

Project title: Vegetative production of *Aloidendron dichotomum*

Level of project: B-Tech / Advanced Diploma in Horticulture

Location: Karoo Desert National Botanical Garden, Worcester

Horticultural Mentor: Ricardo Riddles

Background:

Growing in arid areas of Namaqualand and Bushmanland, the quiver tree (*Aloidendron dichotomum*) has become an iconic specie to visitors/tourists, amateur botanist and mainly gardeners. This species is extremely slow growing and is used in many arid landscapes, as pot plants as well as water wise gardens.

Numerous studies has indicated a large range of mortality within populations in different regions. Contributing factors for these mortalities includes diseases, wind damage, animal damage, poaching as well as climate change. Conserving this species, is one of the major roles of the Karoo Desert Botanical Garden.

Project aim:

Due to the rarity, popularity and declining populations, it has become quite important to conserve this species. It is n known fact that *Aloidendron dichotomum* can easily be propagated through seeds, but it is extremely difficult by means of cuttings/truncheons.

The aim of this research project will be to understand the morphology of this species and to successfully propagate truncheons that will increase production at the Karoo Desert NBG. This research projects will also give the garden more background on related species such as *Aloe ramosissima* and *Aloidendron pillansii*. Main focus areas will include:

- Growing mediums
- Propagating techniques
- Growth regulators

Upon success the Karoo Desert National Botanical Gardens would include this information in their propagation plan, developing mature plants for conservation and rehabilitations projects.

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