

Master lesson

Conserving species *in situ* – a review of the issues

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Based on a global review, undertaken as part of a GEF project, of existing guidelines, methodologies and other relevant literature on the *in situ* conservation of target plant species and current activities in this area being undertaken by national and international agencies, a summary of the key issues and conclusions will be presented, with special reference to Europe.

In situ conservation is shown to be a poorly understood concept which covers a range of different situations that involve wild populations and species, domesticates, ecosystems agroecosystems, landscapes and bioregions. The *in situ* conservation of target species is a complex multidisciplinary procedure and can be very time-consuming and expensive. Most efforts so far have been directed at the management and recovery of nationally threatened species or on the genetic conservation of forestry species, crop wild relatives and medicinal plants.

The role played by protected areas in species conservation is discussed as is conservation outside protected areas. The economics and costs involved and the problems of implementing Article 8(d) and Target vii of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation are considered.