

Strategic Plan

**Botanic Gardens Conservation International (U.S.),
Inc.**

2012-2016

Adopted by the BGCI US Board February 14, 2012

Introduction

Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) is a global organization that links over 700 botanic garden members in 118 countries into a global network for plant conservation. Through this network BGCI strives to be a voice for plants, to implement and monitor progress toward the UN's Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, and to ensure that no plant conservation, restoration or education work at botanic gardens is limited by lack of access to information or expertise.

BGCI's main office is in London with satellite programs in several other countries. In the United States, more than 80 institutions are BGCI members, and have an informal affiliation with **Botanic Gardens Conservation International (U.S.), Inc.** (BGCI US). BGCI US is a 501(c)3 organization that shares BGCI's mission and vision, but maintains an independent budget and Board of Directors.

BGCI US acts as a central "hub" that connects interests, best practices and information across BGCI's member gardens and with conservation partners in the U.S. Working with BGCI, it facilitates engagement and collaboration on mutual interests within the United States and globally.

BGCI's Mission and Vision

The following mission and vision statements are from the BGCI 2007-2012 Strategic Plan;

BGCI Mission: To mobilize botanic gardens and engage partners in securing plant diversity for the well-being of people and the planet.

BGCI Vision: A world in which plant diversity is valued, secure and supporting all life.

BGCI Values

BGCI has articulated seven values that guide its approach to working throughout the world.

- **Appreciating and valuing plants-** Plants are the backbone of life on Earth, and the security of plant diversity worldwide forms the core of our mission.
- **Relevance-** BGCI's work will continue to evolve to meet the needs of our members, partners and the wider biodiversity conservation community.
- **Excellence-** BGCI strives for the highest standards in its plant conservation work around the world.
- **Cultural sensitivity-** BGCI's programs are designed to be culturally relevant to the needs and circumstances of local partners and audiences from diverse cultures around the world.
- **Integrity-** BGCI promises integrity, trust and honesty in every action.
- **Respectful relationships-** BGCI builds and maintains respectful and strong relationships with members and partners.
- **Sustainability-** BGCI integrates principles of sustainability throughout our institutional operations and works with our members to demonstrate sustainability in practice.

BGCI's Unique Role

There is a pressing need to conserve and restore global plant diversity, yet insufficient capacity to do so. We believe that every botanic garden can provide important capacity to support plant conservation, restoration, and education. While already significant, with greater support, coordination and collaboration the combined power and impact of botanic gardens will yield increasingly significant results for plant conservation.

- We support local plant conservation action informed by a global perspective.
- As the UN designate for implementing the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, we raise awareness of the issues and advocate for support needed to address them.
- We are a proactive hub that connects and mobilizes gardens. Our online databases, publications, and global congresses support collaboration and knowledge-sharing that enables strategic planning, collaboration, and action.
- We develop tools that help botanic gardens better understand and build their role in supporting conservation, restoration, and education.

BGCI US Strategic Planning Background

In 2007, a strategic plan for BGCI's work in the U.S. was developed by Richard Daley of EMD Consulting, with input and participation from nearly 80 member organizations as well as the BGCI Secretary General, BGCI staff, and the BGCI US Board through a series of workshops and surveys.

In 2011, a new strategic planning process was initiated by the BGCI US Board, facilitated by Susan Parks of Parks Consulting. This process was informed by a member survey taken by 50 BGCI member gardens in the United States. The main components of this new Strategic Plan for 2012-2016 were finalized during a 2-day planning retreat of the BGCI US Board in November 2011.

SWOT Analysis

The 2007 and 2011 strategic planning workshops and surveys asked BGCI members to provide comments on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats for BGCI in the United States. The following is a summary of responses.

BGCI's greatest **strengths** are its inclusivity and worldwide network of botanical gardens, giving it and its members vast reach, access to information and expertise from around the world, and a global perspective and platform.

BGCI US's greatest **opportunities** are in global challenges, particularly climate change, affecting plant diversity, its ability to appeal to a broad spectrum of botanical gardens, its ability to gather and synthesize baseline data that supports strategic conservation action and prioritization, and its ability to connect U.S. resources nationally and internationally to halt the loss of global plant diversity.

BGCI US's greatest **weakness** is its under-developed funding base compared to the potential in the U.S.

BGCI US's greatest **threat** is lack of funding to make a sustained difference and consequently its ability to support BGCI and its members in the United States in halting the worldwide loss of plant diversity.

Strategic Pillars: Long Term Goals and 2012-2013 Priorities

The following 8 Strategic Pillars (4 Programmatic and 4 Administrative) have been identified and prioritized by the BGCI US Board. They are presented below. Project teams have been assembled for each pillar, and 5-year goals as well as priorities for work in 2012-2013 are identified below. For each strategic pillar, work plans have also been produced for 2012-2013 and are being used as internal Board documents.

PROGRAMMATIC STRATEGIC PILLARS:

- P1. Conservation Planning and Analysis
- P2. Interactive Communication and Sharing
- P3. Conservation/Restoration Projects
- P4. Policy/ Advocacy

Programmatic Strategic Pillars	Long Term Goals (5-year)	2012-2013 Priorities
P1. Conservation Planning and Analysis	P1.1 Evolve BGCI's databases (PlantSearch and GardenSearch) to be highly used, highly valued tools to support conservation planning & analysis for members, researchers, practitioners & other partners in the United States and around the world.	P1.1.1 Obtain planning grant & work with BGCI members & partners to define the future vision & uses for PlantSearch and GardenSearch. P1.1.2 Create, prioritize & stage functional enhancements to achieve the vision and procure funding to implement them.
P2. Interactive Communication and Sharing	P2.1 Develop & implement new communication and information sharing tools for members. Use these tools to identify, prioritize, & communicate plant conservation and research needs in North America based on the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.	P2.1.1 Obtain planning grant to understand and define interactive tools. P2.1.2 Assemble a team of members to define objectives, functionality and requirements.
P3. Conservation/Restoration Projects	P3.1 Build programs that engage member gardens & allow them to leverage their resources & expertise to achieve more impactful conservation or restoration actions than if they acted alone.	P3.1.1 Successfully complete currently-funded conservation programs; use results to continue to engage members/partners. P3.1.2 Help build restoration programs, working with BGCI & the Ecological Restoration Alliance of Botanic Gardens. P3.1.3 Define criteria for selecting new projects with high need, member engagement & funding potential.
P4. Policy/ Advocacy	P4.1 Engage BGCI members in the U.S. to inform & advocate for plant conservation programs & policies at the federal level.	P4.1.1 Build on recent projects working with the Plant Conservation Alliance & Chicago Botanic Garden to help advance the policy/advocacy work of botanic gardens. P4.1.2 Identify potential sources of funding to support staff time for this.

ADMINISTRATIVE STRATEGIC PILLARS:

- A1. Identity and Awareness
- A2. Membership
- A3. Fundraising
- A4. Governance and Board Development

Administrative Strategic Pillar	Long Term Goals (5-year)	2012-2013 Priorities
A1. Identity and Awareness	A1.1 BGCI and its work are widely recognized and valued.	<p>A1.1.1 Clarify & articulate the focus & unique role that BGCI plays in international plant conservation.</p> <p>A1.1.2 Create compelling messages that can be communicated with a variety of audiences: Garden directors, prospective members, board member candidates, donors.</p> <p>A1.1.3 Develop & implement communication plan.</p>
A2. Membership	A2.1 Gardens and conservation organizations in the United States know the role that BGCI fulfills and want to be a part of the mission.	A2.1.1 Use new identity messaging & reach out personally to directors at current and prospective member gardens.
	A2.2 Increase the number and engagement levels of members.	<p>A2.2.1 Increase U.S. membership numbers, and activity and engagement of current members.</p> <p>A2.2.2 Provide at least one project/year that members in the U.S. can engage in.</p>
A3. Fundraising and Capacity	A3.1 Increase level of board focus on fundraising.	A3.1.1 Add fundraising/philanthropy expertise to the board of trustees.
	A3.2 Generate sufficient funds for staff to do administrative, fundraising (i.e. grant writing), BGCI liaison work as well as projects.	<p>A3.2.1 Apply for support from at least 3 sources/year, ideally in partnership with other organizations and BGCI members.</p> <p>A3.2.2 Establish the feasibility of getting funding to support development staff time.</p>
	A3.3 Create more diversified funding sources for long-term support of the BGCI US office and programs.	A3.3.1 Consider how membership, in-kind donations, foundation & corporate grants/support, earned revenue, other donations, campaigns & planned giving may be used to diversify funding.
	A3.4 Develop a long-term partner relationship with a major funder.	A3.4.1 Talk with potential new board members, other philanthropists/former foundation directors.
A4. Governance and board development	A4.1 Increase size of board to 20 active members with diverse skill sets (fundraising, marketing, non-profit law, technology and financial acumen).	A4.1.1 Recruit 2-3 new board members, with priority for finance, development & marketing/PR.
	A4.2 Ensure board members are engaged & effective.	A4.2.1 Develop board orientation process & materials.