

THE EDEN PROJECT - THE HUMID TROPIC AND WARM TEMPERATE BIOMES

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The Eden Project is located at Bodelva, St Austell, Cornwall, PL24 2SG, (<http://www.edenproject.com/>). To deliver our twin message on man's dependence on plants and his responsibility for the stewardship of nature throughout the world, The Eden Project required space to reproduce environmental conditions inductive to the growth of plants from the tropics, sub-tropics and warm temperate regions. To date, two such environments have been established, the Humid Tropic Biome covering 1.5 ha and the Warm Temperate Biome of 0.6 ha, their respective maximum heights are 55 m and 25 m.

Both Biomes use the same blown hot air heating system and side louvre and dome top ventilation system. These structures were commissioned in October 2000 so to date, performance data is provisional. Our findings to date indicate that the heating system is satisfactory, however the ventilation leaves much to be desired and the retention of a high relative humidity is not reached when the structures are ventilated.

Long standing experience of botanic gardens around the temperate world indicates how tolerant most species of higher plant are to very crude approximations to the climate of their natural environments. Present indications are that Eden's massive Biomes are still dependent on this natural adaptation together with the skills of the horticultural staff. The huge advantage presented by the height of these structures appears to have been bought at the expense of the ability to fine-tune the required temperatures and humidity. It is intended that efforts will be made to develop localised conditions within the structures.