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Ethnopharmacological studies for sustainable development in Cameroon

Tsabang N

Higher Institute of Environmental Sciences, Cameroon

Aim of the study: Several diseases continue to affect strongly the populations' health in Africa. Meanwhile Ethnopharmacology, a scientific interdisciplinary study of natural substances and related knowledges or practices that cultural groups implement for therapeutic, curative, preventive or diagnostic purposes, must be developed in the continent. Therefore sustainable development, a conception of common well being developed since the end of the 20th century can be effective by developing in Africa low-priced phytodrugs for consumption and exportation. The objectives of this study were to sustainably collect and document important cultural heritage before it is lost and to investigate and evaluate agents used to promote drug discovery in Cameroon.

Materials & Methods: To achieve these objectives we have used a methodology that begun by a field work, that started by harvesting and identifying plant species with confirmation in National Herbarium and the ethnopharmacological detailed preparation of recipes and ended by the research of previous studies on recorded plants.

Results: 43% of recorded plants is been documented for the treatment of diseases and investigated for their phytochemical and activities confirming of the rationalization of their traditional uses. Some plants are documented for the first time for their medical use, for example *Massularia acuminata* for hypertension, *Pentaclethra macropylla* for infectious diseases, *Hallea stipulosa* for difficult deliverance, *Guibourtia tessmannii* for diabetes, *Piliostigma rufescens* for dysentery, *Carica papaya* for cancer and *Solanum torvum* for gastric pains.

Conclusion: The results of this study stimulate a sustainable development by providing the basis for low cost drugs discovery and by documenting biodiversity for long time exploitation.

tsabang2001@yahoo.fr