of natural reserve fund of Ukraine in order to support positive tendencies on recovery of Polessye autochthonic complexes and for conservation of biological diversity existing there.