



MEDIA RELEASE

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United Nations and Gardens celebrate biodiversity with photography exhibition

The Australian National Botanic Gardens today opens a biodiversity photography exhibition in association with the United Nations Information Centre and the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT).

The exhibition is the result of an inaugural competition involving CIT photography students. The students created a portfolio of photographs on biodiversity and threatened species.

Winners of the photo competition will be announced at the exhibition launch 5pm Monday 6 December at the Australian National Botanic Gardens Visitors Centre.

Photographs were then assessed as part of the students' coursework and themed under three categories - documentary, social commentary and open.

Executive Director of the Gardens, Dr Judy West, said the exhibition was a great way to celebrate both the International Year of Biodiversity and the 40th anniversary of the Gardens.

"We are delighted to host this exhibition, which is a wonderful initiative by the United Nations Information Centre and CIT," Dr West said.

"The Gardens has a strong role in conservation of threatened species. Currently, there are nearly 4,000 vulnerable, endangered and critically endangered plants in our collection."

Director of the United Nations Information Centre, Christopher Woodthorpe, said the competition and exhibition provided unique opportunities to increase our understanding of the vital role biodiversity plays in sustaining life on earth.

"I am delighted that the Australian National Botanic Gardens and students of the Canberra Institute of Technology have joined with the United Nations to promote these issues. I urge everyone to attend the exhibition," Mr Woodthorpe said.

Director of the CIT Centre for Creative Industries, Kerry Williams, said the winners would receive unique photographic internships with the United Nations Mission in Timor Leste, ACT Government and The Canberra Times.

"Our photography students were inspired by this competition to showcase their ideas, skills, creativity and talent in capturing images of species loss and biodiversity and what it means to them. This really has been a rewarding and exciting project," Ms Williams said.

Winners will receive unique photographic internships with the United Nations Mission in Timor Leste, ACT Government and The Canberra Times.

The photographs are on display in the Gardens' Visitor Centre Gallery until 6 January 2011.

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Biodiversity is life
Biodiversity is our life