

Oral presentation

Harvest of medicinal plants in Surinamese Maroon society: implications for sustainability

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Introduction. The Surinamese Maroon use a range of medicinal plant species many of which are commercially harvested and traded.

Objectives. To make an overall estimation to what extent the harvest of these species may lead to conservation issues on the species level.

Methods. Both commercial harvesters and subsistence users were interviewed and observed during plant harvest. Herbarium specimens were collected for each species considered.

Results. The majority of species is extracted from secondary vegetation or home gardens. Half of the species is domesticated or cultivated, while an equal number are exclusively found in the wild. Most plants are sought after for their leaves, harvested through the removal of entire twigs. Wild, medicinal plants are currently being domesticated in by the Maroon of Suriname, although not always successfully.

Conclusion. While, save a few exceptions, there is little indication that the harvest of medicinal plants takes place unsustainably, they are an important commodity for poor Maroon who dwell around Suriname's capital.

Keywords: suriname, sustainable, traditional medicine

Selected References

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