

ENSCONET e-Bulletin – February 2010

Welcome to the first ENSCONET e-Bulletin. At the beginning of each month we will publish this short bulletin to share network news. Please e-mail your contributions to Ruth.Eastwood@kew.org.

Projects of interest

· A new LIFE+ project started in January 2010 aimed at improving the conservation status of four priority plant species and two priority habitat types, all found in NATURA 2000 sites in Cyprus. The project focuses on the detailed monitoring and effective conservation of the priority plant species of Cyprus *Arabis kennedyae*, *Astragalus macrocarpus* ssp. *lefkarensis*, *Centaurea akamantis* and *Ophrys kotschyi* and of the priority habitat types 9590 *Cedrus brevifolia* (*Cedrosetum brevifoliae*) forests and 9390 scrub and low forest vegetation of *Quercus alnifolia*. One of the project's main objectives is to contribute to the long-term survival of the targeted taxa by storing and preserving a representative range of their genetic diversity at the seed bank of the Agricultural Research Institute, Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment. The knowledge and experience accumulated through the ENSCONET Project will be utilized. Specifically, the "ENSCONET Seed Collecting Manual for Wild Species" will be adopted for collecting seeds of the targeted species from their natural populations. Moreover, the ENSCONET Curation Protocols & Recommendations will be followed for further processing and manipulation (cleaning, drying, storage and general management) of the seed lots.

Partners: 1) Environment Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment 2) Frederick University – Nature Conservation Unit 3) National and Kapodistrian University of Athens 4) Department of Forests, Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environment 5) Federation of Environmental and Ecological Organisations of Cyprus 6) United Nations Development Programme – Action for Cooperation and Trust.

Contacts: Mrs. Christina Pantazi (Project Management Team Leader, cpantazi@environment.moa.gov.cy), Prof. Costas Kadis (Scientific Coordinator, pre.kc@fit.ac.cy), Dr. Nicolas-George Eliades (Project Manager, niceliades@gmail.com). Constantinos Constantinou is also working on this project.

Requests

· Germination ecology studies on *Stipa capillata* (a perennial grass of dry habitats in Hungary) are in progress within the frame of a M.Sc. Theses by Edit Rigó (undergraduate at ELTE University, Budapest) supervised by Peter Csontos. Peter and Edit would appreciate receiving any information on the ecology of *S. capillata* in other European countries. Published and unpublished studies, data etc, are all welcome. If you can help please e-mail Peter at cspeter@rissac.hu.

Publications and presentations from within the network

· Pérez-García, F., Gómez-Campo, C. & Ellis, R. H. 2009. Successful long-term ultra dry storage of seed of 15 species of Brassicaceae in a genebank: variation in ability to germinate over 40 years and dormancy. *Seed Science and Technology* 37: 640-649. (PDF available on request from Ruth)

· Maite Delmas (MNHN) presented the work of ENSCONET to the “Les Semences : de la Biologie à la Filière” course for the Paris Institute of Technology for Life, Food and Environmental Sciences and also for the Muséum Master Programme on /Ex situ/ Plant Conservation.

· Godefroid, S., Van de Vyver, A. & Vanderborght, T. 2009. Germination capacity and viability of threatened species collections in seed banks. *Biodiversity and Conservation*. Published early online. <http://www.springerlink.com/content/0rt35x3w40h765v7/> (PDF available on request from Sandrine or Ruth.)

Interesting publications from outside the network

· Dauber, J., et al., 2010. Effects of patch size and density on flower visitation and seed set of wild plants: a pan-European approach. *Journal of Ecology* 98: 188-196.

· Vander Mijnsbrugge, K., et al., 2009. A question of origin: Where and how to collect seed for ecological restoration. *Basic and Applied Ecology*. Published early online. (PDF available on request from Sandrine or Ruth.)

Forthcoming conferences

· 2nd European Congress of Conservation Biology

Conservation biology and beyond: from science to practice
<http://www.eccb2009.org/index.php>

· Seed Ecology III <http://www.seedecology3.org/index.html>

· 4th Global Botanic Gardens Congress <http://www.4gbgc.com/>

· 7th SER European Conference on Ecological Restoration

<http://www.seravignon2010.org/Welcome-And-Themes/Welcome-to-the-SER-European-2010-Conference-Web-Site>

Best Wishes,

The RBGK ENSCONET Team