

# “Planting the seeds of Biodiversity”

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## **Abstract/summary:**

While the need for protecting biological diversity is becoming increasingly urgent, it is a complex issue. Educators from Canadian botanical gardens, arboreta and museums will share experiences, insights and activities to assist in teaching about the importance biological diversity and how to engage Canadians in taking action.

## **Description:**

According to the IUCN Red List of endangered species, one in three amphibians, almost half of the freshwater turtles, one in eight birds and one quarter of known mammals are known to be in jeopardy. In addition, botanists estimate that approximately 100,000 plants are threatened or face extinction in the wild in the next 10 years. Maintaining the diversity of biological life is urgent.

In an era where “dna” and “genetically modified organism” are everyday terminology, it seems surprising that we don't have a common understanding of the term “biodiversity” nor full appreciation of the importance diversity to the health of life on Earth. The living and non-living collections at botanical gardens, arboreta, zoos and museums highlight this diversity and offer opportunities for research, education and public participation.

Many of these institutions are contributing to international efforts and agreements to protect and promote biodiversity. For example, 20 Canadian institutions have registered to support the International Agenda for Botanic Gardens in Conservation. Collectively their research and education about plant conservation and sustainability help meet targets that Canada has committed to as a country endorsing the the International Convention on Biological Diversity.

At this workshop, educators from Canadian botanical gardens, arboreta and museums will share experiences, insights and activities to assist in teaching about the importance biological diversity to audiences of all ages and facilitate a discussion on how to engage students and community citizens in taking action to protect our important biological heritage.