

# europaan botanic gardens congress

16–20 May 2022, Budapest

*botanic gardens – where people and plants meet*



## EUROGARD IX, “Botanic Gardens – where people and plants meet”

The Ninth European Botanic Gardens Congress was held in Budapest, Hungary from May 16-20, 2022. It was organised by The European Botanic Gardens Consortium and the Hungarian Association of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens, celebrating the 30th anniversary of its foundation, as well as celebrating the 250th anniversary of existence of the Botanic Garden of Eötvös Lóránd University, as the first botanic garden in Hungary.

### Conclusions to the Congress EUROGARD IX

The conclusions are presented on behalf of the European Botanic Garden Consortium.

#### Participation

181 people represented 74 organizations from 28 countries

#### The Scientific Program

The Scientific programme included **70 oral presentations**, partly in parallel sessions, and (apart from two plenary sessions) were presented in **12 themes**:

- Botanical gardens as custodians of biodiversity
- Botanical gardens as experience-based classrooms
- Planta Europa
- Botanical gardens and global change
- Botanical gardens and policy
- Botanical gardens for food security
- Botanical gardens in a social context
- Botanical gardens as eco-attractions
- Botanical gardens as living treasures
- Botanical gardens as perpetuators of cultural heritage
- Botanical gardens as green laboratories
- Botanical gardens as historic gardens

#### 6 workshops

- Sentinel plant research in Europe
- Networking for plant conservation and habitat restoration
- Botanical garden visitors do not waste food
- Peer-to-peer learning: citizen science and community engagement at botanical gardens
- The future of living collection management: understanding the impact of your collection through value scoring
- Enabling responsible exchange of plant material and data

#### 2 satellite meetings

- ENSCONET
- Nordic Network

**51 posters** with an opportunity to present orally during the sessions

#### 2 thematic exhibitions

- « Exhibition for all senses » - emphasis on visitors with special needs
- « 95 years of Botanical Illustrations »

## General Statements

- It is acknowledged that botanic gardens come from very different roots but since 2002, the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, and its update in 2010, has provided a focus and primary framework to guide botanic gardens' activities in strategic and practical contributions to plant conservation.
- While it is clear that the GSPC targets have not been achieved in full, presentations made during this congress illustrate the good progress that has been made in implementing the strategy.
- The Congress unanimously supports the continuation of the GSPC in the context of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (GBF) as a contribution to the achievement of the vision of living in harmony with nature by 2050.
- The Congress looks forward to the publication of the new European Action Plan for Botanic Gardens that will guide our work to address future challenges aligned with the post-2020 GSPC and GBF.
- The Congress notes with concern the increasing negative impacts on plant conservation actions and research resulting from constraints to the exchange and sharing of plant material as a result of the implementation of the regulations of both Access and Benefit Sharing and biosecurity. The negative consequences of these issues need to be communicated to national and regional ABS and biosecurity focal points, and solutions - such as those proposed by the new plant material exchange platform presented at this conference - should be explored.
- The presentations made during this conference illustrate the expanding range of activities in which botanic gardens are involved, including for example:
  - *in situ* conservation actions in partnership with land managers and local authorities
  - seed banking and the use of seeds in integrated *ex* and *in situ* restoration projects
  - the use of exotic plants in collections as sentinels in pest and disease monitoring
  - urban greening projects aimed at increasing biodiversity in cities as well as ensuring greater resilience in the face of climate change
- Given the increasing challenges posed by global change, extreme weather, geophysical events and war, it is of great importance that botanic gardens put in place risk management strategies to safeguard their personnel, visitors, collections and infrastructure.
- The theme of this congress is '*Where People and Plants Meet*' and we have seen some inspiring examples of the education and engagement work carried out by botanic gardens across Europe. However, in order to further engage effectively, we have to continue to build our relationships with local communities, including through citizen science projects, ensuring that our messaging is clear and consistent.
- We acknowledge and applaud the efforts of the organizers to establish a silent auction in aid of botanic gardens and our colleagues in Ukraine, and we thank participants for their generous support.

Finally, the European Botanic Gardens Consortium is pleased to announce that it has accepted an offer from the University of Rome to host the tenth EuroGard Congress in Rome in 2025.

We look forward to seeing you all there!