

**ASSESSING THE CONSERVATION STATUS OF PTERIDOPHYTES,
A CHALLENGE FOR THE GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR PLANT
CONSERVATION**

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ABSTRACT

The Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) sets out a series of activities with targets intended to halt the decline in plant biodiversity by 2010. This article examines the current state of knowledge concerning the conservation status of ferns in relation to Target 2 of the GSPC. The change in criteria used by the World Conservation Union (IUCN) for assessing conservation status has led to data generated prior to 1997 being marginalised. The latest information, using the revised criteria and published in 2003, refers to a smaller number of pteridophyte species, with only ten species being common to both the 1997 and 2003 assessments. There is an urgent need to capture the knowledge that pteridologists and other specialists undoubtedly have, relating to the conservation status of ferns and fern allies, and to incorporate this into Red Data Lists to provide firmer foundations for the GSPC.