



CBD



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

Distr.
GENERAL

UNEP/CBD/GSPC/LG/5/2
27 July 2015

ENGLISH ONLY

**LIAISON GROUP ON THE GLOBAL STRATEGY
FOR PLANT CONSERVATION**

Fifth meeting
Paris, 8 July 2015

**REPORT OF THE LIAISON GROUP ON THE GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR
PLANT CONSERVATION ON ITS FIFTH MEETING**

BACKGROUND

1. In its decision X/17, the Conference of the Parties adopted a consolidated update of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation for the period 2011-2020 and decided to pursue the implementation of the Strategy as part of the broader framework of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.
2. In its decision XII/15, the Conference of the Parties considered the mid-term review of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation contained in CBD Technical Series No. 81¹ and the ensuing recommendation emanating from the eighteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice² and provided guidance on options for enhancing the implementation of the Strategy.
3. The purpose of the Liaison Group meeting was to review ways in which the implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and progress towards the achievement of its 16 targets could be enhanced, taking into account the guidance provided by the Conference of the Parties, and building on the experience of Parties, other Governments, members of the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation and other partners and stakeholders as well as indigenous peoples and local communities.

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

4. The Liaison Group meeting was held at the Salle des Conseils of the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, in Paris. Participants were welcomed by Jean-Patrick Le Duc, Director of International Relations at the Museum, who said he was pleased that the seventh meeting of the European Botanic Gardens Congress had provided the opportunity to hold the meeting of the Liaison Group and that his institution was proud to continue its efforts in supporting implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.
5. In welcoming participants, Mr. Peter Wyse Jackson, Chair of the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation, thanked the Museum, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and

¹ S. Sharrock, S. Oldfield and O. Wilson, *Plant Conservation Report 2014: A Review of Progress towards the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation 2011-2020* (Montreal, Canada: Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and Richmond, United Kingdom: Botanic Gardens Conservation International). Available from: <http://www.cbd.int/doc/publications/cbd-ts-81-en.pdf>.

² See UNEP/CBD/COP/12/3, annex, decision XVIII/2.

Botanic Gardens Conservation International for the arrangements and meeting preparations and expressed appreciation to Botanic Gardens Conservation International and the Missouri Botanical Garden for their financial support, which had made it possible for the meeting to be held. He reminded participants that the Liaison Group was part of the flexible coordination mechanism, which had met four times prior to the meeting and was helpful in guiding the work of the Global Partnership as well as helping to monitor the implementation of the Global Strategy. The Global Partnership for Plant Conservation had 50 members, including many botanic gardens but also organizations active in other fields related to the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.

6. Mr. Braulio Dias, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, thanked the Global Partnership and its Secretariat, provided by Botanic Gardens Conservation International, for their active role in supporting the efforts of Parties to implement the Global Strategy. He noted that, based on the findings of the mid-term review, a main challenge was to step up efforts so that the global targets could be achieved by 2020 and that that might require the engagement of additional partners and further encouragement of Governments to take plant conservation considerations into account in their actions. The CBD Secretariat could be used as a conduit for approaching Governments, for example through notifications, including joint notifications with other partners. He reported on preparations for the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in Mexico in December 2016 with the intention of bridging the gap between environment and productive sectors. In that context, the Government of Mexico was open to new initiatives, such as paying particular attention to wild crop relatives.

7. Following introductions, the meeting proceeded under the joint chairmanship of Mr. Dias and Mr. Wyse Jackson. The list of participants is contained in annex I. Apologies had been received from Plantlife International, Royal Botanic Gardens (Hamilton, Ontario, Canada), Bioversity International, Stephen Blackmore and the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), among others, for being unable to participate in the meeting.

ITEM 2. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

8. Following an introduction of the provisional agenda (UNEP/CBD/GSPC/LG/5/1), the Liaison Group adopted the agenda without modifications.

ITEM 3. REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR PLANT CONSERVATION, INCLUDING IMPLICATIONS OF THE MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE STRATEGY

9. In its decision XII/15, the Conference of the Parties welcomed the initial progress made towards the achievement of some of the targets of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation 2011-2020, and recognized the contribution this makes to the achievement of the corresponding Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. At the same time, the Conference of the Parties noted with concern that most of the targets might not be achieved on the basis of current progress and therefore urged Parties and invited other Governments and relevant organizations to undertake actions to enhance the implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, especially towards meeting targets for which there was then more limited progress.

10. The Liaison Group therefore reviewed the information basis for the mid-term review and discussed options to enhance the quality and coverage of information. It was noted that the mid-term review was based on information provided in response to a call to all members of the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation, as well as a review of scientific literature and information from fifth national reports and updated national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs). A “dashboard” approach similar to that used for the mid-term review of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 had been

used which also made cross-references between the 16 targets of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets. A draft of the mid-term review had been made available for the information of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice at its eighteenth meeting, and was further reviewed, refined and complemented in the light of comments made at that meeting. The final document was released ahead of the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties as CBD Technical Series No. 81.

11. The Group noted that information was generally more available for those targets that are most relevant to botanic gardens, while information on sustainable use and links to the agriculture sector was sketchier. Some information had been obtained from the *State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources* of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and global data sets which had seen rapid progress recently, including the following:

- (a) Genesys for ex situ crop collection;³
- (b) PlantSearch and “ThreatSearch” for threatened species in cultivation;⁴
- (c) Sampled red list index for plants for conservation status assessments beyond the groups that have been fully assessed according to the criteria of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN);⁵
- (d) Red list index for crop wild relative diversity and occurrence.⁶

12. It was noted that, since the publication of the mid-term review for the Global Strategy, additional fifth national reports and updated NBSAPs had been received and that work on the FAO report *State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture* was under way, which could serve to update the information available for the mid-term review. Also, in response to a joint notification with IUCN, many Parties had provided updated information on protected areas and national red lists, which included useful information on plants.

13. With regard to the limited integration of, or explicit reference to, plant conservation considerations in updated NBSAPs received at the time, it was reported that the guidance provided on the relationship between the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 had not been sufficiently clear, which might have led to many Parties not making specific reference to the Global Strategy in their NBSAPs. One way to provide such guidance was through the NBSAP Forum (nbsapforum.net), which serves as a Helpdesk and to which members of the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation could contribute. Issuing a notification with explicit guidance in that regard was also considered useful in order to increase awareness of the links between the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and to enhance support for the implementation of the targets of the Global Strategy.

14. The Liaison Group noted that the online reporting tool under the clearing-house mechanism of the Convention, which was then being tested, would enable Parties to report more flexibly and frequently on progress made or measures taken with regard to individual targets. The tool did not make reference to targets of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation but they could be added as they related to respective Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The tool focused on reporting by Parties, both for the national and subnational

³ See <https://www.genesys-pgr.org> (maintained by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and the Global Crop Diversity Trust).

⁴ See http://www.bgci.org/plant_search.php (maintained by Botanic Gardens Conservation International).

⁵ See <http://www.kew.org/science-conservation/research-data/science-directory/projects/sampled-red-list-index-plants> (led by Royal Botanic Gardens Kew).

⁶ See <http://www.cwrdiversity.org/checklist/cwr-occurrences.php> (maintained by the Global Crop Diversity Trust).

levels, but it was conceivable that reporting by other entities, such as the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation or the business sector, could be enabled to complement formal national reporting. It was noted that the timing of such reporting would be critical to enable Parties to take account of information provided by such entities when they prepared their national report. It was further noted that technical workshops provided opportunities for gathering updated information, including with respect to progress in implementing the Global Strategy. It was also noted that the ability to report progress on individual targets might facilitate reporting on selected topics by Parties that had not elaborated a national plant conservation strategy and therefore might be reluctant to report on implementation of the Global Strategy.

15. The Liaison Group was informed that the Global Environment Facility, under its biodiversity portfolio, welcomed proposals from Parties related to other biodiversity-related conventions, such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), as long as they were formulated as contributions to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. It was noted that that change could enhance work on non-detriment findings for plants and thereby facilitate the provision of information on population status, distribution, population trend, harvest, other biological and ecological factors, and trade, all of which would be relevant to informing various targets of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.

16. The Liaison Group also noted the potential to enhance linkages with the Man and the Biosphere Programme, coordinated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and its network of over 650 Biosphere Reserves in 120 countries. The International Co-ordinating Council of the MAB Programme at its twenty-seventh session (Paris, 8-12 June 2015) had adopted a MAB Strategy (2015-2025) and agreed on the development of a MAB Action Plan, which provided opportunities for more systematic monitoring on the basis of indicators and reporting relevant to various instruments, including on protected areas and plant conservation.

17. In that context, it was noted that the Secretariat of the Convention was working with the United Nations Environment Programme's World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), the Joint Research Centre of the European Union, IUCN, the Alliance for Zero Extinction and Birdlife International to develop a country-by-country gap analysis of areas important for biodiversity that were not adequately protected, either through protected areas or other effective area-based conservation measures, and the extent to which they covered adequate portions of each ecological region. That work could also include areas important for plant diversity, including Important Plant Areas.

18. In returning to the question of how confident they were in the assessments made as part of the mid-term review it was concluded that, while some targets were difficult to measure and monitor (e.g. target 13), lacked baselines (e.g. target 12), were likely to be subjective (e.g. target 14) or difficult to quantify and benchmark (e.g. target 16) and, although outcome indicators were not available for several targets, the use of proxies, process indicators and bundles of empirical evidence had enabled an assessment that the Liaison Group considered to be of satisfactory quality and provided a good overview of progress achieved in the implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.

19. The Liaison Group considered ways to improve assessments of education and awareness about plant diversity (target 14), noting the work of the Union on Ethical Biotrade and of the World Association on Zoos and Aquariums, and was informed that the issue had recently been discussed at the Ninth BGCI International Congress on Education in Botanic Gardens (Saint Louis, Missouri, United States of America, 26 April–1 May 2015). The Group was also informed that the Austrian CITES Management Authority was commissioning studies to assess which factors triggered changes in awareness and behaviour related to biodiversity issues with a view to incorporating those factors into the curricula of schools and universities. The presence of institutions and organizations working on plant conservation in

curriculum development committees was particularly effective but not easy to achieve, as exemplified by the time it took the Millennium Seed Bank to join that effort in the United Kingdom.

20. It was also noted that, where information was held by institutions other than the ministries of environment and their technical arms, that information was difficult to take into account in national reporting. The Liaison Group discussed ways to establish ongoing information flows and coordination mechanisms, including coordination across relevant sectors. The Group was informed that the Subsidiary Body on Implementation of the Convention at its first meeting (May 2016) would discuss ways to strengthen national coordination mechanisms.

21. In concluding its consideration of the agenda item, the Liaison Group recommended the following:

(a) To encourage UNEP-WCMC, on behalf of the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership, to pursue its proposal on the development of indicators for the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, including by engaging and consulting members of the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation (GPPC) (action by GPPC required);

(b) To explore the feasibility of adding in the online reporting tool links to related targets of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation as well as to relevant and quality-tested data sets as potential sources of information (action by SCBD required);

(c) To promote arrangements that facilitate communication and coordination across sectors, such as co-focal points located in different institutions (action required by GPPC and SCBD);

(d) To facilitate access, by relevant national experts, including focal points, to global data sets with a view to enabling both to draw national information from those data sets and to contribute to their improvement (action by GPPC and SCBD required);

(e) To consider providing Parties with additional guidance in order to facilitate the implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, its reflection in relevant national strategies and plans, access to relevant information to review progress, and the availability of support mechanisms (action by SCBD required);

(f) To facilitate reporting by Parties related to the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation by developing communication channels between botanical institutions and the ministries responsible for CBD implementation and by offering timely information on elements of implementation of the Strategy (action by GPPC required);

(g) To consider including guidance on reporting on GSPC targets in the guidelines for the sixth national report (action by SCBD required).

ITEM 4. OPTIONS FOR ENHANCING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGY

22. In considering options for enhancing the implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, the Conference of the Parties, in its decision XII/15, recognized that a range of approaches might be effective in helping to accelerate progress towards the targets, and called for strengthening efforts in a number of related areas. The Liaison Group discussed them as described below.

4.1. Capacity-building and technical and scientific cooperation

23. The Liaison Group agreed that the GSPC Toolkit, which already included references to training material relevant to the targets of the Global Strategy, should serve as a basis for further compiling information on opportunities to promote capacity-building activities on botany and other related disciplines. It was noted that the website of Botanic Gardens Conservation International was being

restructured to provide information on seed conservation, plant health and invasive alien species, ecological restoration, tree conservation, conservation status assessments and documentation of ex situ conservation efforts, among other things. It did not include training opportunities but the intention was to include training courses and registers of expertise in the new structure.

24. The Liaison Group noted that it would not be feasible or practical to attempt to maintain continuously updated comprehensive registers of fellowships, meetings, training events, university courses or online courses. Instead, it would be more useful to list and share, in an easily accessible way, modalities for capacity-building opportunities, meaning generic opportunities to promote capacity-building activities. Noteworthy examples included the Master's Degree course offered by the International University of Andalusia in Baeza, Spain, responding to the need to train staff working in national CITES Authorities. The course, entitled "Management and conservation of species in trade: the international framework", had been held 11 times and represented a continuing feature of Spain's commitment to capacity-building activities on plant conservation. Parties should be encouraged to share information about other initiatives and examples of the inclusion of plant conservation in curricula.

25. The Liaison Group discussed the evidence of the impacts of past capacity-building activities with a view to maximizing their effectiveness. One of the weaknesses noted was a limited ability to follow up with participants after training events. Maintaining communication and support for networking among participants was considered desirable, and that should be incorporated into the plans for any capacity-building activity.

26. In terms of substance matters, the Liaison Group noted the usefulness of addressing clusters of related targets, for example those on the sustainable use of wild plant resources, and seeking to implement them in the context of themes that attracted broad interest, such as ecosystem restoration or interlinkages between biodiversity and health. Drawing on those examples, it was considered helpful to formulate plant conservation activities in the context of, or at least with reference to, such activities as the new initiative of the Lancet-Rockefeller Foundation Commission on Planetary Health, the post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals, programmes of the United Nations Environment Programme, ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and others on sustainable public procurement, or the programme on Education for Sustainable Development of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. In addition, countries would benefit from guidelines or minimum requirements for criteria of sustainable wild-harvesting and trade (for example, the FairWild Standard) for possible application in their public procurement policies.

27. The Liaison Group also discussed new approaches for reaching broader constituencies, such as massive open online courses and other Internet-based learning approaches. It was noted, however, that targeted courses reaching specific audiences were more likely to train people who would then be able to use what they had learned in their future careers. A focus on young people at the beginning of their careers would be desirable and it was noted that many alumni from the CITES course in Baeza were now representing their countries in CITES negotiations or working for national CITES authorities.

28. A call was made to provide practical training relevant to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, such as training on how the Global Environment Facility operated. In that context, the Liaison Group was informed of opportunities to solicit grants from the Green Climate Fund, which was inviting proposals for contributing to technology transfer and capacity-building on climate adaptation or mitigation.

29. The Liaison Group was informed that the Bio-Bridge Initiative, launched by the Republic of Korea at the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (see UNEP/CBD/COP/12/INF/33), was now entering its operational phase. The initiative would enable

specific needs related to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and, by extension, the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, to be matched with existing capacities that could address such needs.

30. The Liaison Group noted that botanical institutions, by their nature, were interested in collaboration and exchanges, involving both staff and expertise as well as plant material (including seeds and specimens), for purposes of scientific research and to support conservation activities. The current status of operationalization of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization, however, delayed the issuance of permits and hindered access to genetic resources, including for research and conservation purposes. Members of the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation were therefore interested in the development of simplified procedures for access to genetic resources for research purposes, and it was noted in that context that the International Plant Exchange Network (IPEN) provided a useful model for ABS-compliant exchange of material between botanical institutions for research purposes. It was also noted that the Nagoya Protocol permitted the use of model contractual clauses, voluntary codes of conduct, guidelines and best practices and/or standards to facilitate access and benefit-sharing. The need to develop proposals for guidance on facilitating simplified access to genetic material for research and conservation purposes was noted. However, such approaches would need to be developed in such a way as to instil trust and confidence between providers and users. The CBD Secretariat had experts ready to provide advice and guidance in that regard. A first step could be to carry out an audit of examples of streamlined ABS procedures for research and conservation purposes, and to add them to the GSPC toolkit (www.plants2020.net).

31. It was noted that there were various options for promoting technical and scientific cooperation and collaborative research included twinning arrangements between botanic gardens, mentorship arrangements, job swaps or staff exchanges, and secondments among others. Such arrangements were most effective when there was a long-term commitment from both partners. While Botanic Gardens Conservation International could play a role in promoting such arrangements, it was also noted that opportunities could arise through many avenues. In that context, the Liaison Group noted that one participant in the pre-Congress workshop on enhancing implementation of the Global Strategy in francophone countries had arranged a research stay at the Museum, enabled by financial support from his host institution.

32. The Liaison Group also noted that the ability of botanical institutions to engage in technical and scientific cooperation and collaborative research depended on appropriate mandates. For example, the Botanical Garden of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, had been given a mandate in 2008 to coordinate plant conservation policies for the entire country. As a consequence, the National Centre for Plant Conservation (CNCFlora) had been created in December 2008 with a mission to coordinate national efforts, and to understand, document, and conserve plant diversity in Brazil, in collaboration with research institutions and environmental agencies worldwide.

4.2 Mainstreaming plant conservation considerations into sectors and strengthening cross-sectoral linkages

33. The Liaison Group was informed that the incoming Presidency for the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, Mexico, had begun preparations for the meeting which would have a focus on mainstreaming biodiversity into selected productive sectors, including agriculture, forestry and tourism. Mexico had undertaken a number of consultations and preparatory meetings and intended to highlight successful examples of mainstreaming biodiversity on those sectors. Mexico was also interested in emphasizing plant conservation issues in that context.

34. The Liaison Group also noted that the country partnerships of the Millennium Seed Bank Partnership involved collaboration with agriculture and forestry sectors. Equally, the Crop Diversity Trust involved collaboration between botanic gardens and agricultural institutions. It would be helpful to engage such partners as the Crop Diversity Trust, the International Treaty for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture or the Forestry Department of FAO in the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation, ensuring that information exchange would go in both directions, for example through GPPC partners contributing to various FAO reports on the state of the world's resources (for example on plant nomenclature).

35. The Liaison Group further discussed the potential of linking the implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation with a number of processes and events, including the post-2015 development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, the Global Landscape Forum, the World Forestry Congress (Durban, South Africa, September 2015), the IUCN World Conservation Congress (Hawaii, United States, September 2016; a workshop on information and education would provide a good opportunity to discuss ways to enhance awareness of plant conservation), the forthcoming conference on local communities and climate change hosted by the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris (25-27 November 2015) and the Sud Expert Plantes Développement Durable (SEP2D) project in collaboration with UNESCO.

4.3. Establishing national plant conservation partnerships and coordinating activities with key partners

36. The Liaison Group noted that little information had been received in response to a request for information on the existence of national plant conservation networks or partnerships. Experience from countries in which such networks existed in some form, for example Austria, Colombia, France, Mexico, Rwanda, Madagascar, Seychelles and South Africa, were positive with regard to enabling plant conservation considerations to inform the countries' positions with regard to the international agenda. The Global Partnership for Plant Conservation could collect such examples and present them as case studies and guidance for other countries. The Global Partnership for Plant Conservation itself or IUCN and its Specialist Groups could also be used as examples of collaboration and coordination.

37. The Liaison Group noted opportunities to connect national activities on non-detriment findings and trade projects in support of the work of the CITES Plants Committee with the efforts of national focal points for the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. The work of CITES could benefit, for example, from habitat-related parameters arising from activities under the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. In addition, the CITES Nomenclature Committee would benefit from links to the World Flora Online project.

38. The Liaison Group considered that it would be beneficial to document case studies on synergies between the work of CITES and the implementation of the Global Strategy, for example training of customs and law enforcement officers provided by botanic gardens and other institutions, advances in the use of DNA barcoding for species identification, or in situ security systems detecting illegal harvesting of threatened plants.

39. The Liaison Group discussed the contributions of indigenous peoples and local communities to plant conservation, noting that those efforts were mostly undertaken without any outside support. While some indigenous peoples and local communities were open to formal recognition by the relevant authorities of their indigenous peoples' and community conserved territories and areas (ICCAs) and related management practices, others strongly opposed any interference. The Group noted the efforts of the ICCA Consortium (www.iccaconsortium.org) to support indigenous peoples and local communities in averting critical threats and challenges to those ICCAs and how ICCAs contributed to a range of Aichi

Biodiversity Targets. The Group also noted the work of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in supporting the World Network of Indigenous and Local Community Land and Sea Managers in the Pacific region as well as work in support of sustainable pastoralism and participatory monitoring. The CBD-UNESCO programme and cultural and biological diversity was also noted.

4.4. Enhancing outreach and communication in support of the implementation of the Strategy

40. The Liaison Group reflected on ways to follow up on the International Conference “Botanists of the Twenty-First Century: Roles, Challenges and Opportunities”, hosted by UNESCO in September 2014, noting that the final declaration, which had been made available for information at the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (see UNEP/CBD/COP/12/INF/41), included a call for an International Year for Plants for Life to be associated the same year with World Science Day on “Botany and plant sciences for sustainable development”. It was decided to further explore that idea as an excellent opportunity to draw attention to plant conservation issues and communicate them to the wider public. It was noted that a declaration by the United Nations General Assembly would require support from countries. The 6th Global Botanic Garden Congress (Geneva, Switzerland, June 2017) could be used to start planning activities for an International Year that could be envisaged for 2019, which would coincide with the twentieth anniversary of the Gran Canaria Declaration, the origin of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. The Global Partnership could prepare a concept note providing justification for the International Year and an indication of the content and types of activities. It was noted that planning for such an event would need about two years of preparations and a small dedicated secretariat.

41. The Liaison Group was informed of the growing importance of social media and Internet-based resources in addition to physical visits to botanic gardens. The Missouri Botanical Garden, for example, had, in 2014, 130,000 Facebook followers, 10 million visits to its website and 16 million searches on its Tropicos database; in addition, the Garden receives some 1 million visitors per year. The Group noted that it would be important to develop a social media strategy for the Global Strategy which should aim to reach different people profiled who could be interested in plant conservation. Links to citizen science programmes and the effectiveness of TED talks were mentioned in that context. It was also noted that Twitter was useful for solving specific questions or problems.

42. The Liaison Group also discussed the need to further promote open access policies for data and publications, noting that the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in its decision VIII/11, had invited Parties and other Governments, as appropriate, to provide free and open access to all past, present and future public-good research results, assessments, maps and databases on biodiversity, in accordance with national and international legislation. Researchgate (www.researchgate.net) was mentioned as a powerful way for sharing and discovering research.

43. In concluding its consideration of the agenda item, the Liaison Group recommended the following:

(a) To pursue capacity-building activities in support of the implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (action by GPPC and SCBD required);

(b) To explore the feasibility of conducting surveys of public attitudes regarding biodiversity and plant conservation in botanical institutions (action by BGCI required);

(c) To transmit appreciation for the launch of the Sud Expert Plantes Développement Durable (SEP2D) project and to engage with, and contribute to, its implementation (action by GPPC and SCBD required);

(d) To prepare a concept note providing justification for the International Year for Plants for Life and an indication of the content and types of activities (action by GPPC required);

(e) To better explain and promote the connections between ex situ and in situ conservation approaches, for example in ecological restoration activities, ensuring that practical actions are based on scientific evidence and that efforts are made to work more broadly with civil society, especially in the area of restoration (action by GPPC required);

(f) To encourage TRAFFIC, GPPC members, other institutions and Parties to continue the development of the wild plants trade flagships approach and its implementation, providing both the framework for implementation and measuring the progress against target 12 and other related targets of the Strategy (action by GPPC required);

(g) To prepare and circulate additional guidance for enhancing the integration of plant conservation considerations in national environmental and development agendas, improving communication between botanical specialists and institutions with decision-making processes at all levels and further elaborating on the role of national focal points for the Strategy (action by SCBD required);

(h) To provide additional guidance on global data sets relevant to the targets of the Strategy and related Aichi Biodiversity Targets to facilitate national reporting on those issues (action by GPPC and SCBD required);

(i) To compile examples of agreements and good practices on access to genetic resources and the benefits arising from it as a basis for the development of simplified procedures for access and benefit-sharing agreements for scientific research (action by GPPC and SCBD required).

ITEM 5. OTHER MATTERS

44. No other matters were raised.

ITEM 6. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

45. The Liaison Group agreed that a draft of the report would be circulated to participants within one week and that participants would be given 7 to 10 days to provide comments before the report was finalized.

ITEM 7. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

46. In closing the meeting, Mr. Peter Wyse Jackson thanked the Museum for hosting and BGCI for organizing the meeting and expressed appreciation for the contributions by all participants. He also acknowledged the participation of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity in the meeting.

47. In responding, Mr. Braulio Dias emphasized his commitment to, and interest in, the implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and confirmed the support of the CBD Secretariat in delivering on the decisions. He referred to the global assessment on biodiversity and ecosystem services carried out by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), to be delivered in 2018 as a major input to the discussions about strategies for the next decade. He also emphasized that the implementation process for the Sustainable Development Goals provided opportunities for better mainstreaming plant conservation issues into wider programmes and strategies.

48. Speaking on behalf of the Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Ms. Maïté Delmas expressed appreciation for the fact that the seventh European Botanic Gardens Congress had been chosen to host the Liaison Group meeting and thanked everyone for their participation in the Congress.

49. The meeting closed at 6 p.m. on 8 July 2015.

*Annex***LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

- Ms. Maité Delmas, International Relations, Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris and GSPC Focal Point for France
- Mr. Bráulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity, Montreal, Canada
- Mr. Matthew Jebb; National Botanic Gardens of Ireland, Dublin and GSPC Focal Point for Ireland
- Mr. Robert Höft, Convention on Biological Diversity, Montreal, Canada
- Mr. Michael Kiehn, Director, Botanical Garden, University of Vienna, Austria
- Mr. Jean-Patrick Le Duc, Director of International Relations, Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris, and GSPC Focal Point for France
- Mr. Pete Lowry, Missouri Botanical Garden, Saint Louis, United States of America, and Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris, France
- Mr. Gary Martin, Director, Global Diversity Foundation, Marrakesh, Morocco
- Mr. Narcisse Mbarga Lambert, Scientific Authority for CITES, Yaoundé, Cameroon
- Ms. Noeline Raondry Rakotoarisoa, UNESCO, Man and the Biosphere Programme, Paris, France
- Mr. Bernard Riera, Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris, France
- Ms. Kate Sackman, Executive Director, Botanic Gardens Conservation International (United States), Chicago, United States
- Ms. Suzanne Sharrock, Botanic Gardens Conservation International, Richmond, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
- Mr. Paul Smith, Secretary General, Botanic Gardens Conservation International, Richmond, United Kingdom
- Ms. Anastasiya Timoshyna, TRAFFIC International, Cambridge, United Kingdom
- Mr. Gilles Vincent, Special Advisor to the Executive President, Chenshan Botanical Garden, Shanghai, China
- Mr. Peter Wyse Jackson, President, Missouri Botanical Garden, Saint Louis, United States, and Chair of the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation
-