

Gardens for life

Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium of South Australia
Strategic Plan 2009 - 2012



Botanic Gardens
of ADELAIDE



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people · plants · culture

Our Values - Trust, Connect, Discover

The community **TRUST**
the Botanic Gardens and
use Botanic Gardens to **CONNECT**
with nature to
DISCOVER and advance their appreciation
for the natural world.

The values of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide and State Herbarium reflect our internal aspiration – to interact with each other within the organisation and with the broader community. Each of these values relates to the others: remove one and they all are reduced; achieve one and the others are strengthened.

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Chairman's Foreword

To say that the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide are popular is an understatement.

1.8 million visitors each year would agree.

More than just a feast for the eyes, they are an inspiration for so much in our daily lives. Since their establishment they have made a contribution to our community, our science, our agriculture, our medicine, our architecture, our work and our enterprise.

They have germinated the seeds of great speeches, poetry, literature, music and art.

Their verdant displays have had a healing effect on our sick and hold the promise of solutions for even an ailing ecology.

Gardens are the lungs of our planet, the hope for our future, the proof of our endeavours. They are the beacons of our ability to sustain life and are the mirror of our practices.

The mission of the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide is to lead, inspire and engage the community in creating a botanically sustainable future in a changing environment.

We can address the global challenges of climate change and water sustainability through plants – by advancing plant appreciation, knowledge and conservation practices using our botanical collections and programs.

Our gardens are our place of leisure, our teachers, our role models, our research contributors and our conservators.

As the Chair of the Board, I believe this strategic plan will allow us to address great challenges and most importantly inspire the community to look more closely at plants and gardens, not just as a museum or living display, but also for a much greater purpose – life itself.

I speak for all the Board members when I say it is a privilege to serve such a great institution.



Ian Little
Chairman



Director's Perspective

As a collections-based scientific and cultural institution the Gardens and the State Herbarium has a significant role to play in the South Australian community.

The Gardens has had a major impact on South Australian agriculture, horticulture and pastoral industries in the nineteenth century, on establishing knowledge of South Australia's native flora in the twentieth-century and is a leader in environmental reconciliation through sustainable landscapes, in foundation knowledge in plant taxonomy and in landscape restoration technologies in the twenty-first century.

Throughout its 150 year history the Gardens has also maintained significant roles in education, recreation and culture for South Australians. Though our Gardens 150 celebrations ended in October 2007, progress towards the completion of the Gardens 150 capital program continues into 2009 (and beyond). The recent restoration of the Santos Museum of Economic Botany and construction of the Western Entry and the Garden of Health are just a few examples.

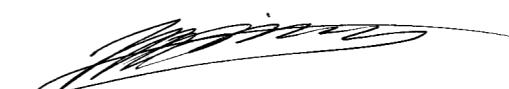
As we were formulating this strategic plan we were reminded of the interconnecting elements that are important in all Botanic Gardens.

We use the popular terms of People, Plants and Culture but beneath those headings lie a far more complex network of interdependence.

In a garden, water, soil, microclimate, biodiversity, science, patience and even sheer luck all play their part. This plan has all these things in mind. But there is one thing that will dominate this period.

The emphasis on planning for the Gardens and the Herbarium and for programs associated with their collections has shifted to planting and connecting with people in the current strategic plan.

While at first sight this shift might appear overdue, the clear directions for collections development and for themes and messages for communication, that have been developed through the planning process, will provide the Gardens and Herbarium with solid foundations for the challenges of the next 150 years.



Stephen Forbes
Director

What is a Botanic Garden?

"Botanic gardens are cultural institutions holding documented collections of living plants for the purpose of **scientific research, conservation, display and education.**"

Source: International Agenda for Botanic Gardens in Conservation

Who are we?

The Botanic Gardens of Adelaide are in fact three gardens – in the city of Adelaide, at Mount Lofty and Wittunga in Blackwood, together with the State Herbarium. It is the most visited scientific and cultural institution in the State, featuring thematic living plant displays, herbarium and allied collections from around the world.

Attractions in the Adelaide Garden include the Bicentennial Conservatory, the Palm House, the Schomburgk Pavilion, the magnificent Amazon Waterlily Pavilion and the recently invigorated Santos Museum of Economic Botany, the last remaining museum of its type in the world.

The Botanic Gardens of Adelaide also run extensive community outreach and school education programmes. The Gardens are a unique research facility and host a range of major cultural events.

The Mount Lofty Botanic Garden is an extensive collection of cool temperate plants from around the world, located in the Adelaide Hills, while the Wittunga Botanic Garden in Blackwood provides visitors with a unique Australian and South African native plant experience.

The Garden and the Herbarium are managed by the Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH) and the Board of the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium.



What do we do?

Our institution conducts research and provides leadership in education and conservation, based on our significant collections. Of course, it is the aesthetic appeal of our gardens that catches the eye of visitors but the experience we provide is even more substantial.

The Botanic Gardens of Adelaide and State Herbarium will play a leading role in informing and preparing the South Australian community for the significant environmental challenges of the future. Through our collections, we will contribute to the community's understanding of climate change and its many associated issues.

Our Seed Conservation Centre assists in conserving South Australia's threatened flora, and is the only unit dedicated to such native seed collection work in South Australia. The Centre works on a national and international stage, linking with other botanic gardens, universities and research institutions. Since 2003 we have been working in partnership with the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew Millennium Seed Bank (UK). This project has collected seed from more than 1,000 of South Australia's native plant species, including 60% of the State's threatened species.

With close to one million pressed plant specimens, the State Herbarium is the fourth largest in Australia, and houses a collection of international importance, including specimens from the first explorations of the State of South Australia. The State Herbarium is an internationally recognised institution, dedicated to undertaking research and an advisory role in plant systematics for South Australia. It has, since its inception, had a strong national and international profile.

In South Australia it plays a key role in undertaking botanical surveys, has been instrumental in the foundation of conservation parks across the State, and has established strong links with the University of Adelaide through postgraduate teaching of plant systematics.



How our Strategic Plan contributes to South Australia

The Strategic Plan for the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium draws its strength from interconnecting what is important in daily life, public life and natural existence.

Marrying water issues with climate change, nurturing cultural needs and bringing quality to our lives, at the same time educating the community, fulfils important objectives in the South Australian Strategic Plan (SASP).

As part of the Department for Environment and Heritage we work with the department's corporate plan:

- To move South Australia towards a sustainable future
- To conserve, value and celebrate South Australia's natural and cultural heritage
- To foster debate on the environment and engage the community
- To secure the future of South Australia's coastal and marine environment
- To maximise organisational performance.

But it is our contribution to the larger issues in our State's plan that are inescapable.

Through its public programs, science and research activities, and its multi-site operations, the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium has the potential to deliver benefits against all six of South Australia's Strategic Plan Objectives, with special focus on Improving Wellbeing and Attaining Sustainability.

The following chart illustrate just how interconnected all our objectives are:

SASP Objectives	Objective 1: Growing Prosperity	Objective2: Improving Wellbeing	Objective 3: Attaining Sustainability		Objective 4: Fostering Creativity & Innovation	Objective 5: Building Communities	Objective 6: Expanding Opportunity					
DEH Objectives	DEH 4: Better Decisions & Opportunity	DEH 5: Getting Results	DEH 1: SA's Involved	DEH 5: Getting Results	DEH 1: SA's Involved	DEH 2: A Healthy Environment	DEH 3: Sustainable Growth	DEH 4: Better Decisions & Opportunity	DEH 1: SA's Involved	DEH 4: Better Decisions & Opportunity	DEH 1: SA's Involved	DEH 4: Better Decisions & Opportunity
Sustainability												
Health & Wellbeing												
Collections												
Biodiversity												
Connecting with People												

The Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium holds a special focus for the Department on conserving, valuing and celebrating South Australia's heritage, and by encouraging debate on the environment while providing educational, recreational and practical opportunities for the community along the way.

Botanic Gardens of Adelaide and State Herbarium Strategy Map 2009-2012

VISION

Lead, inspire and engage the community in creating a botanically sustainable future in a changing environment.

MISSION

Advance plant appreciation, knowledge and conservation through our natural and cultural collections and programs

STRATEGIC THEMES

Sustainability

Health & Wellbeing

Collections

Biodiversity

Connecting People

WE ASPIRE TO...

enable and influence community and government to minimise the ecological footprint of public and private urban landscapes (SASP Obj 3)

advance community understanding of the relationship between plants, people, gardens and human health and wellbeing (SASP Obj 2)

as custodians of the states' primary botanical collections, demonstrate excellence in their quality, management and accessibility (SASP Obj 3 and 4)

advance the scientific understanding and conservation of our biodiversity (SASP Obj 3)

continually engage with different communities to learn from and to inspire one another and to encourage greater social inclusion and community development (SASP Obj 4 and 5)

HIGHLIGHT OBJECTIVES

- By 2012, 50% of all water used in the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide is derived from non-mains sources (1e, T3.9)
- By 2012, sustainable landscapes principles are guiding land management practices within 10 South Australian government and industry entities. (1e, 3c)
- By 2020, the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide will be at least carbon neutral. (1e, T3.7)

- By 2011, Western Entrance and Garden of Health is completed in the Adelaide Botanic Garden (1a)
- By 2010, progress a kitchen garden initiative to support community health and education programs (1a)
- By 2012, partner with Healthy Parks, Healthy People program to further connect people to the Gardens during National Parks Month, (1c, T2.3)

- By 2012, three garden areas developed with plant species indigenous to the local area (1e)
- By 2012, plant 150 trees in Adelaide Botanic Garden to preserve the mature tree canopy (1e)
- By 2012, herbarium, living and cultural collections information and knowledge is available on-line (4a, 3a, 3b)
- By 2012, the Santos Museum of Economic Botany is established as a major exhibition space, with at least 5 major exhibitions held (1b, T4.3)

- By 2012, taxonomic, genetic and ecological research informs biodiversity management, No Species Loss and Naturelinks programs (2a, 2c, T3.2)
- By 2012, the Flora of South Australia is published in print and online (2a)
- By 2020, establish ex situ conservation collections for 90% of South Australian threatened species (2a, T3.1)
- By 2020, 25% of threatened plant species in seed bank collections used in restoration or revegetation programs (2a, T3.1)

- By 2012, volunteer participation increased by 10% (1c)
- By 2012, at least 60 scientific and other publications are produced each year (10% peer reviewed) and publicly available (4a)
- By 2012, increased participation of disadvantaged schools sector in education programs (1c)
- By 2012, 100,000 people participate in Botanic Garden public events annually (1b, 1c, T4.4)
- By 2012, Indigenous reconciliation and inclusion initiatives are imbedded in visitor interpretation and education programs (1c, T4.5)
- By 2012 establish three web-based initiatives connecting the Gardens' collections with the community (1c)

ACTIONS TO BE DELIVERED

- Conduct an environmental review of current policies and practices, including energy and resource use, to determine the ecological footprint
- Incorporate sustainability principles into organisational planning and operations
- Develop an active program to use sustainable and/or renewable resources within all operations
- Develop Sustainable Landscapes demonstration sites developed in association with government and industry partners
- Coordinate the Native Garden initiative to promote the benefits of native plants and gardens.

- Extend knowledge of traditional use of plants in South Australian contemporary and historical communities
- Develop partnerships to effectively deliver Kitchen Garden programs to disadvantaged schools.
- Develop and deliver partnership programs with health and community organisations.
- Provide a safe and healthy environment for staff, volunteers and visitors.

- Collections knowledge accessible through initiatives such as Australian Virtual Herbarium, Atlas of Living Australia
- An interpretive master plan outlines the interpretive strategies and priorities
- Implement the remaining Tree Study recommendations
- Complete Eremophila Garden, Australian Cycad Collection extension, Grey Box Woodland, Botanic Park /Zoo interface and Sustainable Landscape utilising nature plants
- Deliver knowledge for decision making, research and publication
- Foster partnerships to develop the Gardens as a centre of excellence for horticultural training

- Provide a research program that reviews genetic and taxonomic knowledge of plants, algae and fungi to inform biodiversity management
- Use innovative technologies in taxonomic research to understand diversity and plant relationships
- Provide input to the DNA Global Barcode of Life program
- Undertake new biological diversity discovery program and use biodiversity knowledge to prioritise taxa for conservation and national biosecurity focus
- Research the biology and ecology of threatened plant species and implement actions to lessen the impact of threatening processes including climate change and habitat disturbance
- Develop landscape restoration principles and techniques for degraded environments developed in partnership with external stakeholders

- Develop and implement community research program that informs program delivery
- Develop and implement a volunteer strategy to build a committed and diversified volunteer base
- Develop and implement a Communication Plan
- Provide web-based and other educational resources in schools and partnering with community groups.
- Implement a sustainable annual events plan that links with community and core Gardens activities

TRUST • CONNECT • DISCOVER



But there are challenges ahead

To retain relevance in a changing society as well as a changing environment, the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium faces important challenges and will inevitably be judged on the effectiveness of its response in providing environmental leadership to the community.

The Botanic Gardens brand, public trust, goodwill and authority all work in partnership to help deliver Government, Department and Board objectives for the future.

The most significant challenges facing the organisation are centred on:

- Climate Change – demonstrating responsible leadership in responding to key issues of:
 - water and water management,
 - sustainability (especially for urban gardens and landscapes) and
 - conservation of South Australian flora
- Partnerships – Strengthening existing as well as the development of new partnerships will assist in achievement of our strategic goals
- Public awareness, connecting with people and our community:

By providing environmental information relevant to the community and developing the ability to reach non-traditional audiences with environmental health and wellbeing messages

By contributing to the understanding of climate change impacts and responses, through the Gardens living collections

- Innovation – we must use new methodologies and technologies in reaching a non-traditional resource base.

Challenge 1 – Climate Change

While water conservation is implicit in the Board's Vision, the Gardens remains uncomfortably dependent on a precarious resource. Each element of the Gardens planning, development, management and maintenance needs to specifically address water conservation in the context of drought and the anticipated impact of climate change.

We must lead the way in demonstrating sustainable horticultural, water harvesting and management practices related to both urban landscapes and native flora.

Challenge 2 – Partnerships

We need to be more effective with our current resource base and seek new ways of conducting business, connecting with it through shared values. We will strengthen existing relationships and forge new industry and community partnerships – diversity will bring strength. And the proof of that will be the show of community support for the Adelaide Botanic Gardens Foundation and its fundraising initiatives.

As seeds are carried on the wind, our collaborative partnerships will germinate new possibilities.

Challenge 3 – Connecting with People

We must remain relevant to the community at many levels. Our publications, events, school and community education programs and partnerships are the messengers of this relevance.

The Board strives to balance values such as tranquillity and entertainment, education and relaxation, commerce and inclusion, art and science in the Gardens.

As a cultural and scientific institution constituted under its own legislation, the Board has considerable autonomy. However, the Garden and Herbarium's license to operate as a cultural and scientific institution is ultimately in the hands of the community.

Simple visitor numbers alone are an inadequate measure of our effectiveness in engaging the community. The relationship between the Gardens and the Community is far more complex.

We must consider the involvement of volunteers in the Gardens programs and the vibrancy and membership of the Friends of the Botanic Gardens, community education, school holiday and schools education program and event attendance.

Volunteers give up their most valuable asset, their time, to support the Gardens. Friend's membership formally registers a strong connection with the Gardens and provides a key avenue for engagement with the Gardens and Herbariums activities. So in return, the Gardens must effectively partner with Volunteers and Friends of the Botanic Gardens.

Visitors and the community deserve for the Gardens to be accountable (including accountability for operating within their mandate), and we must honour our responsibility to listen to the views of visitors and the community.

And it is in the strength of all these relationships that we will find our measures of success.

Challenge 4 – Innovation

The natural world not only survives, but thrives on innovation. Yet often we feel that we witness little or no change. As we walk through the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide there is a peace, a design, a plan that is actually sowing the seeds of the new. New Technologies. New methodologies. Nature does it every day.

So we need to demonstrate how technology lives alongside ecology. Technology is not a competitor, innovation is at our soul. The Botanic Gardens and the State Herbarium must stand for inspiration in a new world.

Our Business Plan: What we aspire to do

The Board of the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium has developed five strategies that reflect the key challenges...around sustainability, health and wellbeing, collections management and connecting with people.

We aspire to

- Enabling and influencing the community and government to minimise the ecological foot print of public and private landscapes (Sustainability)
- Advancing community understanding of the relationship between plants, people, gardens and human health and wellbeing (Health and Wellbeing)
- Demonstrating excellence in the management and accessibility of the state's primary botanical collection (Botanical and Cultural Collections)
- Advancing the scientific understanding and conservation of our biodiversity (Biodiversity)
- Continually engaging with different communities to learn from and to inspire one another and to encourage greater social inclusion and community development (Connecting with people).

Sustainability

Sustainability is the capacity to "meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". Developing sustainable lifestyles and practices requires finding workable solutions to imbalances through more responsible consumer behaviour - the definition adopted by the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.

The Botanic Gardens will enable and influence community and government to minimise the ecological footprint of public and private urban landscapes. This will be achieved through demonstration of appropriate practises and choices for the local South Australian environment and the provision of information to guide the community towards a sustainable environmental future.

Health & Wellbeing

Plants and gardens have always been fundamental for human health and wellbeing, providing medicine, nourishment and a natural haven for spiritual replenishment and social connection. Through our collections, displays and public programs, the Botanic Gardens of Adelaide will advance the physical, social, emotional, spiritual and cognitive wellbeing of our visitors and the wider community.



Our Business Plan: What we aspire to do

Collections

The Botanic Gardens of Adelaide is entrusted with a unique collection of living and cultural items that represent the botanical heritage of South Australia. We will care and manage these remarkable collections and display them to enhance society's appreciation of our mutual environmental and cultural heritage. While preserving these valuable assets we will ensure and sustain the ongoing tranquillity of our Gardens.

Biodiversity

Advance the scientific understanding and conservation of our biodiversity:

"the variability among living organisms from all sources, including terrestrial, marine, and other aquatic ecosystems, and the ecological complexes of which they are part: this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems" – the definition adopted by the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.

Connecting with People

Continually engage with different communities to learn from and to inspire one another and to encourage greater social inclusion and community development.

Our focus on social inclusion will see increased participation of disadvantaged schools and the creation of a web-based resource accessible to all.

We will improve our volunteer base, with increased diversity and participation.

Efforts in community development ensure that people who connect with the Gardens will benefit on many levels from the experience. We aspire to have 100,000 people participate in Botanic Gardens public events every year by 2012 – which will help link South Australia's community with core Garden activities and our other worthy aspirations of promoting sustainability, biodiversity, health and wellbeing. We will measure our success at reaching and developing the South Australian community, to help direct our efforts, improving them where possible and enabling us to celebrate our success with the community.

Linkage to Botanic Gardens in Australia and Globally

Relationship to National Agendas

Australian Botanic Gardens cooperate through both formal and informal linkages providing opportunities for information and staff exchanges, establishment of standards and benchmarks, training opportunities, workshops and conferences. Coordination of activities at the policy level is achieved through:

- Council of Heads of Australian Botanic Gardens (BGANZ), and
- Botanic Gardens Australia and New Zealand network (BGANZ).

An important example of this cooperative approach between Botanic Gardens is illustrated by the development and publication in 2008 of the "National strategy and action plan for the role of Australia's botanic gardens in adapting to climate change".

The strategy has gained endorsement and acceptance in the Natural Resource Management (NRM) arena. For the first time, via the strategy and action plan, Botanic Gardens are in a position to report to and influence national agendas through the NRM Policies and Programs Committee to the NRM Ministerial Council. This is an illustration of the acceptance of Botanic Gardens having an important role in responding to climate change impacts.

Relationship to International agendas

Coordination of the activities of Botanic Gardens at the International level is provided by Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI). The BGCI International Agenda for Botanic Gardens in Conservation (2000) provides the common framework and principles under which Botanic Gardens operate and interact.

These operating principles are in response to:

- the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), 1992
- the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC), 2002, and the targets currently to be achieved by 2010
- Principles on access and benefit sharing between participating institutions
- the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).



Linkages with the Department for Environment and Heritage

The Botanic Gardens Strategic Plan is an integral part of Government and Department planning and direction. Through contribution towards achievement of the Department for Environment and Heritage Corporate Plan goals and objectives, principally:

- Objective 1 – South Australians Involved
- Objective 2 – A Healthy Environment, and
- Objective 3 – Sustainable Growth.

The Botanic Gardens is a significant contributor to achievement of the objectives and targets of South Australia's Strategic Plan (SASP).

The Botanic Gardens Conservation Study, Site Master Plan, and its Business and Program Plans, all provide the mechanisms for future progress, monitoring of progress and reporting of progress and achievements.

“You change people
by pleasure.

You change people
by delight.”

St Thomas Aquinas

