

Suggested areas of activity for national focal points for the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation

Draft for discussion

The specific responsibilities of national focal points for the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) are determined by Parties. The elements below are intended to serve as additional suggestions aimed at pointing to the areas in which focal points for the GSPC can support their countries/regions in the implementation of the Strategy.

Generally, the main role of GSPC focal points is to act as a link and transmitter of information between the national ministry/authority responsible for implementation of the CBD on the one hand and the national plant conservation actors on the other. Whether or not GSPC focal points are authorized to directly transmit official information to the CBD Secretariat varies from country to country.

The GSPC focal point is vital to the success of the national implementation of the Strategy by bringing together stakeholders, promoting the development or updating of the national plant conservation strategy and targets and their incorporation into relevant plans, programmes and initiatives and by sharing this information with other countries, including through the GSPC toolkit.

GSPC focal points may be regularly called on to undertake a variety of required tasks, including:

Promotion and review of national implementation: The GSPC provides a framework for the national implementation of a plant conservation agenda. Its success depends on the actions taken on the ground, which in turn depends on the degree to which countries have incorporated plant conservation strategies and targets in their sustainable development plans and policies and set aside resources for their implementation, or mainstreamed plant conservation activities into sectors. Specifically, countries are invited to “develop or update national and, regional targets as appropriate, and, where appropriate, to incorporate them into relevant plans, programmes and initiatives, including national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and to align the further implementation of the Strategy with national and/or regional efforts to implement the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020” (decision X/17, paragraph 6 (a)).¹ Each country will decide individually (or sometimes through regional processes) how to do this in accordance with its national priorities and capacities, and taking into account its plant diversity. However there is great value in sharing experiences amongst countries (for example through regional workshops, including in the context of updating national biodiversity strategies and action plans; by developing joint projects and activities related to plant conservation that involve several countries; or by offering examples of national implementation, national plant conservation strategies or approaches and techniques to plant conservation that have been developed or applied at national level. These can be made available through the GSPC toolkit²).

Consultations with national and local partners: Where either the CBD Secretariat or national planning and reporting processes require detailed information and data on plant conservation the GSPC focal

¹ See <http://www.cbd.int/decision/cop/?id=12283>

² See www.plants2020.net. Examples of national implementation can be found at <http://www.plants2020.net/national-casestudies/>

point will need to communicate with the holders of such information and data. This may include branches of ministries, technical agencies including those responsible for forestry, agriculture, phytosanitary services , national CITES authorities, botanical gardens, museums and collections, research institutions, genebanks, non-governmental organizations (local, country-wide and national offices of international NGOs), local authorities, indigenous and local communities, and plant conservation experts among others. Such consultations can be time consuming and expensive and their level of detail will depend on the importance of the issue at stake and on the availability of resources. It should thereby be borne in mind that where the GSPC focal point has limited resources one of the partners listed above may be able to assist.

Reactions to communications and notifications from the CBD Secretariat: These will include invitations to review documents and comment on materials prepared in line with COP decisions or submit views on issues related to plant conservation; invitations to participate in, or nominate qualified experts to participate in, meetings or other processes related to plant conservation; transmissions of information of general relevance to countries in the context of the GSPC; requests to report on progress in implementation of the GSPC at national level (and where appropriate in a regional context).

These notifications usually require responses by a certain deadline. Notifications are automatically sent by email (or in some cases by fax) to officially nominated national representatives, whereby notifications related to the GSPC would normally be sent to the primary national focal point, the SBSTTA focal point as well as the GSPC focal point where one has been nominated. Depending on the specific responsibilities and assignments, GSPC focal points, would in these cases, do the technical part and transmit this to the SBSTTA and/or primary national focal point for review and onward transmission. All notifications are publicly accessible from <http://www.cbd.int/gspc/notifications.shtml>.