
The IUCN Plant specialist group for Macaronesia: Using transnational cooperation and updated scientific data to better understand and mitigate the threats to oceanic island floras.

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Abstract

Following the recent publication of thorough multidisciplinary reviews of current and emerging threats of the native floras of the Macaronesian region (encompassing the archipelagos of the Açores, Madeira and Selvagens, Canaries, and Cape Verde), a new Macaronesian Islands Plant Specialist Group (MISPG) was constituted for the period 2017-2020 under the IUCN Species Survival Commission to assess the most urgent priorities for the conservation of the native Macaronesian floras, and to improve the impact of conservation science and practice for a better preservation of plant biodiversity in this multi-national insular region. The talk will delve into the most important priorities identified by the participating specialists, emphasizing examples on the needs to enrich and update the IUCN red list information available, to provide expert advice to eradicate the most important threats to the floras (introduced mammals, invasive alien plants and other consequences of global changes), and to upscale and enforce the application of multi-disciplinary research results in the planning of in situ conservation actions, alongside with strategically designed outreach activities with relevant stakeholders and social actors whose cooperation is needed for the effective improvement and enforcement of the existing nature protection laws. Overall, this IUCN chair aims to put into practice the most urgent actions suggested by the most updated scientific evidence, entailing a collaborative framework that should encompass Universities, Botanic Gardens and Regional Administrations competent in the protection of the environment in the Macaronesian area.

Keywords: Conservation, IUCN, Macaronesia, oceanic islands

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