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Research Article

ANALYSIS AND DOCUMENTATION OF OBTAINABLE MEDICINAL PLANTS IN ALANGULAM HILL LOCK IN TIRUNELVELI, TAMILNADU

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ABSTRACT

Biodiversity is of vital importance to human kind from many point of view. Diversity is essential for proper functioning of food chain in an ecosystem. It is of scientific importance for protecting and maintaining soil and regulating climate. The Indian region with a total area of about 3029 million hectares is listed as 'Mega diversity' region in the world and is considered to be one of the twelve centres of origin and diversity of several plant species in the world. Around the world many billions of people still use plants as their primary source of medicine. India also possesses a great heritage of other ancient systems of medicine such as Siddha, Unani and Homeopathy. As many as 4000 plants are collectively mentioned in these early works. The importance of medicinal plants and their traditional use to treats various ailments are well known to many people in Alangulam area. So the medicinal plants also facing various degrees of threats. The present study was documented and quantitative analysed the frequent usage of medicinal plants in Alangulam hillock. The collected plant materials were identified and their medicinal uses are recorded. The plants were documented by herbarium. The area has 195 species comprising of 172 Dicots and 23 Monocots. Among these Compositae and Poacee family species are dominant than other species of plants. Among these more than 113 common medicinal plants were identified and 55 medicinal plants were discussed. In the study area 4 species of peninsular endemic have been identifiedviz. Barleriabuxifolia, Maeruaapetela, Commiphoraberryi and Cyperusrotundus. Effective strategies are to be formulated with an aim to conserve these medicinal plants.

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INTRODUCTION

Biodiversity is of vital importance to human kind from many points of view. Diversity is essential for proper functioning of food chain in an ecosystem. It is of scientific importance for protecting and maintaining soil and regulating climate. The Indian region with a total area of about 3029 million hectares is listed as 'Mega diversity' region in the world and is considered to be one of the twelve centres of origin and diversity of several plant species in the world. It is estimated that about 18000 vascular plants(flowering plants, gymnosperms and pteridophytes) are accounted for in this region of which as many 5,000 species are endemic to this region. About 11% of the known world plants and 6% of the known world flowering plants occur in India. India's rich vegetational wealth and diversity is undoubtedly due to the immense variety of the climatic and altitudinal variations coupled with varied ecological habitats. The richness and diversity of flora of India can be further appreciated by the fact that as many as 10

biogeographic regions representing 3 basic biomass and natural realms as identified by Udvardy (1975) are recognised within the territory of the Indian Republic. The global biodiversity is under considerable threat from a variety of human generated factors like (a) habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation (b) spread of invasive aliens species (c) over exploitation of species (d) forest clearance for agriculture expansion township, etc shifting cultivation. Based on current trend globally an estimated 34000 plants and 5200 animal species are facing the threat of extinction. In spite of the hectic efforts of taxonomists during the last 50 years or so even the correct assessment of the species biodiversity is not yet complete. While we know substantially the species diversity, genetic diversity studies are least attempted. Concerned efforts are needed to study and conserve the rich biodiversity in the country. Hence this work carried out to get information about the flora and their medicinal uses of Alangulam Hill Lock of Tirunelveli District. Tirunelveli District is the one of the important store house of

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the medicinal plants. The total area of the forest of the district is 1,22,055 ha. Of which 79,668 hectares are under wetland. Various types of forests from luxuriant tropical wet evergreen forests to southern thorn scrub forests occur in the district. Owing to its diverse geographical factors the forests in the district. The use of plants to alleviate human suffering is as old as the evolution of human civilization itself. As many as 4000 plants are collectively mentioned in these early works.

NAYAK *et al* (2003) studied some medicinal weeds of Mahanadi Delta. From an extensive survey programme as many as 114 weed species collected, identified and preserved as herbarium specimens. Out of these 30 plants screened out as plants having perennial medicinal values. Various medicinal uses of these species given in the enumeration after the nomenclature citation.

ARINATHAN (2003) studied on foodnand medicinal plants of Western Ghats. People of the Palliyar tribe of Srivilliputhur, Western Ghats, Imdia use wild plants for food and supplement their diet with Dioscoreapentaphylla L', D.bulbifera L., Dolichusbiflorus L., Canavalia gladiate(Jacq) DC., Dolichos lablab L., Carissa carandas L., Syzygiumcumini (L) Skools , stericulf) uronsL., etc. Most of the wild plants were used to treat various ailments also.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study area

In Tamil Nadu Alangulam hill-lock is one of the important forest area occur near Tirunelveli District. The study area is about 29Km from Tirunelveli and can be reached by a motorable road.

Field Visits: Field visits were made in the study area to survey and to gather information on herbal medicines and to collect specimens for further study. To confirm the identification of the species Gamble's Flora of the Presidency of Madras(1915) was referred. The plants and their families were arranged according to the Bentham Hooker system. The collected plants materials were identified and their medicinal uses are recorded. The area has 195 species comprising of 172 Dicots and 23 Monocots. Among these more than 113 common medicinal plants were identified and 55 medicinal plants were discussed.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The present study was carried out in the Alangulam hillock of Tirunelveli District, Tamil Nadu. A detailed survey was conducted. The information collected was confirmed by field observations. The specimens were identified in the herbarium at CCRAS (Siddha Unit), Government Siddha Medical College, Palyamkottai -627002.

Important medicinal plants of alangulam hill – lock Plate.1 Abutilon indicum (l,) sweet. Malvaceae

Various parts of the plant are used as a demulcent, aphrodisiac, laxative, diuretic, sedative, astringent, expectorant, tonic, antiinflammatory, anthelmintic, and analgesic and to treat leprosy, ulcers, headaches, gonorrhea, and bladder infection. The whole plant is uprooted, dried and is powdered the leaves are used as adjunct to medicines used for pile complaints. The flowers are used to increase semen in men.

Plate.2. Achyranthes aspera (L.,) Amaranthaceae

The juice of the twig is applied to relieve tooth-ache. The whole plant and especially the roots, characterized by their anti-inflammatory and uterine stimulant activity, are prescribed in the rheumatism, lumbago, osteodynia, dysuria, post- partum haematometra and dysmenorrheal.

Plate.3. Aloe vera L., Liliaceae

Aloe vera is used in traditional medicine as a skin treatment. Aloe vera is used on facial tissues where it is promoted as a moisturizer and anti-irritant to reduce chafing of the nose. Cosmetic companies commonly add sap or other derivatives from *Aloe vera* to products such as makeup, tissues, moisturizers, soaps, sunscreens, incense, shaving cream, or shampoos. Other potential uses for extracts of *Aloe vera* include the dilution of semen for the artificial fertilization of sheep, as a fresh food preservative, or for water conservation in small farms.

Plate.4. Adathoda vasicaNees.(Acanthaceae)

Adhatodavasica is considered useful in treating bronchitis, tuberculosis and other lung and bronchiole disorders.A decoction of the leaves may be used as an herbal treatment for cough and other symptoms of colds A poultice of the leaves may be applied to wounds for their antibacterial and antiinflammatory properties

Plate.5. Argemone Mexicana L.,(Papavaraceae)

The whole plant is used to make a tea and as much tea as possible is drunk until symptoms disappear. This use has been studied clinically for the treatment of uncomplicated malaria.

Plate.6. Azadiracta indica A.Juss (Meliaceae)

All parts of Neem tree used as anthelmintic, anti-fungal, antidiabetic, antibacterial, antiviral, contraceptive and sedative. Neem tree is used in many medicinal treatment like skin diseases, healthy hair, improve liver function, detoxify the blood, Pest and disease control, fever reduction, dental treatments, cough, asthma, ulcers, piles, intestinal worms, urinary diseases etc.

Plate.7. Borreria hispida (L.,) K.Sch (Rubiaceae)

The leaves are applied in poultices to treat headache, and also to wounds or sores. A decoction of the roots is used as a mouthwash for toothache. The seeds are considered cooling and demulcent, and are given in diarrhoea and dysentery.

Plate.8. Calotropis gigantean (L.,) R.Br. (Asclepediaceae)

The plant is reported as effective in treating skin, digestive, respiratory, circulatory and neurological disorders and was used to treat fevers, elephantiasis, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.

Plate.9. Capparis sepiaria L., (Capparidaceae)

The powdered bark is mixed with garlics, pepper and palm jaggary, 'Tatibellam' and is given as an effective remedy to reheumatic pains and Herpes virus infections.

Plate.10. Cardiospermum helicacabum L., (Sapindaceae)

It has been used in the treatment of rheumatism, nervous diseases, stiffness of the limbs and snakebite. Leaves are crushed and made into a tea, which aids itchy skin. Salted leaves are used as a poultice on swellings. Young leaves can be cooked as vegetables. The leaf juice has been used as a treatment for earache.

Plate.11.Carrisa spinarum L., var. hirsute(Roth) Hook (Apocynaceae)

The roots are reported to possess purgative the root is ground and put in worm –infected sores of animals.

Plate.12. Cassia tora L., (Caesalpiniaceae)

Cassia plant especially in treating skin ailments. The leaves, seed and even root of this plant is found to contain medicinal value through which it helps to cure many skin problems. It was indeed a traditional medicine and mainly preferred as a laxative for drugs and ointments prepared for skin problems and in the preparation of other medications.

Plate.13.Clerodendron inerme(L.,)J Gaertn.(Verbenaceae)

Clerodendron inerme indicate an immense potential of this plant as anti-inflammatory, antidiabetic, antimalarial, antiviral, antihypertensive, hypolipidemic and antioxidant activities.

Plate.14. Clitoria ternatea L.(Fabaceae)

Powder of the roots are used for treating whooping cough. The extract from the roots of the herb is used as an antidote in treating poisonous bites of insects or of snakes. For treating epilepsy and excessive menstruation, 2 ml of Shankhpushpi juice with honey is given. To Alleviates swelling and pain.Used in thyroid disorders.

Plate.15. Cephalandra indica(W. and A) Narud. (*Cucurbitaveae*)

It is very useful remedy for Diabetes mellitus and Diabetes insipidus. It is very useful for skin complaints which occur in diabetes. It is very good remedy for jaundice, dropsy, dysentery. It is very useful in sunstroke. It is good remedy for boils, carbuncles, abscesses. It helps to control diabetes along with diet restrictions. It helps in treatment of glucose in urine. It is given when patient has intolerable burning sensation all over the body.

Plate.16. Commelina benghalensis L. (Commelinaceae)

The young leaves as a vegetable, use a paste derived from the plant to treat burns, and treat indigestion with a juice produced from the roots. Its use as a famine food in India has been recorded. In South East Asia and Africa it is used as fodder and also medicinally as a poultice.

Plate. 17. Crotalaria verrucosaL. (Fabaceae)

Juice of the leaves and tender stalks are prescribed for scabies.

Plate.18. Cynodon dactylon (L.,) Pers (Poaceae)

The oil is used as a carminative and as an application in chronic rheumatism.

Plate.19 .Datura stramonium L. (Solanaceae)

Leaves and seeds are used as antisptic, anodyne, narcotic. Fruits are used as sedative, intoxicating. Leaves are applied to boils, sores and fish-bites. Juice of the flowers used for earache and applied to scalp for curing dandruff and falling hair.

Plate. 20. Desmodium triflorum (L.) (Fabaceae)

The leaves are cleaned and ground with cow's milk and taken daily in the morning to cure infantile diarrhoea caused by indigestion and convulsions.

Plate. 21. Dolichos trilobatus L. (Fabaceae)

The poultice of leaves is applied as an anti-dot to scorpionsting.

Plate 22 . Evolvulus alsinodes (L.) (Convolvulacee)

The plant is bitter and is reported to be used as tonic, febrifuge. Also is said to be used as a vermifuge with oil, for promoting hair growth.

Plate 23. Ficus benghalensis L. (Moraceae)

The milky juice is externally applied for pains and bruises and as an anodyne in rheumatism and lumbago, also used as a remedy for toothache. The bark is astringent, used in dysentery, diarrhoea and diabetes. The tender tips of prop roots are given in leprosy and piles.

Plate 24. Ficus hispidaL.f. (Moraceae)

Fruits are considere tonic, lactagogue and emetic. The leaves are used for poulticing boils. The fruit is boiled in goat's milk is used in hepatic obstructions.

Plate 25. Heliotropium indicum L. (Boraginaceae)

The plant is bitter and astringent. It is reported to possess emollient, vulnerary and diuretic properties. Also, used as local application for ulcers, sores, wounds, gum boils, skin affections, scorpion stings and poisonous bites.

Plate 26.Indigofera tinctoria L. (Fabaceae)

A wineglassful of the juice of the leaves is administered on the morning with or without milk for 3 days, to those who have been bitten by mad dogs, Indigo is applied to the bites and stings of venomous insects and reptiles to relieve the pain, also to burns and scalds and commonly applied to wounds.

Plate 27. Ipomoea carnea Moench. (Convolvulaceae)

The leaves contain polysaccharides, when administered intravenously, the water soluble toxin caused haemolysis and reduced the blood pressure.

Plate 28. Jatropha curcas L. (Euphorbiaceae)

The seeds are considered anthelmintic. Ground with palm oil and used as rat poison. Tender twigs are used for cleaning teeth, the juice is reported to relieve tooth-ache. The juice of the plant is used as a purgative. The leaf juice is used as an external application for piles. It is applied for inflammations of the tongue in babies. The twig sap with benzyl benzoate is used to be effective against scabies, wet eczema and dermatitis.

Plate 29. Leucas aspera (Wild.) Link. (Lamiaceae)

The juice of the leaves mixed with turmeric application psoriasis, chronic skin eruption and painful swellings. Flowers are given with honey for coughs and colds in children.

Plate 30.Mollugo oppositifolia L. (Molluginaceae)

The plant is considered aperient, antiseptic and efficacious suppressed lochia; it is smeared with castor oil and applied warm for earache. The plant juice is applied to itch and other skin diseases.

Plate 31.Mollugo pentaphylla L. (Molluginaceae)

The plant is considered stomachic, antiseptic and emmenagogue, and is used in poultices for sore legs. Leaves are bitter and antiperiodic, they are warded after smearing with oil and applied to the ear to relieve earache.

Plate 32.Oldenlandia corymbosa L. (Rubiaceae)

The plant is usually administered in the form of a decoction in remittent fevers with gastric irritability and nervous depression caused by deranged bile; also given in jaundice and liver disorders.

Plate 33. Passiflora foetida L. (Passifloraceae)

The decoction of the leaves used in biliousness and asthma. Fruit emetic, leaves applied on the head in giddiness and head ache.

Plate 34. Pedalium murex L. (Pedaliaceae)

A decoction of the leaves given to cases of gonorrhoea. The leaves are applied to ulcers and a decoction of the roots is said to be antibilious.

Plate 35.Pergularia extensa (Jacq.) N.E., Br.(Asclepiadaceae)

A decoction of the leaves is given to children for asthma and their juice in infantile The root bark is used a s a purgative in rheumatism cases.

Plate 36. Phyllanthus niruri L. (Euphorbiaceae)

The herb is bitter and reported to possess astringent, deobstruent stomachic, diuretic, febrifugal and antiseptic. Also used in stomach troubles such as dyspepsia, colic, diarrhoea and dysentery and is also employed in dropsy and diseases of urinogenital system. Fresh root are said to be beneficial in Jaundice, and taken with milk and galactgogue. The latex is also applied to offensive sores ad ulcers.

Plate 37. Phyllanthus mederaspatensis L. (Euphorbiaceae)

An infusion of the leaves is used in headache. The seeds possess laxatives, carminative and diuretic properties.

Plate 38. Physalis minima L. (Solanaceae)

The fruits are considered to be tonic, diuretic and purgative. The auits of P. minima va.indica are said to be form an ingredient in a medicinal oil given for spleen disorders.

Plate.39 Ploycarpea corymbosa (L) Lam. (Caryophyllaceae)

The plant is administered both internally a externally as a remedy for venomous bites of reptiles. Pounded leaves are used as poultice over boils and inflammatory swellings. The leaf power is made into pills with molasses and given in jaundice.

Plate 40.Portulaca quadrifida Z., (Portulacaceae)

The herb is said to be useful asthma, cough, urinary discharges, inflammations and ulcers. Fresh leaves are applied externally in erysipelas and as an infusion is given internally in dysuria. The plant and seed is used in the diseases of kidneys, bladder and lungs, which are supposes to be caused by hot or bilious humours. A paste of the leaves is applied to burns, scalds, swellings and various form of skin diseases.

Plate 41.Pongamia pinnata (L) Pierre. (Fabaceae)

The juice of the leaves is prescribed in flatulence, dyspepsia, diarrhoea and cough, it is also considered a remedy for leprosy and gonorrhoea. The dried flowers are used in decoction to quench thin in diabetes. The stem bark is given internally is bleeding piles and for beri-beri.

Plate 42. Pulalia lappacea (L) Juss, (Amaranthaceae)

The fruit is applied locally for cuts and forms an ingredient in enema preparations, mixed with palm oil, it is applied as a dressing for boils. It is given in the form of soup for cough and fever and applied the leprosy sores after making them bleed.

Plate 43.Sida cordifolia Linn (Malvaceae)

The juice of the plant is mixed with the juice of Borassflabellifer (Tati) for local use in Elephantiasis. The mucilaginous learn are used as a demulcent and their infusion is given in fever as refrigerant. The root is astringent, diuretic and tonic. An infusion leaf is given in urinary disorders, bilious disorders and gonorrhoea in also used in cystitis, strangury and haematuria. In nervous disord such as hemiplegia, sciatica and facila paralysis; the root is administer internally in combination with asafoetida and rock salt.

Plate 44.Solanum trilobatum L. (Solanaceae)

The bitter roots are used for consumption in the form of an ectuary, decoction or powder. The berries and flowers are administered or treatment of cough. The decoction of various parts of the plant.

Plate 45.Stachytarpheta indica (Verbenaceae)

The herb is used for treating intestinal worms, venereal diseases, leers, erysipelas, dropsy and stomach aliments. Also, used to stop nomiting. The decoction of the plant is taken as an abortificient. Leaves are said to be used in cardiac troubles and are also rubbed on sprains and bruises or used as cataplasm for boils. The leaf decoction is also used in the treatment of ulceration of the nose.

Plate 46. Trianthem aportulacastrum L. (Aizoaceae)

The leaves and stems are eaten as a vegetable, but they are produce toxic effects in the form of diarrhoea and paralysis. The row have cathartic and irritant properties and are used as an abortifacies also used for the obstruction of the liver, asthma and amenorrhoae the leaves are diuretic and used in oedema and dropsy and in ascitis.



Plate 1 Abutilon indicum (L,)



Plate 5 Argemone mexicanaL.,





Plate 13 Clerodendron inerme(L.,)



Plate 17 Crotalaria verrucosaL.



Plate 21 Dolichos trilobatus L.



Plate 25 Heliotropiumindicum





Plate 7 Borreria hispida (l.,)

Plate 15 Cephalandra indica

Plate 19 Datura stramonium L.



Plate 6 Azadiracta indicaA.Juss



Plate 9 Capparis sepiaria L., Plate 10 Cardiospermum helicacabum



Plate 14 Clitoria ternatea L.



Plate 18 Cynodon dactylon (L.,)



Plate 22 Evolvulus alsinodes (L.) Plate 23 Ficus benghalensis L.







Plate 25 Heliotropium indicum L.



Plate 4 Adathoda vasicaNees



Plate 8 Calotropis gigantean(L.,)R.Br.



Plate 12 Cassia tora L.,



Plate 16 Commelina benghalensis L.



Plate 20 Desmodium triflorum (L.)



Plate 24 Ficus hispidaL.f.



Plate 27 Ipomoea carneaMoench.



Plate 28 Jatropha curcas L.



Plate 38 Physalis minima L.



Plate 37 Phyllanthus mederaspatensis L.



Plate 41 Pongamia pinnata (L)



Plate 45 Stachytarphetaindica Plate



Plate 30 Mollugo oppositifolia L.



Plate 39 Ploycarpae corymbose (L) Lam.



Plate 38 Physalis mini



Plate 42 Pulalia lappacea (L)



Plate 46 Trianthemaportulacastrum L.



Plate 36 Phyllanthus niruri L.



Plate 37 Phyllanthus mederaspatensis L.



Plate 40 Portulaca quadrifida Z., Plate 36 Phyllanthus niruri L.



Plate 39 Ploycarpea corymbosa (L) Lam. Plate 40 Portulaca quadrifida Z.,



Plate 43 Sida cordifolia Linn



Plate 47 Tribulusterrestris L.





Plate 49 Vernonia cinerea (L)



Plate 53 Xanthium indicum Koen







Plate 54 Ziziphus jujuba (L)

Plate 51 Vitis quadrangularis (L.)



Plate 55 Zizyphus xylopyrus (Retz.)



Plate 44 Solanumtrilobatum L.



Plate 48 Tridaxprocumbens L.



Plate 52 Waltheria indica Linn



28195 | P a g e

Plate 47. Tribulu sterrestris L. (Zygophyllaceae)

The leaves possess stomachic properties. The leaf paste is given the treatment of stones in the bladder. The root is credited with erient and tonic properties. Paste of the fruit and root is used in amenorrhoea and dysuria. The flowers rubbed ith silver applied in inflammation of the cornea.

Plate48. Tridax procumbens L. (Asteraceae)

The leaves are reported to be employed in bronchial catarrh, dysentery and diarrhoea and for restoring hair. The leaf juice possesses antiseptic, insecticidal and parasiticidal properties. The leaf juice used to check heamorrage from cuts, bruises and wounds.

Plate 49. Vernonia cinerea (L) Less. (Asteraceae)

Fresh juice of the leaves is given in amoebiasis. A poultice of leaves is used against humid herpes, eczema and ringworm and the extraction of guinea worms, the juice is boiled with oil and used for the treatment of elephantiasis.

Plate 50. Vicoa indica (L.) DC. (Asteraceae)

Leaf juice is taken internally to cure oedema, cough a biliousness. The seed paste is applied to the temples to cure headache. The flower decoction gargling heals inflammation of the plate. The root past is applied on scorpion-sting and smoked with cotton cloth reduce the suffereing.

Plate 51. Vitis quadrangularis (L.) Wall. Ex. Wight. (Vitaceae)

The juice of the stem is dropped into the ear in earache and the nose in epistaxis. It has reputation in scurvy and in irregular menstruation in the latter disease.

Plate 52. Waltheria indica Linn. (Sterculiaceae)

The plant is credited with febrifugal, purgative and emollient properties. It is used as resinous powder for drying and healing of wounds. The powder is also used against cough. A decoction of the parts is used in skin-eruptions and for cleaning wounds. The root works like aspirin. The flowers and the root bark are used for thrush. The plant is a cure for the bite of mad dogs.

Plate 53. Xanthium indicumKoen. (Asteraceae)

The decoction is recommended in chronic malaria, leuccorrhoea urinary diseases. The fruits are rich in Vit. 'C It is also effective in small-pox. The ashes are applied to sores on the lips and ous membrane of the mouth. The root is bitter tonic and has employed in cancer and scrofula. Its extract is used locally on wounds, boiles and abscesses.

Plate 54.Ziziphus jujuba (L) Gaertn. (Rhamnaceae)

Bark is powerfully astringent and the dried fruit powder is used as tonic and stimulant. The young leaves are pounded with those of glomerata and applied to scorpion stings. With Acacia catechus, it is given as a cooling medicine in hot weather in doses of two.

Plate 55. Zizyphus xylopyrus (Retz.) Willd (Rhamnaceae)

The flowers with an equal quantity of the petioles of ht lead and half as much lime are given in 4- gram pills twice a menorrhagia.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The Alangulam hill lock is one of the important forest area occur near Western Ghats. Field visits were made in the study area to survey and to gather information of herbal medicines. The collected plant materials are identified and the morphological descriptions were recorded. The vegetation of the Alangulam hills lock are important which abounds rich herbaceous medicinal flora offers the great scope for the traditional medicine and medico ethno botanical studies. Some of the local treatments commonly used by the inhabitants of the remote areas and other ethnic groups in Tirunelveli were identified. The ground herbaceous flora is rich during rainy season. The Alangulam hills lock and its vegetation are important because it serve as a migratory route for many tropical, humid floristic elements. Apart from the unique flora and vegetation of the mountains, the runoff water and small streams originate from the forest are the main sources of replenishing water for local ponds in Alangulam area. However, a number of anthropogenic factors have adverse environmental impact on the flora and habitats

Future Scope

There is a need to enhance research awareness campaign on economic values of Medicinal plants and their biodiversity. Factual information is hard to find or non-existent. Last but not the least, nothing can be achieved without people's participation. In developing countries like India, voluntary organisations, institutions or pressure groups can play an important role in conservation of Medicinal Plants.

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