

What is the future of the Singapore Botanic Gardens?

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Over its long history, the Singapore Botanic Gardens has gone through several defining moments which cumulatively, make the Gardens what it is today. Although these changes took place under different socio-economic and socio-political context of the past era, they are always associated with leadership, vision, and the ability to muster resources. These defining moments may be viewed as transformations, as well as oscillations in our history that are only apparent when viewed through a critical and historical lens. Understanding these transformations, in turn, provides useful lessons for thinking about the future of the Gardens.

What might the future hold for us? Despite its enviable status as a leading institution in tropical botany and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, like my predecessors, I contend that the Gardens still has much more to achieve, and I muse about its future. I will share my perspectives of the key transformations in the Gardens' history, highlight our current preoccupations, and suggest that as we try to "think globally and act locally", it is also necessary to "think locally and act globally".