

SUBMISSION on Nature Conservation (Protected Plants) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2013 - 5TH July, 2013

Preamble:

In recognition of the importance of conservation and protection of endangered plants and special habitats of ecological or scientific significance, National Parks are and should be declared to protect them but if the ongoing conditions in the parks are not necessarily conducive to the survival of the species under threat, research and trial of "improved conditions" should be undertaken to identify more favourable conditions.

Rather than leaving an endangered or rare plant to take its chances in the natural environment where the natural elements of drought, flood, weed invasion, fire, natural predations and diseases could well bring about its extinction, positive steps to promote the conservation of the plant should be taken. The conditions in the natural habitat may already have been factors involved in bringing the plant to the verge of extinction.

More positive pro-active conservation measures to conserve threatened plants could and should be encouraged. These could be achieved by permitting researchers and students in Qld Universities and State T.A.F.E.s where facilities are already established, to research, propagate and distribute these plants to interested growers. Limited amounts of propagation material i.e. seed or cuttings are sufficient to establish stock plants to provide for the needs for research and further propagation.

Authorization of Regional Botanic Gardens as repositories of stock plants and a source of propagation material and/ or plants for researchers and plant collectors would be desirable. Bringing rare plants into cultivation to provide a source of propagation material for interested collectors and for researchers would take pressure off wild plant populations

In addition, we see a valuable role for members of specialist native flower grower organizations in conservation of rare plants. These members have a particular interest in protection of Australian native plants and are keen to assist in the protection of threatened plants. As recognized in the arrangements for managed propagation and distribution of the Wollemi Pine, the Foxtail Palm, the propagation of other rare and endangered plants should be permitted to protect further species from extinction. The survival of the rare Ginkgo, extinct in the wild, is proof of the valuable role to be played in the authorization of propagation and distribution of threatened species by interested growers and collectors.

This submission urges the following:

- Recognition of the environmental value of and scientific and commercial interest in rare native plant species
- Establishment of National Parks for purpose of protecting rare native species in the wild habitat
- Encouragement and facilitation of research into conditions required for survival of Queensland's rare plants
- Establishment of repositories for the protection of rare native species e.g. Captive breeding programmes are established for threatened animals, so equivalent programmes need to be established for threatened plants
- Provision for authorized access to limited amounts of propagation material of all rare and endangered plants
- Establishment of rare plants in Regional Botanic Gardens
- Encouragement of distribution of rare native plants from Regional Botanic Gardens to researchers, commercial and recreational growers.