

Advances in plant conservation biology:

Implications for flora management and restoration



Symposium program and abstracts

Perth, Western Australia
25-27 October 2005

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Advances in plant
conservation biology
Symposium, Perth

THE MILLENNIUM SEED BANK – A COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP

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The flora of southwest Western Australia is unique. With more than 8000 species it is recognised as one of the world's 25 biodiversity hotspots. This corner of the State has the highest concentration of rare and threatened endemic plants in Australia. The loss of biological diversity is the most serious environmental problem facing this area. The major threats are habitat loss due to land clearing, salinity, weed invasion and introduced pathogens such as the dieback disease, *Phytophthora cinnamomi*.

In 2001 the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) and the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority (BGPA) became partners in the Millennium Seed Bank Project (MSBP) managed by the Seed Conservation Department at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, United Kingdom. This collaborative seed collecting and conservation project is focussing on collecting seeds from wild species primarily from the world's arid and semi-arid regions. The goal is to store 10% of the world's dryland flora by the end of the year 2010 in one of the world's largest seed bank. To achieve this Kew has enlisted the help of people from around the world through the development of collaborative partnerships. As well as Australia, countries as diverse as the United States, Madagascar, South Africa, Chile and Lebanon are involved in the project. This partnership will provide duplicate collections of material for storage at the Millennium Seed Bank and in facilities in Western Australia. This will help achieve the long-term objectives of conservation and restoration of native plant diversity within Western Australia.

It is anticipated that over the life of the project, the Millennium Seed Bank, the Department of Conservation and Land Management and the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority will be contributing to the conservation of some 60% of Western Australia's threatened flora.