

The Contribution of the Australian Seed Bank Partnership to the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation

The Australian Seed Bank Partnership is contributing to the implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation in several significant ways:

Objective 1 (target 1 and target 3)

The Australian Seed Bank Partnership is collaborating with the *Atlas of Living Australia* to build an accessible online seed information resource drawing on the collections data captured, and knowledge created through seed science, while building ex situ collections over the past 12 years. This information is being integrated with other relevant data records such as Australia's Virtual Herbarium and the spatial layers available through the Atlas (the resource is currently undergoing testing and refinement and will be launched in 2013 - <http://asbp.ala.org.au>). As a distributed database, powered by the Atlas, it provides the capability to export the data into other systems e.g. the MSBP data warehouse and the World Flora online.

Objective 2 (target 8)

Members have already secured a third of Australia's flora in conservation seed banks with duplicate collections at the Millennium Seed Bank, including 25% of the nation's threatened plants. The ASBP's *1000 Species Project* (2011-2020), a national collaboration, builds upon the existing conservation seed bank collections by coordinating targeted seed collection of endangered, endemic or economically significant species not already represented in seed bank, as well as working to enhance the genetic diversity of existing collections. During the 2012/2013 collecting season, partners will add around 170 new species to Australia's conservation seed banks and the Millennium Seed Bank in the U.K. The Partnership is also being contracted by the Australian Government to building ex situ collections of native species susceptible to *Phytophthora cinnamomi*.

Objective 2 (target 9)

The Royal Botanic Gardens Kew has indicated its intention to engage the Australian Seed Bank Partnership to support its work with the Crop Diversity Trust on wild crop relatives. The Australian partners will be collecting and banking seeds of Australian wild crop relatives for this global initiative.

Objective 2 (target 10)

The Australian Seed Bank Partnership is an active participant on the national multilateral *Myrtle Rust Transition to Management Group*, coordinated through Plant Health Australia, working to put effective management into place to maintain plant diversity currently being threatened through the recent invasion of myrtle rust in natural systems in Australian states including Queensland, New South Wales, Australian Capital Territory and Victoria.

Objective 3 (target 12)

The Australian Seed Bank Partnership, along with the Australian Network for Plant Conservation, is trying to negotiate with the Australian Government to develop national standards and guidelines for the sustainable collecting of wild harvested seed and the development of seed production areas that can support a growing restoration industry.

Objective 4 (target 14)

Members of the Australian Seed Bank Partnership actively raise awareness and understanding of the importance of plant diversity through their botanic garden education programs and activities. Australia's eight capital city botanic gardens and 150 regional botanic gardens attract around 13 million visitors a year.

Objective 5 (target 16)

The Australian Seed Bank Partnership was established to actively support the implementation of *Australia's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy 2010-2030* and support Australia's contribution to achieving the targets of the *Global Strategy for Plant Conservation*. Through the Australian Seed Bank Partnership we are taking a coordinated approach to building a national safety net for Australia's plant species through ex situ conservation that will provide us with options for the future use of these plants. The Australian Seed Bank Partnership is supported by the Australian Government through the provision of a national coordinator position and the hosting of the secretariat through the Australian National Botanic Gardens.

