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Update on indigenous knowledge of Okoubaka aubrevillei: The Need for Biotechnological Conservatory Approaches

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Abstract

Okoubaka aubrevillei is one of the forest trees critically threatened and rare in its natural ranges in Nigeria. This study conducted a field search and ethnobotanical survey for O. aubrevillei in selected areas of Oyo and Osun States, aimed towards sustainable conservation and utilization. Ethnobotanical information gathering followed a participatory rural appraisal (PRA) approach, whereas, for the search and species identification, standard botanical procedures were followed. While two stands of O. aubrevillei were found at Ameere village in Osun state, none was encountered in Oyo state. The bark was the predominantly known part, with a 94 % fidelity level (FL) of use. Other FL of use computed in the study were for leaves (70 %), seeds (50 %) as well as bark and seed (25 %). The medicinal potentials of the plant include the treatment of insanity, convulsion, miscarriage, skin infections, food poisoning, stomach upset, snake bite, leprosy, and venereal diseases. Taboos and reverence ascribed to the plant, coupled with mandatory rituals required to assess and harvest the parts, contributed mainly to the low level of concerted research efforts to promote the cultivation, management/improvement of its genetic resources, conservation, and utilization. The

use of
biotechnological conservatory approaches could considerably stem some of the constraints and
substantially
enhance its cultivation and utilization.

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