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Research Article

Exploring the Links between Ethnobotany, Local Therapeutic Practices, and Protected Areas in Santa Catarina Coastline, Brazil

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Abstract

We investigated the knowledge of medicinal plants in two areas proposed for the creation of protected areas for sustainable use in the city of Imbituba (SC). In this study, we analyzed the influence of gender, form of learning, and modern medicine on medicinal plant knowledge while also reflecting on the relationship of this knowledge to in situ conservation. Data collection was conducted through structured interviews, free listings, guided tours, and collection of botanical material. 197 species of medicinal plants belonging to 70 botanical families were recorded. Gender and the form of learning were factors that significantly influenced the similarity of the knowledge of medicinal plants among the informants. We also observed the existence of a therapeutic pluralism among key informants. Local medicinal plant knowledge emphasizes the importance of strategies to create protected areas of sustainable use as a way to ensure the maintenance of traditional lifestyles and associated local knowledge.

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