



To halt the destruction of plant diversity, **Botanic Gardens Conservation International** calls on the world community to emphasise and communicate the importance of conserving plant diversity and to work together to implement the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.

BGCI's vision for plant conservation
'a world where plant diversity is valued as a vital resource for living now and for future generations'.



BGCI
Plants for the Planet

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"The impoverishment of plant diversity is a major global crisis – we need to act now to reverse the extinction trend. With over 300 million people visiting botanic gardens each year the botanic garden community is well placed to promote conservation messages and provide education programmes. BGCI will do all that it can to support this vital work".

Sara Oldfield, Secretary General, BGCI



"One of the greatest challenges facing humankind in the 21st Century is the loss of plant diversity. The reasons are complex and require individual, social and organizational change. We need to put far more effort into developing communication, education and public awareness programmes if we are serious about achieving our aim of sustainability".

Denise Hamú, Chair, IUCN-CEC, CEO, WWF-Brazil

Botanic Gardens Conservation International is a worldwide membership organisation working on an international scale to safeguard tens of thousands of plant species from extinction. BGCI brings together the world's botanic gardens, forming a community working in partnership to achieve conservation, education and development goals.

For more information on plant conservation in botanic gardens, contact:
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Communicating the importance of plant diversity

The Global Strategy for Plant Conservation

**Implementing Target 14:
incorporating the importance of plant diversity
into communication, educational and public
awareness programmes**



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Why do people need to be aware about the importance of plant diversity?

Plants are essential for life on earth. They provide us with oxygen, food, clothing, shelter, medicines and fuel. While most of our needs are provided for by domestic crops there are thousands of wild plant species upon which people's livelihoods still depend. Yet despite our reliance on plants, hundreds of thousands of plant species are threatened worldwide with genetic impoverishment and extinction.

The reasons for this are complex, but there is no doubt that the major cause is human behaviour through, for example, habitat destruction, pollution, introduction of alien species and population growth. To halt this loss and to secure the future of all species, we need to review our relationship with nature. This process will require educators and communicators at all levels in societies to develop education and public awareness programmes that focus on the importance of plant diversity and how it can be saved.

In the end, we will conserve only what we love, we will love what we understand, we will understand only what we are taught.

Baba Dioum, Senegalese poet and ecologist



The Global Strategy for Plant Conservation

Developed to halt the current and continuing loss of plant diversity, the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation includes 16 outcome-oriented targets to be achieved by 2010.

The Strategy was adopted by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 2002, and contributes to the biodiversity target agreed to at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002: "to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction in the current and continuing rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on earth."

For more information on the GSPC, please visit the websites: www.biodiv.org and www.plants2010.org

Target 14

Communicating the importance of plant diversity

Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) has been designated as *Lead Institution* by the CBD to promote involvement and support for the implementation of Target 14 of the GSPC.



Target 14 refers to formal and informal education at all levels. Addressing Target 14 will require stakeholders to share their experiences, expertise and resources so that new and effective education and public awareness programmes can be developed. Capacity building and training will be crucial for the success of this target.



Encouraging action for plant conservation and sustainability is imperative. For this reason, stakeholders will need to ensure that their programmes include a social, political and economic perspective so that people form a better understanding of the ways in which they

interact with their environment. The fundamental importance of plants and the factors leading to their extinction needs to be widely appreciated. By identifying the root causes, people can be encouraged to develop skills that will enable them to participate in finding solutions.

The aims and objectives of the GSPC will only be realized if education and public awareness is incorporated in all GSPC programmes of work.

