

Original Article

Plant Resources Use in the Province of Taza (North of Morocco)

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Abstract

This work concerns researches on flora uses in the Pre-Rif of Taza (North of Morocco). An inquiry conducted among the local population and field surveys have raised real direct values of plant resources (food, traditional medicine, etc.), and plead for the conservation of the local flora. The local plant diversity has been estimated at 140 species, corresponding to 55 botanical families, and represents 3.11% of the national specific richness. *Fabaceae*, *Lamiaceae*, *Rosaceae*, *Poaceae* and *Asteraceae* are the most used, and constitute 43.6% of the inventoried species. Aerial part, fruits, leaves and inflorescences are the most exploited with respective rates of 24%, 22%, 20% and 15%. A high diversification of the social behaviors related to traditional medicine has also been underlined. Species with therapeutic virtues represent 51.4% of the specific inventory, and of which 20.7% interest herbalism activity in the region. *Origanum compactum* Benth. and *Rosmarinus officinalis* L. are the more used. The melliferous flora, generating a profit for the local population, corresponds to 19.3% of the identified species.

Keywords: Northern Morocco, flora, socio-economy

1. Introduction

According to formal documentation, the Moroccan flora would include c. 8000 species, and little information is available on some plant groups with high ecological and socioeconomic interest, and many sites of Morocco have almost never been prospected. Morocco is among the euro-Mediterranean region having a high endemism rate of vascular flora.

Thus, 4500 taxa of vascular, indigenous or naturalized plants, distributed between 920 genera and 130 families, 800 to 951 taxa are endemic to Morocco [e.g. 5, 18].

In the Northern Morocco, we expect particular works on the vascular-flora diversity [28] as well as on its uses [e.g. 13-15, 18, 20, 23].

On the other hand, use and exploitation mode of natural habitat are the source of a cultural richness, expressed by a mosaic of folklores, architectures, local products and a varied handicraft and customs [5]. It is the way of which people with a particular culture use indigenous plants in various domains (food, shelters, medicines, clothes, hunt and religious ceremonies), expressing the relation between a society and its environment [1].

The phyto-diversity studies have generally recourse to the taxonomic richness, in addition to the factors that influence it. Direct values of flora diversity (cut of wood, collecting, picking, etc.) are sometimes raised outside of its real values (indirect use, option, etc.). In this context, we were interested in the diversity and the socioeconomic importance

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