



Limbe Botanic Garden

# LIMBE BOTANIC GARDEN

ONE OF THE OLDEST BOTANIC GARDEN IN AFRICA  
FOUNDED IN 1892



## History and background

The Limbe Botanic Garden (LBG) is located between the shore of the Atlantic Ocean and the slopes of Mt. Cameroon, an area of outstanding natural beauty. It is crossed by the Limbe River. The Limbe Botanic Garden (LBG) is a Third Category Protected Area (PA) under the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF) covering a total surface area of 48 hectares.

It was founded in 1892 by German Horticulturist Dr. Paul Preuss as the Victoria Botanic Garden to serve as an Agricultural Research Station and Forestry College. It had originally 200 ha. The German administration of the Garden ended in 1916 during World War I.

The Garden was rehabilitated by the British Administration for the first time in 1924 after a severe period of decline. The British funding stopped in 1929 due to the World Economic crisis and the Garden entered another period of decline up to 1954 when funding was restored.

The management of the Garden was handed over to the Cameroon Government in 1961 after Independence.

The Garden entered another period of renovation in 1988 thanks to a bilateral agreement between Cameroon and the United Kingdom that gave birth to the Mount Cameroon Project (MCP).

Since 2018 the Programme for Sustainable Management of Natural Resources-South West Region (PSMNR-SWR), co-financed by the Republic of Germany, funded some rehabilitations in the framework of the creation of the Integrated Conservation Education Centre (ICEC), hosted in the Garden.

## Biodiversity potentials

- Over 1500 plants of various types, families, genera and species are found in the Garden ;
- The Garden Herbarium internationally known by its Acronym "SCA" was created as a databank for preserved plant material having 30,000 herbarium specimen and more than 13,000 ecological specimen of over 32 types, 260 plant families, 700 genera, 1400 species with 46 endemic plants species ;
- The living collections with thematic planting contain indigenous and exotic species of timber, non-timber forest product, ornamental and medicinal plants.
- Tea (*Camellia sinensis assamica*) was introduced in the Garden in 1892 and are at the base of tea plantations at the slope of Mt Cameroon in Tole and tea estates in other parts of Cameroon.
- Many historical colonial buildings contribute to the unique setting of the Garden.
- Other remarkable sites are the Commonwealth War Memorial graves, the conference centre, the jungle village (an open-air amphitheatre) ;
- The botanical garden has a wilderness part on the Bota Hill accessible through a nature trail.
- The garden is rich in bird species.



Conservation Education in the Garden.





**Preuss House has been a landmark at the Limbe Botanic Garden (LBG), having been the repository of a rich herbarium collection.**



**Conference Centre LBG renovated for ICEC.**



**Students on study tour from around the region visit the exposition of key wildlife species in the Integrated Conservation Education Centre (ICEC).**

## **Achievements with the Programme for Sustainable Management of Natural Resources - South West Region (PSMNR-SWR)**

- **Renovation of the Preuss House :** The residence of the first Director of the Garden, Dr Preuss, constructed before 1901, was renovated by PSMNR in 2020/21. Preuss' house, being a part of the historical heritage of Cameroon, was rehabilitated to its original state. The rehabilitated building now serves as accommodation facility for students on study tour to the Limbe Botanic Garden . It is planned to install in the hall on the floor an exposition on the history of the garden and plant diversity in SWR.
- **Renovation of the Conference centre :** The conference centre was renovated and equipped to host the Integrated Conservation Education centre (ICEC), a centre created to up-scale conservation education and outreach programmes in targeted communities around protected areas. The centre has three conference rooms, offices and the entrance was arranged by PSMNR-SWR as an exhibition hall about six key species of Protected Areas in SWR. The renovation of the building and its future use will valorize LBG and enhance its function to serve as a hub to promote biodiversity conservation and conservation education.
- PSMNR-SWR renovated also a historical building, in which the actual herbarium of the Garden is lodged.
- PSMNR-SWR plans to develop the nature trail and to create some adventure play ground in the Garden.

For more information

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