



life on earth depends on its extraordinary diversity of plants and fungi,

yet two in every five wild plants
are threatened with extinction

Rarely in the spotlight, the endless variety and colour of the world's flora and fungi are relegated to a green background for more charismatic wildlife.

We need to look again.

From the tiniest mosses to the tallest trees, wild plants and fungi are the foundation of our planet's ecosystems. They provide life support for all wildlife, capture and store astonishing amounts of carbon, clean our water and air, and prevent flooding and soil erosion. They give us oxygen to breathe, medicines to heal and food to eat. They raise our spirits and inspire some of our greatest art, literature and music.

**Wild plants and fungi now need
us as much as we need them**

Underpinning the health of our environment, wild plants and fungi are the foundation upon which we can help resolve the climate, ecological and societal challenges we face. These challenges affect us all, but the worst impacts are being felt by the world's poorest and most vulnerable communities. Restoring a rich diversity of wild plants and fungi as part of healthy ecosystems is the foundation for our food, clean air and water, livelihoods, safety and wellbeing. Plantlife will collaborate and influence on the world stage to empower societies across the globe to help protect plants and fungi.

It's time to act.

Together with our partners, Plantlife will:

1 Campaign for global and national strategies and investment in wild plant and fungi diversity

Global and national strategies for nature, people and the climate must contribute to the restoration of healthy, diverse and abundant native wild plants and fungi. Decades of urbanisation, pollution, industrial agriculture or mismanagement have led to swathes of healthy, biodiverse ecosystems being lost. Halting and reversing this loss can be achieved through plant-friendly strategies and investment by public and private sectors.

We will:

- Promote the implementation of the new Global Strategy for Plant Conservation as a part of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.
- Encourage governments to develop national plant conservation strategies and to prioritise wild plants within National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans.
- Spotlight activities threaten and destroy wild plants and fungi and their habitats which communities rely on for their food, health and livelihoods.
- Campaign for greater investment in action for wild plant and fungi diversity.

2 Support the identification, protection and restoration of Important Plant Areas in every country

Important Plant Areas (IPAs) are at the heart of our global action for wild plants. They are key sites for exceptional botanical richness, rare, threatened and socio-economically valuable plant species and rare and threatened habitats.

IPAs have now been identified in 30 countries around the world from Europe to the Americas to Africa, using standard international criteria established by Plantlife and partners. IPAs are helping countries to: prioritise areas for legal protection and practical conservation of wild plants; monitor progress on their biodiversity commitments and strategies; raise national awareness of and pride in their wild plant diversity, stimulating community-led guardianship

and citizen science; and bring together expert knowledge on the country's flora and strengthen collaboration across science and conservation.

We will:

- Highlight the value of identifying IPAs in every country.
- Share global best practice to protect, restore and celebrate IPAs.
- Invest in the international IPA database as a tool for planning and for monitoring progress.
- Support networking and sharing of IPA knowledge and expertise.

3 Help restore plant and fungi diversity and permanent grasslands for the climate

The nature and climate crises are inseparable challenges: healthy species and habitats provide essential solutions to climate change, absorbing carbon and increasing resilience. Yet many carbon-focused initiatives are blind to the importance of plant and fungi diversity or can even do more harm than good, causing damage and destruction to our most precious wildlife.

Nature-based solutions to climate change rightly focus on trees, wetlands and peatlands, but often overlook the importance of the world's permanent grasslands. From the smallest British wildflower meadow to the great steppes, savanna and prairies, these grasslands are home to thousands of species, many of which are threatened and endangered. They hold around 30% of the world's land-based – or terrestrial – carbon, as well as providing vital grazing pasture for livestock and wildlife.

Today, many species-rich grasslands around the world have been destroyed and those remaining are at risk. Globally, almost half of all temperate grasslands have been converted to agricultural or industrial uses and only 1% of the original tallgrass prairie still exists.

We will:

- Help secure the recognition of the value of species-rich grasslands as a climate solution as well as for biodiversity.
- Encourage the integration of grassland restoration into net zero delivery plans.
- Promote the restoration of permanent, species-rich grasslands as part of future farming policies globally.

4 Support communities in creating a healthy environment – starting with wild plants and fungi

The UN 2050 vision of *Living in harmony with nature* needs everyone to play their part in protecting and restoring their local environment. This is a question of environmental and social justice, human rights and wellbeing.

Habitat destruction and desertification – caused by human activities and climate change – pose major challenges to sustainable development and affect the lives and livelihoods of millions of people; 74% of the world's poor are directly affected by land degradation and as many as 80% of people living in rural areas in developing countries rely on traditional plant-based medicines for basic healthcare. Investing in wild plant conservation is critical for improving livelihoods and health, reducing vulnerabilities and economic impacts.

Effective community action requires specialist knowledge, technical expertise and practical resources, starting with the world's poorest and most vulnerable communities.

We will:

- Celebrate and support the actions of communities and indigenous people to protect and restore their local environments – starting with wild plants and fungi.
- Promote the integration of wild plant and fungi conservation into programmes for food security, farming, health and climate resilience.
- Expand and strengthen partnerships and knowledge exchange between all sectors of society, to support communities to take action for wild plant and fungi conservation.



2 in 5 wild plant species are threatened with extinction globally



I'm Karen Inwood, Plantlife's International Strategy Lead. The natural world is my inspiration and my solace. I spent many years in Central America working with climate-vulnerable communities to safeguard their food, water and health by

enriching the biodiversity of their land.

Our survival depends on the world's extraordinary diversity of wild plants and fungi, and yet two in five wild plant species are threatened with extinction.

So, at this crucial time for global agreements on climate and nature, Plantlife International is excited to join forces with conservationists, scientists and communities – building on our long history of international collaboration to empower people across the globe to take action for a healthy, diverse and plant-rich world. If you'd like to find out more and work with us, please get in touch.

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