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**Climate Emergency Declaration, 6 February 2020**

**The South London Botanical Institute (SLBI) has joined organisations around London and the world in declaring a climate emergency. The announcement was made following a meeting of the SLBI’s Board of Trustees on Thursday 6 February 2020.**

In line with the SLBI’s charitable objects, the organisation has always been committed to sustainable development (meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs) as a guiding principle within its work.

Concern for the environment at this time of climate emergency, including reducing the charity’s carbon footprint and educating others in what they can do to help, is an integral and fundamental part of this commitment.

Like many other environmental and educational organisations (as well as health organisations and local authorities) who have already declared a climate emergency, the SLBI recognises that climate change is the critical issue of our time and needs urgent action. The science behind the issue has been well-documented, including the need to reverse carbon emissions drastically over the next 10 years.

As well as the aims in its 2019 Environmental Policy, the SLBI now aims to carry out a full assessment of its carbon footprint by the end of 2020, so that it can set meaningful targets to reduce its footprint over the next year and into the future.

However, the SLBI can have an even bigger positive impact through its educational work with other people. It is well-placed as an environmental, educational and community organisation to tell others the facts about the climate emergency and how humans can help. As a botanical institute, it can demonstrate to visitors of all ages that humans need plants in order to survive. Our collections, in our garden, herbarium and library, show the wide-ranging values of plants and also how nature has been changing in our local area.

The SLBI plans to hold a series of events over the next 3 years, based around the climate emergency. These will include lectures, workshops, walks and school visits highlighting different aspects of climate change and how these impact on the plant world and therefore on humans as a species. Events will also demonstrate the vital importance of plants in combatting climate change. All activities will aim to encourage behaviour change in visiting individuals, schools, families and other organisations. These events will be held in partnership with other local organisations, where appropriate, and will also provide a focus for the SLBI’s future strategic planning, including its new 2020-2025 Business Plan.

Signed on behalf of the SLBI Trustees: Roy Vickery, President

Date: 6 February 2020