

## The Austrian Botanic Gardens Working Group

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The Austrian Botanic Gardens Working Group (ABGW) was founded in 1998 and today comprises 18 members. They represent different types of Botanic Gardens (federal, state, university, public, private) as well as different collection sizes (from less than 400 species in a specialized university garden to more than 25.000 species in the Austrian Federal Gardens).

Communication and coordination of activities of the ABGW is ensured, i.a., by annual meetings (of all target groups: directors, technical directors, gardeners, administrators), by a listserver for communication, or by an e-mail list of all relevant persons.

Tasks to be coordinated comprise, e.g., research, teaching, education, public awareness, collection policies, documentation, conservation issues (mainly ex-situ related), the natural heritage role, the recreation area function, or the presence of BG-related issues and the gardens themselves in the media.

An area of special activities is the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) of the CBD. One field of interest here is related to seed exchange and conservation programs (incl. seed banking or seed collection activities) in accord with Target 8 of the GSPC. The ABGW work in this context mainly concentrates on rare and endangered alpine plants, dry region species, and taxa from aquatic and semi-aquatic habitats. Ideally, seed collecting and seed banking for these species will be combined with ex-situ cultivation and/or in-situ restoration projects. For such approaches, the expertise and standards developed in the context of the ENSCONET-EU project and provided by the two Austrian project partners, the BGs of the University of Vienna and of the University for Applied Life Sciences, can be used.

Further conservation activities of the members of the ABGW refer to the preservation of tropical species of concern (e.g., bromeliads, Malagasy orchids) or link to other conservation related institutions (as nature conservancy agencies, public bodies, GBIF stakeholders, or plant collection holders outside the network).

The work of the ABGW has positive results for its member gardens as well as for the Botanic Gardens community in Austria at all: Austrian Gardens today are better linked with each other, better organized, better recognized, more effective in conservation, and more visible. Although there is no extra staff or budget for the network, the work of the individual gardens can be carried out more effectively and successfully because of sharing the workload between different institutions according to skills, equipment and manpower available. The individual gardens as well as the network profit from the joint presentation of the ABGW-activities nationally and internationally. Additional benefits come from the joint homepage ([http://www.botanik.univie.ac.at/hbv/deutsch/ag\\_oebg/oebotgar.htm](http://www.botanik.univie.ac.at/hbv/deutsch/ag_oebg/oebotgar.htm)), the joint poster (the new version presented in Wuhan for the first time), or from coordination of participation in projects (in Austria as well as on the EU-level).

### The current member gardens of the ABGWG:

#### Kärnten – Carinthia

- Alpengarten Villacher Alpe

- Kärntner Botanikzentrum, Botanischer Garten

#### **Niederösterreich – Lower Austria**

- Arche Noah

#### **Oberösterreich – Upper Austria**

- Agrarium
- Botanischer Garten und Arboretum der Stadt Linz
- Ökopark, Biologiezentrum des OÖ Landesmuseums

#### **Salzburg**

- Botanischer Garten, Universität Salzburg

#### **Steiermark – Styria**

- Botanischer Garten, Universität Graz
- Landesmuseum Joanneum und Alpengarten Rannach
- Tier- und Naturpark Herberstein

#### **Tirol – Tyrolia**

- Botanischer Garten und Alpengarten Patscherkofel, Universität Innsbruck

#### **Wien – Vienna**

- Botanischer Garten, Institut für Botanik, Universität für Bodenkultur
- Botanischer Garten, Fakultätszentrum für Botanik, Universität Wien
- Botanischer Garten, Department für Pharmakognosie, Universität Wien
- Botanischer Garten, Veterinärmedizinische Universität
- Bundesgärten Wien und Innsbruck
  - Schloß Belvedere
  - Schloß Schönbrunn
  - Schmetterlingshaus, Palmenhaus, Burggarten, 1010 Wien
- Höhere Bundeslehr- und Versuchsanstalt für Gartenbau Wien - Schönbrunn
- MA 42 Stadtgartenamt