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Colloque international sur le thème

Nature et Jardins botaniques au XXI^e siècle

Genève — 2-4 juin 1993

SESSION II — DISCUSSION

R. SPICHIGER:

Je voudrais demander à M. Reinhard s'il a encore le temps ou s'il a la possibilité de faire de la recherche avec son système?

J. L. REINHARD:

To be honest: no! But the scientific level of the garden during the past ten years was very poor and the past years we had to invest all our money and all our time in surviving. By making that choice, we survived! We find out that now there will be time to do more scientific work, not only more time, there will be more labour available and there will be more money. So, we have done "sur place" for few years, but it has been wise!

R. SPICHIGER:

Merci beaucoup!

W. MCK. KLEIN:

Do you have a policy or a financial goal governing how much of the income that you are gathering from these various activities is invested in the scientific and educational part of the programme? Let me explain a little bit: I assume that you have certain financial goals for each part of your operation and that you are meeting these financial goals. I would assume then that you would have policies and procedures set up for the reinvestment of income that comes from these various operations to apply to the science and education.

J. L. REINHARD:

First of all, all income, and also all profits, goes back into the garden. There isn't any structure which makes it possible that profits go out of the garden: that's statement one. At the very present time, roughly 10% of all costs are going into scientific works (scientific staff). The aim for the next five years is that we can increase the 10% to 20%. You should realize that when we took over, so to say, the garden from the University, there has been a period of ten years without maintenance; so, the revenues we earned the past years, and we will earn the next coming years, have to be used in big maintenance, not only the buildings, but also technical installations that need a proper check up.

F. NAEF:

You showed us how you use the botanical garden and how you make it much more attractive, by having cafeterias, special exhibitions and all sorts of activities. How much people, do you think, still look at the botanical side of your garden? Do they come for the restaurant, for the chinese garden or are they interested in the ecological impact that's offered in your garden?

J. L. REINHARD:

I think that the number of that kind of visitors is still the same, which means that we have attracted new kind of people, and by showing them that kind of elements in the garden they are interested in, we can at the same time tell them the story we would like. But the people interested in the old classic botanical garden, didn't run away, they are still there, but never in great amounts.

H. TAMM:

You have a lot of visitors and you are asking more and more, but how do you prevent damages on landscape, vegetation and collections in your garden?

J. L. REINHARD:

We are surprised that people, as soon as they have entered our premises, they behave themselves, they got impressed about the fine, rich nature they notice (there is hardly any damage). I know that you can find rough people, such as football fans, but not in a botanical garden. We are not afraid for damage by increasing the number of people, and by the way, this morning, there was a question: what about changing of administration (new targets)? I would add to that: don't only look for experience at your colleagues, but also to the men working in the leisure industry; they already have that kind of experience we are looking for.

H. ERN:

You told us that you wish to introduce insects and birds to the open area of your garden. When I saw all the beautiful tulips and other plantations, I asked myself and I'm asking now to you: do you not use pesticides in your garden?

J. L. REINHARD:

In the glasshouses, we are working already I think 10 years with biological control, bringing in insects, that's not something new, you already did it, but for conservation of the plants. When we bring in birds for instance, it's in different houses on our premises and I don't think that we shall need no other kind of pesticides as we are used to do.

H. ERN:

So, I didn't understand you well when I thought that you wanted to introduce those birds and insects to the open areas of the garden.

J. L. REINHARD:

No, we have an insectarium, and there you can find the insects. In the open areas of the garden, we already have our natural birds for many years, but we are introducing all kinds of animals because the central theme we would like to introduce is showing the relationship between plants and animals. We have done that with insects, fishes and birds.

H. ERN:

So, you do not use insecticides in the open?

J. L. REINHARD:

No, we don't.

H. ERN:

Thank you. If the discussion is closed now on Mr. Reinhard's contribution, I would like to open the discussion upon Mr. Andreev's contribution. Is the Academy of Sciences of Soviet Union still existing in the former shape, or what were the changes in the Academy, to which your garden belongs?

L. N. ANDREEV:

The Academy of Sciences of Soviet Union still exists in much the same form as it has used to be, I mean, it is now the Academy of Sciences of Russia. All the former members of the Academy of Sciences of Soviet Union, they still retain their membership in the new organization and for some reasons they do not want themselves to be called foreign members of the Academy. The structure remains the same, the new things more relate to new additional sources of financing, so we have new grants devoted to fundamental research, and also some funds to support young researchers and various target programmes.

W. MCK. KLEIN:

What other kinds of help as a part of the botanical community, what other kinds of assistance might we be able to provide to our sister gardens in Russia?

L. N. ANDREEV:

Other kinds of assistance, and we used such assistance already, include exchange programmes, so that we could send out our research fellows to other botanical gardens, and at this very moment three members of our staff are already in the USA (they have one year grants there). And of course, we are pretty much interested in launching joined programmes. As regards our direct cooperation with the US botanical gardens, now we have direct contact between our researchers and the researchers in the States. For example, University of Alaska has contacts with the botanical garden of Novosibirsk; the same also concerns other botanical gardens.

W. MCK. KLEIN:

Is there an interest in developing cooperate business, entrepreneurial kinds of partnerships between American or European cooperations and botanical gardens? Many of our institutions are developing new kinds of partnerships (economic partnerships is that going on), if so, is there an interest in perhaps expanding that (a particular aspect is: you move in free market economy)?

L. N. ANDREEV:

We are very interested in such programmes: what we have now is for example sending two of our research fellows to a company, doing plant breeding, for one year contacts. But we have certain difficulties with planning for the future, given the unstable economic situation in Russia now, so we had for example some difficulties receiving representatives of these companies in our botanical garden. So, many people came to visit us, but any specific programmes hardly error were in the matings.

G. ALZIAR:

Dans le monde méditerranéen, la création et le fonctionnement du jardin botanique de Córdoba est exemplaire sur bien des points. Je voulais savoir quels ont été les organismes financeurs du départ et ceux qui actuellement gèrent ce jardin botanique?

J. E. HERNÁNDEZ-BERMEJO:

The financial support of the Córdoba botanical garden comes mainly from the town council of the city (approximately 60-70%), the rest coming from the University, because the Córdoba botanical garden is the result of an agreement between the town council and the University. But, together, University and town council not mean the total of the sponsorship of the botanical garden. You must consider that we are a foundation with legal economic personality and we look for new sponsors in other agencies (ministries and also in private resources): for instance, the main part of our conservation programmes is financed by the environmental agency of the autonomous government of Andalusia. We have used many other resources for financing the botanical garden of Córdoba.

M. MAUNDER:

If the system developed in Córdoba was to be expanded in a country of tropical high diversity, say one of Latin America, how would you expand or develop your system further to cope with that extra number of species?

J. E. HERNÁNDEZ BERMEJO:

I'm not sure if our experience is able to translate immediately to the Latin American countries. Our experience is involved into a little country and the complexity and heterogeneity at regional level in Latin America is bigger and I'm not sure if it is immediately able to be translated.