



CASE STUDIES - ESPC Target 9

70% of the genetic diversity of crops and other socio-economically valuable plant species conserved, and associated local and indigenous knowledge maintained.

European Crop Wild Relative Diversity Assessment and Conservation Forum (PGR Forum)

GSPC Target 9 (ESPC targets 1.2a, 2.1, 2.11)

Relevant species or habitats

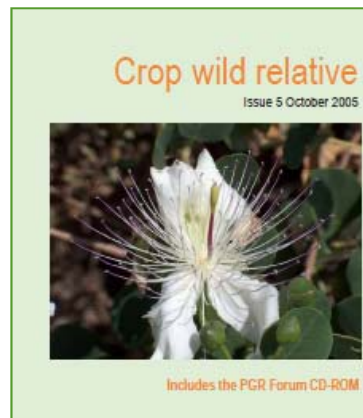
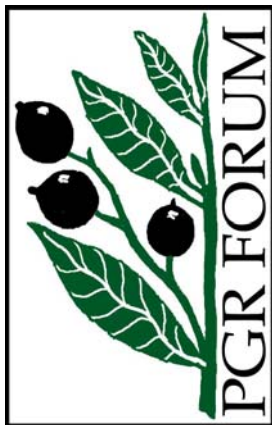
Project coordinators

University of Birmingham

Partner organisations

http://www.pgforum.org/Partner_institutes.htm

Funding mechanisms



Description

PGR Forum, coordinated by the University of Birmingham, was funded by the EC Framework 5 for Research and had 23 partner institutions in 21 countries in Europe, including IUCN (the World Conservation Union) and IPGRI (International Plant Genetic Resources Institute, now Biodiversity International). The project developed methodologies for crop wild relative (CWR) threat and conservation assessment, *in situ* data management methodologies, population management methodologies, and genetic erosion and genetic pollution methodologies.

The **Crop Wild Relative Information System (CWRIS)** – (<http://cwr.is.ecpgr.org/>), launched in 2005, provides:

Access to a searchable catalogue of socio-economic plants of Europe and the Mediterranean, including information on their distribution, as well as links to external information sources on their uses, habitats and threat status etc. Currently, there are 25,687 species and in excess of 280,000 distribution records contained in the Catalogue.

A data model for the management of CWR information, with an emphasis on site and population data, which is required for the effective genetic conservation of *in situ* CWR populations. The data model is illustrated with a number of CWR case studies and a corresponding [XML schema](#) is also available..

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Description (II)

The PGR Forum website also provides access to case studies and fact-sheets on conservation issues and recommendations for specific CWR (see example below), as well as five issues of the publication, *Crop wild relative*, which is now being taken forward by the newly formed IUCN/SSC CWR Specialist Group

Example: the diploid oat and crop wild relative, *Avena strigosa* does not form a sustainable natural seed bank and must be repeatedly bolstered by crop escapes to survive. Its distribution has declined dramatically across Europe because of lack of cultivation, although it is still grown by small-scale farmers as a fodder crop in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland because of its tolerance to high wind and manganese poor soils. It has recently been included on the UK Red List (2005). As a result of recent conservation action, there are now several accessions in national and international gene banks.

Crop Wild Relative Red List – If the 2004 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species is queried, only 184 CWR taxa have been assessed and considered threatened, and these are nearly all trees. However, PGR Forum stimulated Red Listing of CWR taxa in Germany, Hungary, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain, the United Kingdom and across Africa (the latter for the wild relatives of cowpea). For example, in Portugal, 216 priority CWR species were assessed using the 2001 IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria; one species was considered to be Extinct (EX) (*Astragalus algarbiensis* Bunge) because it has not been detected since the beginning of the 20th century, 58 species were assessed as Endangered (EN), 47 Data Deficient (DD), 43 Vulnerable (VU), 45 Near Threatened (NT) and 22 Critically Endangered (CR). Red Listing CWR will be a major activity of the recently formed IUCN/SSC CWR Specialist Group.

PGR Forum staged the First International Conference on Crop Wild Relative Conservation and Use in Sicily, Italy in 2005. One of the outputs of this conference is a **Draft Global Strategy for Crop Wild Relative Conservation and Use** (available on the PGR website), which is being taken forward by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in the context of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) and the CBD Secretariat

A major publication, *Crop Wild Relative Conservation and Use*, which stems from PGR Forum and the First International Conference on CWR Conservation and Use, will be published by CABI Publishing later in 2007. This will be an important publication to raise awareness about the critical need for greater attention to these neglected resources.

Date of case study

Citations and Publications

<http://www.pgrforum.org/Publications.htm>

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Website

www.pgrforum.org/index.htm

<http://cwr.is.ecpgr.org/>

