



As each year brings new changes to our planet, preserving the delicate balance between society and our natural resources is an increasing challenge. We are reminded that preservation extends beyond the act of saving a natural environment, slowing our use of natural resources and saving natural habitats. We must also save the lessons learned in all regions of the world and maintain information specific to mankind that will impact on our future.

In this information age, it seems that preserving this knowledge would be easy. Yet, in the complexity of understanding our natural world, it can be difficult to prioritize how to focus our limited resources. When it comes to understanding our natural world, there's so much more to learn from Nature itself.

Much of that knowledge has already been lost. An estimated 99.9% of all species that have ever existed on this planet are now extinct. And of the species alive today, over half of them are contained in our rainforests. Yet our rainforests are some of the most undiscovered places on earth. Within the Peruvian Amazon alone, most of the flora is still undiscovered. Meanwhile rainforest destruction brings an estimated 50,000 species to extinction each year. With 25% of all medicines are based in rainforest botanicals, threat of extinction to various species reduces the options for future medicines\*.

\*Sited by Paradise Earth, Cal Tech, and Rain-Tree.com

In 2010, Promega was fortunate to support one of the largest extant collections of Amazonian flora from Northern Peru. Over the last few decades, 100,000 botanical specimens were carefully collected in that region of the Amazon, but there were no resources to catalog, database or share the findings. A region so rich in biodiversity was poor in knowledge-based tools like computers and scanners. Promega supports an initiative to bring the collection to the world. Today a joint effort is underway between the Universidad Nacional de La Amazonia Peruana and Botanical Dimensions (a non-profit committed to the collection, protection preservation and understanding of ethnobotanicals with potential medical significance). In the next three years, these specimens will be available in a digital library to scientists worldwide.

Initiatives like this remind us all that leaving a better future to our children isn't just in a place, a program or a trust, but also in knowledge that can bring better medicines, greater environmental sustainability and a richer life for all living things on this planet.

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