
Medicinal and Aromatic Plants

Utilization and Conservation

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Conservation of Ethno-Medicine in Rarh Region of South-west Bengal

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Ethnobotany deals with different aspects of man-plant relationship with special emphasis on ethnic community of a region, nay country or any geographical territory. This perhaps gives us a new dimension, orientation and objectives to make it complete with vivid information on people and their resource use pattern including science background behind scientific use. The new form of ethnobotany is now reformed and re-oriented as beta-ethnobotany. Earlier taxonomists, anthropologists and social workers have made their work on a wide field of man-plant relationship which was very loose in the sense that no specification or special focus was there which has its origin so called alpha-ethnobotany. Beta-ethnobotany deals with objective based oriented studies, divine, dynamic and quantitative ethno-botany with special emphasis to assessment of credibility of folk claims, ethno pharmacology, ethno-pharmacotherapy and ethno-medicine. Presently scientists estimated that out of over 5000 plants have been used in ethno-medicine much less than 1000 are utilized in herbal drug industry in different indigenous systems of medicine like ayurveda, homoeopathy, unani and siddha. A wide variation of use and conservation strategies on that medicine or the raw sources of these materials are available in the lower tract of Chotanagpur plateau in red lateritic part of West Bengal so called the 'rarh' region. Tribal people like *santal*, *kol*, *sabar*, *kheria*, *oraon*, *munda* etc. inhabiting the *rarh* region use the medicine as ethno-medicine since time immemorial and conserve the plants and similar plant propagules in their home gardens and nearby *sal* (*Shorea robusta*) dominated forests for future