

# IUCN SSC Plant Conservation Sub-Committee



2016-2017 Report



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## Co-Chairs

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## Location/Affiliation

South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), South Africa

## Number of members

15

## Mission statement

The IUCN SSC Plant Conservation Sub-Committee (PCSC) leads IUCN's efforts in stemming the loss of global plant diversity through its wide-ranging network of plant conservationists. The PCSC is responsible for advising and assisting on the overall prioritisation and programme oversight within the SSC to deliver on its plant conservation responsibilities. The PCSC works to support and facilitate the activities of the SSC Chair, the IUCN Global Species Programme, and the expert volunteer network of Specialist Groups, Red List Authorities, Task Forces and others, providing overall strategic guidance and direction in accordance with the mandate of the SSC.

## Main activities by Key Priority Area (2016 & 2017)

### Barometer of life

#### ■ Red List

i. Members of the PCSC have made good progress with developing a tools for automating Least Concerned assessments, these tools includes ways of automatically clean GBIF records, as well as producing the basic parameters required for the IUCN assessment. This work is being led by KEW and we hope to have a working online tool within the next six months for our various plant Red List partners and the megadiverse countries on the PCSC to test. (KSR #6)

ii. There is extensive co-ordination taking place around the Global Tree Assessments with all megadiverse countries on the PCSC currently assessing tree species. (KSR #29)

### Communications

#### ■ Scientific meetings

i. PCSC meeting took place in October 2017 at Kirstenbosch Gardens Cape Town, South Africa. A work plan was developed for the Plant

Conservation Sub-Committee to implement over the next four years in close collaboration with all plant specialist groups within the IUCN SSC network. (KSR #28)

## Increasing diversity of SSC

### ■ Membership

i. Increased representation of megadiverse countries.

### ■ Synergy

i. Major botanical plant research and conservation institutions (Kew, Missouri Botanic Gardens and Botanic Gardens Conservation International) are part of the PCSC. (KSR #29)

## Acknowledgements

We thank the IUCN SSC for providing funding to support the first meeting of the Plant Conservation Sub-Committee and the South African National Biodiversity Institute for hosting the meeting.

## Targets for the quadrennium 2017-2020

### Barometer of life

Capacity building: support specialist groups to achieve assessments committed to in the IUCN Strategic Plan for Species, through having one-on-one skype calls with each group and emailing them to encourage progress. Encourage them to submit in new languages allowed on the Red List. Provide training and reviews of assessments where needed.

Green List: test the Green List for Cycads, Kew Caribbean plants, Cacti, and sample Global Tree Campaign Species.

Proposal development and funding: raise funds to conduct a Global Tree Assessment that also includes resources for the Red List Unit to be able to process these assessments.



Members of the Plant Conservation Sub-Committee  
Photo: PCSC archives

**Red List:** (1) manage and drive assessments forward in 13 megadiverse countries: US, Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, Ecuador, Peru, South Africa, Ethiopia, Madagascar, India, Indonesia, China, Australia; (2) champion Red List assessment of the CITES-listed plants and species important to livelihoods; (3) develop a system for automating LC assessments for plants; (4) prioritise CWR assessments in hotspots - including Indonesia, Brazil and Ethiopia.

#### Capacity building

**Capacity building:** encourage students to conduct assessments at selected universities where a champion lecturer is able to both teach assessment methodology and review assessments produced.

**Synergy:** share the framework for agrobiodiversity developed by CONABIO and place on GSPC toolkit Plants20/20.

#### Communications

**Communication:** (1) select a handful of plant journals to work with, ensure experienced plant assessors are nominated as reviewers for papers that include assessment information; create links using SIS connect to automatically pull assessment information into SIS; (2) write a paper - calling on botanists to publish assessment information for Red Listing (Taxon call to arms); (3) guideline for including species in spatial conservation planning by producing a new appendix to the UNEP WCMC Mapping Biodiversity Priorities publication; (4) contribute to publications for TRAFFIC's public/consumer campaign (with/via botanic gardens, private sector), to increase the awareness of the use of wild plants in products, highlight issues around their sustainability, and promote the more responsible practices to key companies involved in key plant resources in trade.

**Synergy:** (1) map where we have Specialist Groups and if they have links to Botanic Gardens - post survey of groups; (2) produce case studies on good relationships between Botanic Gardens and Specialist Groups (that include both examples of re-introductions and *ex situ* work); (3) at least two new formal partnerships in place by 2019.

#### Conservation action

**Conservation activities:** (1) ensuring in situ conservation of plants is promoted via developing guidelines on including plant diversity in action plans and sector based plans; (2) ensure that use and trade of plants is reflected in the work of SGs as/when appropriate, including to request plant SGs to integrate SU and trade in their work, in particular for the new SGs; (3) champion the use of the Plant Sustainable Use guidelines by expanding the use of the FairWild Standard and its certification scheme as a recognized international best practice for sustainable harvest and trade in wild plants.

**Research activities:** (1) hotspot regions (Indonesia, Brazil, South Africa, Madagascar, Colombia) to list Sites for Zero extinction for Plants (once on Red List); (2) hotspot regions where possible to identify KBAs (once on Red List) (Indonesia, Brazil, South Africa, Madagascar, Colombia).

#### Policy

**Policy advice:** (1) develop the next iteration of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation that incorporates the views and aspirations of the entire plant conservation community (not just the *ex situ* community); (2) develop better indicators for the post-2020 global biodiversity targets for plants, also provide tools and data services for conservation practitioners and policymakers, including CBD national focal points; (3) produce a policy brief on Crop Wild Relatives (CWR) and their role in adaptation to climate change, consider turning this into a resolution for WCC; (4) collate the case studies on what works for plants, listed on CITES Appendices, for example in collaboration with CITES Secretariat; (5) champion/support piloting of the FairWild Standard and certification for high risk CITES-listed species, and summarize case study at the relevant CITES events (in particular as relevant to livelihoods and incentives agenda items); (6) develop the concept and complete the review of costs and benefits, as well as conservation and livelihood promises vs. the outcomes of the switch to *ex situ* production of plants; (7) use the outcomes to inform policy-making, including CITES, national policies.

**Synergy:** facilitate the identification and

engagement of plant SGs to designate CITES focal points with IUCN Global Species Programme (GSP) and SSC and work together to: (a) review plant SGs engagement with CITES in 2017-18 and report back to PCSC; (b) make SGs aware of the usefulness of the application of the CITES Non Detriment Findings guidance for perennial plants (the nine-steps methodology) for relevant taxa; (c) identify how to flag to the SGs priority issues prior to particular CITES events; (d) identify SG members who are involved with wildlife trade discussions, ask how to best support them in strengthening the arguments for plants trade in the international wildlife trade discussions; (e) encourage Plant SGs to contribute to the CITES and livelihoods item, including responding to the current call for case studies on CITES and livelihoods; also the CITES Rural communities process. Specifically, these are some of the potential case studies: Palms; Medicinal plants; FairWild; Madagascar CITES spp (ornamental); Central African ebonies - Taylor guitars (check with George Schatz).

#### Projected impact for the quadrennium 2017-2020

The Plant Conservation Specialist Groups aims to achieve the following outputs by 2020: (1) achieving the barometer of life targets for plants (38,000 plants included on the IUCN Red List); (2) guidelines on including plant diversity in action plans and sector based plans developed; (3) *ex situ* conservation of plants promoted by involving botanic gardens in conservation and support of IUCN SSC groups; (4) each IUCN SSC specialist group has a sustainable use focus; (5) quantifiable targets related to plant diversity incorporated into the post-2020 global biodiversity targets.

#### Summary of activities (2016-2017)

Key Priority Area ratio: 3/7

Key Priority Areas addressed:

- Barometer of life (2 activities)
- Communications (1 activity)
- Increasing diversity of SSC (2 activities)

Main KSRs addressed: 6, 28, 29