

The role of arboreta and botanical gardens in preventing regional decline: A proposal for the 8th Global Botanic Garden Congress

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The impending threat of regional decline, exacerbated by factors such as population exodus and economic stagnation, necessitates proactive measures for sustainable development. In this context, arboreta and botanical gardens emerge as pivotal agents of change, capable of revitalising communities and safeguarding local ecosystems. This presentation proposes a comprehensive framework outlining the multifaceted role of these green spaces in preventing regional decline and fostering resilience. Arboreta and botanical gardens possess inherent potential as catalysts for job creation, drawing from their diverse infrastructure and educational programs. By leveraging their resources to establish on-site facilities and tourism initiatives, these institutions can stimulate economic activity and attract visitors, thereby mitigating population outflows and bolstering local income streams. Collaborative development initiatives lie at the heart of this proposal, emphasising the importance of partnerships between arboreta, local stakeholders, and governmental bodies. Through strategic alliances, such as joint research projects and community engagement programs, arboreta can engender a sense of ownership and empowerment among residents, fostering sustainable growth and social cohesion. Technological integration offers further avenues for innovation, enabling arboreta to enhance visitor experiences and reach broader audiences. By embracing digital platforms and interactive exhibits, these institutions can augment their educational outreach and cultivate a deeper appreciation for plant biodiversity and environmental conservation. Ultimately, the success of these endeavours hinges upon robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, ensuring accountability and facilitating continuous improvement. By systematically assessing the impact of their initiatives, arboreta can refine their strategies and maximise their contribution to regional revitalisation.