

Valorization, Conservation and Sustainable Production of Medicinal Plants in Morocco

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Abstract : Of course, there has been a great growth in scientific information about medicinal plants in recent decades, but in many ways this has proved poor compensation, because such information is accessible, in practice, only to a very few people and anyway, rather little of it is relevant to problems of management and utilization, as encountered in the field. Active compounds are used in most traditional medicines and play an important role in advancing sustainable rural livelihoods through their conservation, cultivation, propagation, marketing and commercialization. Medicinal herbs are great resources for various pharmaceutical compounds and urgent measures are required to protect these plant species from their natural destruction and disappearance. Indeed, there is a real danger of indigenous Arab medicinal practices and knowledge disappearing altogether, further weakening traditional Arab culture and creating more insecurity, as well as forsaking a resource of inestimable economic and health care importance. As scientific approach, the ethnopharmacological investigation remains the principal way to improve, evaluate, and increase the odds of finding of biologically active compounds derived from medicinal plants. As developing country, belonging to the Mediterranean basin, Morocco country is endowed with resources of medicinal and aromatic plants. These plants have been used over the millennia for human welfare, even today. Besides, Morocco has a large plant biodiversity, in fact, its medicinal flora account more than 4200 species growing on various bioclimatic zones from subhumide to arid and Saharan. Nevertheless, the human and animal pressure resulting from the increase of rural population needs has led to degradation of this patrimony. In this paper, we focus our attention on ethnopharmacological studies carried out in Morocco. The goal of this work is to clarify the importance of herbs as platform for drugs discovery and further development, to highlight the importance of ethnopharmacological study as approach on discovery of natural products in the health care field, and to discuss the limit of ethnopharmacological investigation of drug discovery in Morocco.

Keywords : Morocco, medicinal plants, ethnopharmacology, natural products, drug-discovery

Conference Title : ICTMH 2016 : International Conference on Traditional Medicine and Herbs

Conference Location : Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Conference Dates : January 26-27, 2016