



To halt the erosion of plant diversity, **Botanic Gardens Conservation International** and the **International Plant Genetic Resources Institute** call on the world conservation community to ensure that rare and endangered plant species are protected in well-documented *ex situ* collections and to work together to implement the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.

BGCI strongly believes that plant extinction could be eliminated by focused local action, national strategy and international policy among a global alliance dedicated to the conservation and sustainable use of plant resources.



IPGRI's Vision is that people today and in the future enjoy greater well-being through increased incomes, sustainably improved food security and nutrition, and greater environmental health, made possible by conservation and the deployment of agricultural biodiversity on farms and in forests.



**BGCI**  
Plants for the Planet

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*"At least 30,000 plant species are threatened with extinction in the near future, and some of those species will not be able to survive in nature; therefore, botanical gardens have a vital role to play in their conservation. The Global Strategy for Plant Conservation is a call to arms. BGCI played a key role in developing the Strategy and is fully committed to its implementation. Target 8 provides an insurance mechanism for plants that are under threat in the wild by facilitating their long-term conservation".*

**Prof. Peter Raven**, Chair, International Advisory Council of BGCI



*"Agricultural biodiversity, including genetic resources, is one of the world's most important natural assets. It underpins the future development of crops and delivers improved nutrition and health and resilient harvests. IPGRI helps the world to conserve this resource in situ and ex situ and, more importantly, to make use of agricultural biodiversity to improve the lives of poor people".*

**Dr Emile Frison**, Director General, IPGRI

**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.

**International Plant Genetic Resources Institute** is an international research institute with a mandate to advance the conservation and use of genetic diversity for the well-being of present and future generations. It is a Centre of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research.

For more information on plant conservation in botanic gardens, contact:

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# Conserving threatened plants and restoring plant diversity

**A contribution to the Global Strategy for  
Plant Conservation**

**Implementing Target 8:  
Ex situ Conservation supporting recovery  
and restoration programmes**



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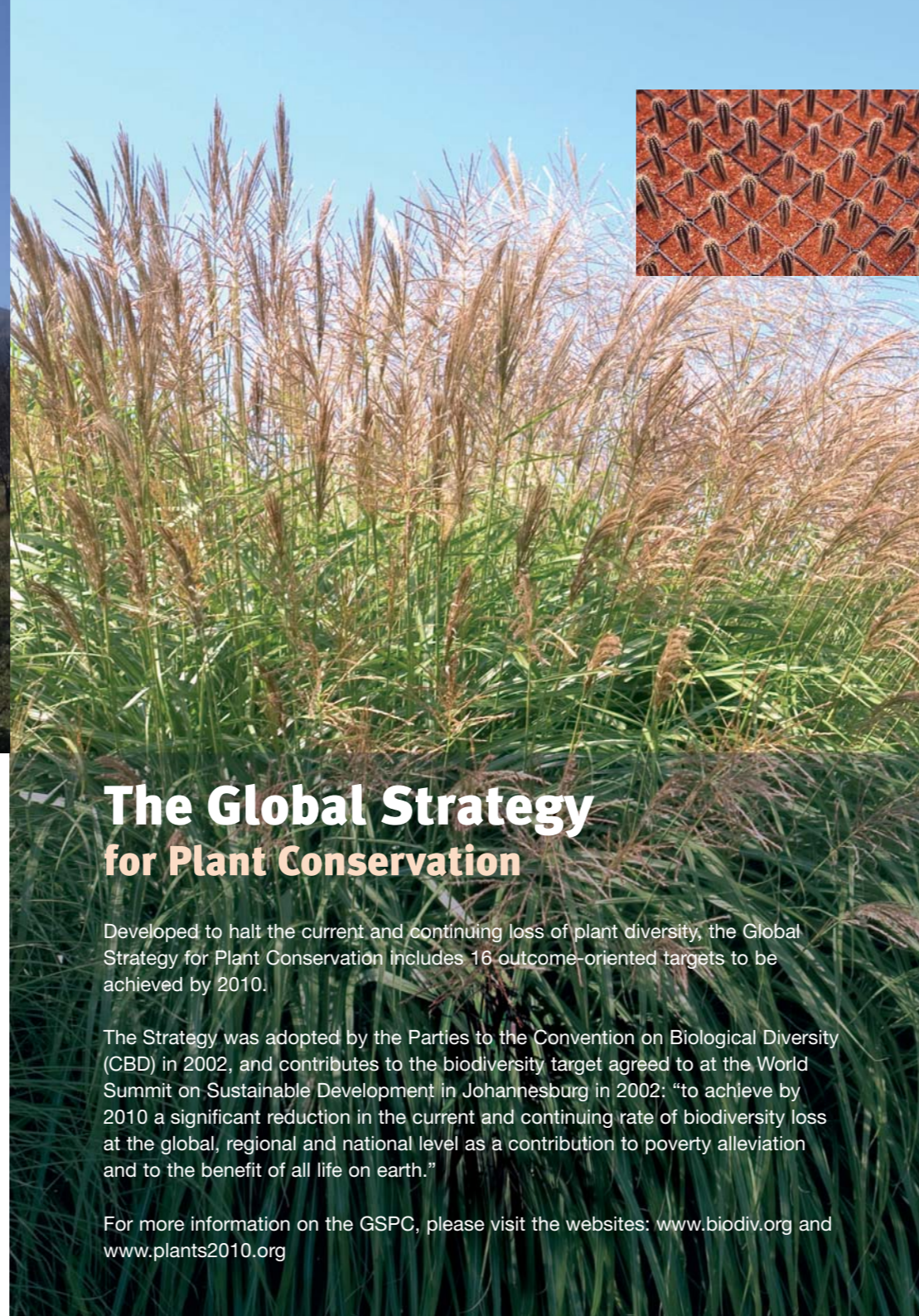


## What is *ex situ* conservation and why is it important?

Plants are a vital part of the world's biological diversity, and an essential resource for human well-being. Yet despite their fundamental importance, thousands of species are at risk of extinction. *Ex-situ* conservation provides an "insurance policy" against such extinction by preserving plants outside their natural habitats, away from the threats affecting them.

*Ex-situ* collections provide a valuable source of accessible plant material useful for the restoration of damaged or degraded habitats and for the nursery trade, local agriculture and crop breeding programmes, amenity planting and local forestry. Such collections facilitate research on endangered plants and provide a starting point for recovery programmes for threatened species.

Many of the institutions involved in *ex situ* conservation also play a central role in public education and awareness raising, by bringing members of the public into contact with plants they may not normally see in the wild. For example, it is estimated that worldwide, over 200 million people visit botanic gardens every year.



## 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](http://www.biodiv.org) and [www.plants2010.org](http://www.plants2010.org)



## Target 8

**60% of threatened plant species in accessible *ex situ* collections, preferably in the country of origin, and 10% of them included in recovery and restoration programmes**

Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) and the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI) have been identified as lead organisations to support the achievement of Target 8 of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.

Target 8 addresses the Plant Kingdom with a focus on higher plants, and other well described groups such as Bryophytes and Pteridophytes. *Ex situ* collections are those collections of plant diversity held outside their natural habitats to



safeguard identified populations or individuals from danger or loss. These collections should preferably be held in the country of origin and be accessible under the terms defined in the CBD, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources and relevant National legislation. Wherever possible they should be duplicated in another site or country.

It is estimated that presently the representation of threatened plant species in *ex situ* collections is not more than 20% and that perhaps only 2% are included in recovery and restoration programmes. A rejuvenated and vigorously coordinated worldwide programme for *ex situ* conservation and species recovery will therefore be required to meet this target. To this end, an international working group has proposed a multi-year work-plan until 2010 with specific milestones identified.

The priority categories of taxa for focused *ex situ* conservation programmes are those:

- in immediate danger of extinction at global, national or local level;
- of local economic importance - minor food crops, medicinal plants and plants providing the basis for local industries, horticulture and crafts;
- local ecotypes which may be required for specific reintroduction or habitat restoration schemes;
- local 'flagship' species that will stimulate conservation awareness;
- of special scientific interest, such as narrow endemics or geographical relics.

