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Biodiversity

Millennium Seed Bank Project



In 2000, the United Kingdom's Seed Conservation Department at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, opened the Millennium Seed Bank. This is the world's largest native seed bank and seed bank research facility, designed specifically for the conservation of wild species.

The Millennium Seed Bank Project aims to store seeds from 10 per cent of the world's arid and semi arid regions (about 24,000 species) by the year 2010. The project is a global undertaking with numerous partners from around the world, including the Western Australian Government.

In 2001, DEC's Threatened Flora Seed Centre began a nine-year partnership with the Millennium Seed Bank Project which:

- provides duplicate storage for seed collections from the Threatened Flora Seed Centre. Storing seed at two locations ensures double protection for collected seed;
- provides additional resources which have enabled the Threatened Flora Seed Centre to expand its capacity to collect, store and study seed by supporting post-graduate students, employing additional staff and purchasing specialised equipment;
- provides technical and research training for Threatened Flora Seed Centre staff;
- internationally raises the profile of Western Australian seed conservation activities.

Since 2001, Western Australia has contributed more than one million seeds. This project is safeguarding some of the State's most threatened and precious plant species against a range of threats, including the impact of changing climates in areas such as the Stirling Range National Park, where climate change may have a significant impact on the many rare and endemic species found there.

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