Introduction

The Global Tree Assessment continues to gain momentum with a number of major new tree red listing initiatives. The emphasis is currently on assessing tree species in countries, which have the largest numbers of endemic species. These include Brazil, Colombia, Indonesia, Malaysia and Mexico - more details outlined below. At the same time, around 10,000 Least Concern tree species are being processed for the IUCN Red List. It is also important to identify the Data Deficient species - the priorities for future research efforts.

Thank you to everyone for sharing information, undertaking assessments and reviews. We are particularly grateful to Larry Stritch who has assessed many North American species this year contributing to work coordinated by The Morton Arboretum and described below.

We are very optimistic about reaching the 2020 goal and look forward to sharing news through this newsletter and the Global Tree Assessment website: www.globaltreeassessment.org

Very best wishes,

Sara Oldfield & Adrian Newton
Co-Chairs GTSG

sara@saraoldfield.net & ANewton@bournemouth.ac.uk
Welcome to new GTSG members

We are delighted to welcome:

**Yi-Gang Song**, a PhD candidate at the University of Fribourg (Department of Biology) in collaboration with the Chenshan Plant Science Research Center of the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Shanghai. Yi-Gang is Red Listing Juglandaceae.

Professor **Gregor Kozlowski**, curator of the Botanic Garden and group leader at the Department of Biology of the University of Fribourg.

**Pastor Malabrigio**, Associate Professor at the Dept. of Forest Biological Sciences, University of the Philippines Los Banos.

We also welcome **Christina Carrero** who joins the Morton Red Listing team. She will be working on Asian oak species and can be contacted at ccarrero@mortonarb.org.

GlobalTreeSearch update

A year has passed since the launch of GlobalTreeSearch and to mark the occasion we have made an updated list of the world’s tree species. Work has continued over the past year, updating and amending the database when new information becomes available.

Currently on GlobalTreeSearch there are 60,096 tree species listed. Since the launch of the database last year, 539 tree species have been added, alongside 8,317 country level distributions.

Despite adding 539 new species names to GlobalTreeSearch, the total number of tree species has only increased by 31 species. This reflects revisions in taxonomy and some erroneous species previously listed.

Many thanks to many of our GTSG members who have contributed new information to expand GlobalTreeSearch. If you have data to add or you spot an error (in taxonomy, distribution or lifeform) or have data that you think could improve the database, please get in touch at globaltreesearch@bgci.org.
**Red List of Fraxinus**

In February 2018, The Red List of *Fraxinus* was published. This is the first red list treatment of any genus within Oleaceae. Of the 53 species within *Fraxinus*, 11 were assessed within a threatened category, 35 were assessed as not threatened and just seven species were considered data deficient. Eighty-five percent of *Fraxinus* were found in ex situ collections and only one threatened species (*Fraxinus hubeiensis*) was not found in a botanic garden or arboretum collection.

Invasive pests and diseases were identified as the greatest threat to the world’s ash species. In particular the Emerald Ash Borer, invasive to North America, which is decimating keystone ash populations here. Other threats included logging and land conversion. These widespread, indiscriminative threats are a huge risk to our common and widespread tree species and this report highlighted the need to assess and understand our most abundant and iconic trees.

Thanks to all GTSG members who contributed to The Red List of *Fraxinus*. This publications is available to download - https://www.bgci.org/files/Global_Trees_Campaign/Fraxinus/FraxinusLowRes.pdf

**Regional GTSG meeting Indonesia**

A regional GTSG meeting was held in Bogor, Indonesia in February/March this year. It was a joint meeting with the Indonesian Plant Red List Authority and was held in collaboration with LIPI, the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and FFI’s Indonesia Programme. We are most grateful for the hospitality and support provided by our hosts and for all the enthusiasm and commitment from participants. The workshop provided a great opportunity to forge new partnerships, assess a range of tree species and review timber species assessments.
CEPF – Madagascar trees

BGCI has received a two-year grant from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) providing an amazing opportunity to work with the key stakeholders in Madagascar for tree conservation assessment. The focus will be on tree species from Western Madagascar. The project has two main components 1) conservation assessments for all the Western Madagascar trees and 2) field based assessments leading to species action plans in Key Biodiversity Areas.

The first component (conservation assessments) will be carried out by Kew Madagascar Conservation Centre (KMCC) and Missouri Botanical Garden Madagascar Program (MGBMP) and then reviewed and completed by the Madagascar Plant Specialist Group (with support from BGCI and GTSG). We are immensely grateful to CEPF for this generous support.

Red Listing North American tree species

Currently, the tree flora of North America is poorly represented in the IUCN Red List. In order to fill these gaps The Morton Arboretum is working with NatureServe, BGCI US, and the USFS to complete Red List assessments for all of the native US tree species. There are over 1400 species included in the project. With the generous help of Dr Larry Stritch, we have already begun the assessment process, starting with genera such as Salix, Ilex, Cornus, and Juglans. This builds on recent published assessments for Fraxinus and Quercus. We are interested in collaborating with other partners to complete the US native tree assessment by 2020. If you have questions about this project please contact Djerome@mortonarb.org.

Red Listing Mexican endemic trees

Esteban Martinez Salas and Marie-Stephanie Samain are coordinating efforts on Mexican trees. A working set of over 1300 endemic and near endemic tree species has been created in SIS for data entry and species assessment. Alejandra Celeste Dolores Fuentes is working on the project, and together with Marie-Stephanie, visits BGCI and Cambridge in April for training and guidance in undertaking assessments.
Assessing agarwoods (Aquilaria spp.)

Agarwood, or Gaharu, is the extremely valuable resinous heartwood from trees of the Thymelaeaceae family. The most widespread agarwood producing genus is Aquilaria, which comprises of 20 species. Unfortunately, harvesting agarwood is extremely destructive to wild populations as it is not possible to determine whether an individual is producing agarwood until it is cut down. Due to this process, many species have suffered considerable declines. Despite agarwood being one of the most sought after natural tree products, only nine species had previously been assessed on the IUCN Red List and of these assessments many had not been updated since 1998.

BGCI has been working with TRAFFIC to complete the assessments for the genus. Thirteen out of the 20 species have been assessed as threatened with extinction. Interestingly seven species were found to be Data Deficient despite their economic and cultural importance. A main recommendation for Aquilaria conservation is that more research needs to be conducted to improve identification procedures at the point of harvest and trade (import and export), in order to measure the impact of agarwood harvesting with greater certainty.

Request for help

In this newsletter we have highlighted just a few of the current initiatives underway as part of the Global Tree Assessment. We will report on other activities in future newsletters. In addition, we are planning to fill in the priority gaps in global coverage. Of course there is much more work to do. In some cases, this involves ensuring that preliminary published assessments are integrated into the IUCNSIS system and added to the IUCN Red List. Work is underway for example to incorporate information on the Andean montane tree species assessed by experts throughout the region and published in the 2014 report: https://www.bgci.org/files/Global_Trees_Campaign/Andes/AndesTreesmedres.pdf. Any updated information on any of the species included in this report will be gratefully received by Sara Oldfield sara@saraoldfield.net.
We are also keen to reach out to taxonomic experts who may have carried out preliminary assessments or be prepared to help with their particular families or genera. Please contact Malin Rivers (malin.rivers@bgci.org) if you can help or recommend others who might be interested. Amongst the taxon we have on our "hitlist" are Aquifoliaceae, Lauraceae, Myrtaceae, Rubiaceae, Leguminosae.

**Meetings and Conferences**

For more information on GTSG and GTA related events in 2018 go to the GTA website


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**Key Resources**

**GlobalTreeSearch**

Database can be accessed here:

Please get in touch if you spot an error or wish to make a comment (globaltreesearch@bgci.org).

Paper is found here:

**ThreatSearch**

Database can be accessed here:
Please get in touch if you have more data to add or wish to make a comment (redlist@bgci.org).

**Keep in Touch**

Please keep in touch! We love to share your news on projects, plans and publications. And don't forget you can help us publicise the Global Tree Assessment making use of the leaflet that can be downloaded at:

http://www.bgci.org/files/GTA/GTALeaflet%20FINAL.pdf