

PLANTA EUROPA

CRITICAL TARGETS 2005-7



Planta Europa is the network of organisations working to conserve the wild plants, both higher and lower, of Europe and their habitats.

VISION

A world in which plants are valued – now and for the future.

GOAL

To halt the loss of wild plant diversity in Europe by 2007.

The broader context - International Strategies for Plant Conservation

- The **Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, adopted by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**, provides a framework for plant conservation action and aims to halt the current & continuing loss of plant diversity by 2010.
- The **European Plant Conservation Strategy**, developed by the Planta Europa network and the Council of Europe, provides a regional framework for conserving plant diversity and has been accepted by the CBD as an integral part of the **Global Strategy for Plant Conservation**.

Both strategies contain clear, challenging but realistic targets under five common objectives. 43 targets for Europe to be achieved by 2007, and 16 global targets to be achieved by 2010.

THE PLANTA EUROPA SECRETARIAT

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The Planta Europa Network, at its fourth Planta Europa conference in Valencia, Spain, September 2004, set itself a challenging agenda to be achieved by 2007. Seven 'Critical Targets' were identified which are to provide the framework for Planta Europa activities for the next three years.

The **Planta Europa Critical Targets** are a principal outcome of the mid-term review of the implementation of the European Plant Conservation Strategy (EPCS) that was undertaken at Valencia. The mid-term review identified realistic milestones for the EPCS targets. Those targets that, for the time being, seem to be beyond the resources of the network, were adjusted.

In the spirit of focussing on the completion of the most essential tasks to achieve better plant conservation in Europe, the conference identified a set of targets that they felt were a priority for Planta Europa members to concentrate on and that should absolutely be achieved by the next Network conference in Romania in 2007. The resulting seven Critical Targets have to be understood as main indicators of success for the Planta Europa Network during the next three years. They include all the targets recognised by the conference as priorities, but focus on the elements of those priorities that are relevant to the work of the Network as a whole, not specific organisations.

PLANTA EUROPA CRITICAL TARGETS

1. Planta Europa membership increased to at least 100 active member organisations with at least one member from each European country
2. Capacity of Planta Europa members to efficiently promote and enable the EPCS and the Global Strategy on Plant Conservation at national, regional and international level, increased
3. 'Wake-up call' for plant conservation designed and launched at the fifth Planta Europa Conference (Romania 2007)
4. Effective platform for information and knowledge exchange on European plant conservation among all interested parties established
5. Identification and protection of Important Plant Areas (IPAs) further promoted in Europe
6. The development of a provisional European Plants and Fungi Red List supported
7. Best practice for conservation and sustainable use of medicinal and other socio-economically important plants identified and promoted to relevant policy makers

The Critical Targets fall into three broad areas of focus:

- 1) Strengthening Planta Europa's capacity and its membership
- 2) Promoting and enabling plant conservation in Europe
- 3) Contributing to key plant conservation programmes.

Each Critical Target broadly corresponds to a target of the European Plant Conservation Strategy. However, some Critical Targets cross cut more than one target of the EPCS.

The Critical Targets and associated Action Plan describe what Planta Europa members see as their most crucial (and minimum) contribution to the delivery of plant conservation in Europe over the next 3 years and where capacity must be built to achieve this. This is an **Action Plan for Planta Europa Network** to achieve the vision that all members work together hand in hand to protect the wild plants in Europe.

European plants are the most threatened in the world. In some European countries more than two thirds of existing habitats are considered endangered. This is due to:

- Land use changes in agriculture and forestry
- Direct impacts by economic activities
- Introduction of non-native species
- Habitat destruction

The Planta Europa Network was established to find solutions to these problems. It works by sharing expertise and information on plant conservation and facilitating opportunities for the development of pan-European projects and partnerships. More effective action can then be taken to conserve European plant diversity.

Who can join Planta Europa?

The membership is open to European organisations, governmental or non-governmental, that work to prevent biodiversity loss of wild plants in Europe.

The Planta Europa members:

- Play a key role in implementing the European Plant Conservation Strategy and the CBD Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.
- Experience great partnership opportunities for European conservation projects.
- Receive regular information on plant conservation issues enabling them to stay informed on the bigger picture.
- Obtain support for their conservation work and to prevent damaging activity affecting Important Plant Areas.

PLANTA EUROPA ACTION PLAN

TARGET 1

Planta Europa membership increased up to at least 100 active member organisations with at least one member from each European country

The achievement of this target will require enhanced communication with potential member organisations through the Planta Europa website, newsletter and various publications. The status of the network and benefits of the Planta Europa membership have to be clearly defined and reflected in all Planta Europa promotional materials. The achievement of this target will also require long-term commitment of the current members of the Network to promoting Planta Europa in their national countries, as well as among their colleagues abroad.

This Critical Target corresponds to Target 5.6 of the EPCS 'Capacity of Planta Europa to achieve effective plant conservation enhanced'

Activities	Institution to act	Timeframe
By 2007: PE network actively promoted in all European countries through the PE website, newsletter and various publications		
Improve information for potential PE members on the PE website	PE Secretariat	2005
Deliver PE Newsletter to the network members and a wider audience on a regular basis	PE Secretariat Plant Talk	2005
Produce information package to be distributed among potential PE members	PE Secretariat	2005



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TARGET 2

Capacity of the Planta Europa members to efficiently promote and enable the EPCS and Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) in national countries, on the regional level and internationally increased

Plant Diversity Challenge, published in the UK in 2004, is an example of a successful promotion of the EPCS and GSPC on a national level. A similar approach has been adopted in some other countries, including Sweden and Belarus, where the national biodiversity action plans for plants are currently under development.

This Critical Target focuses on collaboration with the existing **national** GSPC focal points and identification of GSPC focal points in all Planta Europa member countries where these do not yet exist. Planta Europa needs to communicate the EPCS amongst national focal points and assist with reporting on GSPC implementation progress.

On the regional level, the promotion of the GSPC and EPCS should be channelled through **regional** fora, e.g. the European Habitats Forum (EHF). The political priorities of the Planta Europa Network must be articulated more effectively at the European stage. On the **international** level, Planta Europa should be playing a greater role in Pan-European processes. This can be achieved by working together more closely with key international bodies such as the Council of Europe on key conservation issues, e.g. the European Red List for Plants, invasive species and IPAs.

Critical Target 2 corresponds to Target 5.6 of the EPCS 'Capacity of Planta Europa to achieve effective plant conservation enhanced'.

Activities	Institution to act	Timeframe
National Level		
Identify national GSPC focal points in each PE member country and make them aware of the EPCS; provide assistance with reporting on the progress achieved in GSPC implementation.	PE members	Ongoing
Explore opportunities to produce national responses to the EPCS and GSPC in at least 5 PE member countries	PE members	2007
Regional Level		
Develop PE political agenda and effective mechanism of communicating key conservation messages through European Habitats Forum (EHF)	PE Secretariat	2007
Support the implementation of the European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species (ESIAS)	PE members	2007
International Level		
Targeted & proactive engagement with the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation (GPPC) & other international plant conservation fora	PE Secretariat	Ongoing
Ensure PE members are fully informed of international developments on plant conservation and encouraged to engage as appropriate	PE Secretariat PE members	Ongoing

TARGET 3

Wake-up call for plant conservation designed and launched at the fifth Planta Europa conference

The 'wake-up call' will be addressed to the general public, decision-makers, and conservation professionals across Europe. It will enhance the impact of the next Planta Europa conference. This is a task to be carried out by Planta Europa members, and will need a central hub to coordinate it. The target involves all Planta Europa members, and so would be a very good network-building event. The event will be promoted in pan-European media, and designed to also target the European Parliament and European Commission.

This Critical Target corresponds to Target 4.1 of the EPCS 'A joint public promotion to articulate the case for wild plant conservation'.

Activities	Institution to act	Timeframe
By 2007: Focal event with sets of activities in each national country leading to it identified		
Identify a focal event and develop a framework for Planta Europa members to participate in the event	PE Secretariat	2005
Invite Planta Europa members to organise events in their countries and report to the PE Steering Committee	PE members	2006
Engage other regional players (CoE, EU and others) in the launch	PE Secretariat	2006
Invite professional press staff to assist with promotion of the event	PE members	2007



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TARGET 4

Effective platform for information and knowledge exchange on European plant conservation among all interested parties established

This Critical Target is one of the most important activities for the Planta Europa Network. Providing a functioning platform of information exchange, in particular on projects clearly related to improving plant conservation in Europe, has to be seen as a priority requirement and the main value of the Network for its member organisations.

The Plant Talk website's Country Data Sheets (www.plant-talk.org) can be seen as an example for activities that should be further promoted and supported by Planta Europa. A database of projects and programmes on plant conservation with responsibilities and activities in relation to the EPCS will be developed.

Information and experience exchange between Planta Europa members and beyond will be enhanced by the establishment of a more effective and interactive Planta Europa website. The new website will inhabit an interactive space for each of Planta Europa key conservation activities (e.g. IPAs; European Plants and Fungi Red List; implementation of species recovery plans and management programmes; invasive species management in Europe; conservation and sustainable use of medicinal and other socio-economically important plants; and rural development plans). Programme moderators, drawn from Planta Europa members, will be responsible for overall coordination of each of the topics.

The Target broadly corresponds to Target 5.5 of the EPCS 'Communication and information exchange between scientists and plant conservationists'. Achievement of the target will cross cut with other Targets (e.g. 1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 2.9, 2.21, 2.22 and 3.1).

Activities	Institution to act	Timeframe
By 2005: Present website of country meta data (Plant Talk) completed		
Assist Plant Talk with compiling information for 14 remaining countries	PE members PE Secretariat	2005
Mechanism for ensuring regular updating of country meta data developed and implemented	PE members PE Secretariat	2007
By 2006: Pilot study on members project data and information exchange system for European plant conservation and the PE network established		
Assist Plant Talk with the development of a proposal for the pilot study	PE Secretariat	2005
By 2006: News rooms and clearing house mechanism corresponding to the PE main conservation activities established on the PE website		
Identify framework for newsroom and clearing house mechanism	PE Secretariat PE members	2005
Identify Programme Moderators for PE Website Newsrooms	PE Secretariat PE members	2005
Develop and submit proposal for funding for establishing news rooms and clearing house mechanism on the PE website	PE Secretariat	2005
Establish News rooms and clearing house mechanism	PE Secretariat	2006

TARGET 5

Identification and protection of IPAs further promoted in Europe

The identification and protection of IPAs has long been a key conservation priority for many Network members, and considerable progress has been made since 2001. This process needs to be supported and further promoted across the Network. Network members should take a more proactive role in their respective countries to support, help facilitate and implement national IPA programmes.

A key aspect of the IPA discussion at the conference was the shift away from debating the relevance of IPAs as an important plant conservation tool, and the criteria for their selection, towards how the IPA process can be embedded in national and pan European biodiversity conservation policies and practises. The starting point will be to identify the appropriate mechanisms for achieving this - for example by using IPA data to assist the Natura 2000 shadow list process and the identification of sites for the Emerald Network, integration of IPAs within National Biodiversity Strategies and linking IPAs with the initiative to identify High Nature Value Areas ('Kiev resolution' on agriculture and biodiversity). The latter is regarded as a real opportunity to integrate IPAs with pan-European nature conservation policy.

This Critical Target broadly corresponds to Targets 1.4 and 1.5 of the EPCS relating to Important Plant Areas, with implications for Target 2.9 'Plant conservation benefits of effective Rural Development Plans'.

Activities	Institution to act	Timeframe
By 2007: IPAs promoted in the context of High Nature Value Farming Areas		
Develop work with other conservation organisations to ensure IPAs contribute to the protection of High Nature Value Farming Areas	PE Secretariat PE members	2007
Campaign to have IPAs recognised as criteria for High Nature Value Farming Areas and thus make them eligible for funding under agro-environment schemes	PE Secretariat	2007
Form Planta Europa agri-environment working group	PE Secretariat	2007
By 2007: Contact points identified in countries where no progress on IPAs was made and projects to contribute to IPA network initiated		
Prepare list of countries where no progress on IPA identification has been achieved and contact PE members in these countries; provide them with relevant publications and up-to-date information on progress with IPA identification	PE Secretariat PE members	2005
Identify contact points (NGOs, regional or national government, etc) to be approached	PE members	2006
Explore possibilities, also financial, of starting IPA identification projects together with the identified contact points	PE members	2006
IPA projects initiated	PE members	2007

TARGET 6

Development of a provisional European Plants and Fungi Red List supported

The implementation of this target depends on the performance of the IUCN European Plant Specialist Group, therefore the immediate task for Planta Europa would be to lobby IUCN to revitalise the European Plant Specialist Group and its programme, starting with the appointment of a new Chair for the Group. This Critical Target corresponds to Target 1.2 of the EPCS 'European Red Lists'.

Activities	Institution to act	Timeframe
By 2007: The activities of the European Plant Specialist Group supported by Plata Europa		
Lobby IUCN to appoint a new chair of the European Plant Specialist Group	PE members	2007
Planta Europa members to make their national Red Lists available to the European Plant Specialist Group and advise on information gaps and discrepancies	PE members	2007

TARGET 7

Best practice for conservation and sustainable use of medicinal and other socio-economically important plants identified and promoted to relevant policy makers

This Critical Target corresponds to Target 3.1 of the ESPC 'Best practice for conservation and sustainable use of medicinal plants and other sociologically important plants'.

Activities	Institution to act	Timeframe
By 2006: Monitoring work on the target supported		
Provide clearing house facilities on the PE website	PE Secretariat	2006



Planta Europa brings together 58 member organisations from 34 countries. For a full list of member organisations, please visit the Planta Europa website – www.plantaeuropa.org

The IV Planta Europa Conference in Valencia, Spain could not have successfully taken place without the support of a wide range of individuals and organisations. We would like to particularly acknowledge the support of the following:

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