



THE GARDEN CLUB OF AMERICA POSITION PAPER

The Garden Club of America supports independent, academic, peer-reviewed scientific research as the basis for formulation of responsible public policy and legislation, as well as appropriate funding to ensure quality results.

GCA SUPPORTS STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE

The Garden Club of America recognizes that the consequences of global climate change are affecting the natural world, our economies, national security, and human health. Because individual and collective action can modify the course of climate change, GCA is committed to educating members and communities about its causes and about constructive responses to them. GCA is particularly concerned about the influence of climate change on biodiversity. Native vegetation is the matrix that sustains plant biodiversity and supports wildlife and ecosystem services. Without plants, life on earth is not possible. Therefore, GCA is committed to encouraging action that preserves biodiversity.

Therefore, The Garden Club of America supports:

FUNDING

- To recognize individual species at risk, as well as the value of these species and their habitats.
- To develop and implement proactive strategies to assure at-risk species are protected and to preserve options for future restoration.
- To support implementation of strategies to protect biodiversity.
- To identify and address both the disruptions of co-involved relationships (such as those between plants and pollinators) and the increased incidence of disease and invasive species.

LEGISLATION AND PRIVATE INITIATIVES

- Federal, state and local legislation and regulations, as well as individual initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Individual, corporate, and community initiatives to develop green infrastructure.
- Initiatives to support sustainable forest and wilderness areas, which sequester carbon, help ensure clean air, and protect watersheds.
- Initiatives to protect oceans, which produce more than two-thirds of the world's supply of oxygen and more than half its biological production.

ADAPTION

- Adaptation strategies for human, animal, and plant communities.
- Re-vegetation and re-forestation of disturbed and degraded areas, including green buffers near waterways.
- Development of sufficient supplies of native plant materials to meet this need.
- Proactive water management initiatives to conserve water and maintain water quality in response to the expected challenges of climate change to riparian systems and in stream flow.
- Promotion of more localized systems of food production and consumption.

EDUCATION

- Public education about climate change, including the changing conditions for gardens, sustainable landscape design and gardening practices, and the reduction of energy-intensive products and maintenance practices.
- Awareness of implications of changed hardiness zones for agriculture and horticulture, including changes in phenology (the date that leaves and flowers emerge), migratory patterns, productivity, and crop yield.
- Exploration of social, economic and environmental opportunities that will become available through research and development of new technologies.

The purpose of The Garden Club of America is to stimulate the knowledge and love of gardening, to share the advantages of association by means of educational meetings, conferences, correspondence and publications, and to restore, improve and protect the quality of the environment through educational programs and action in the fields of conservation and civic improvement.