

SOUTH AFRICAN PLANTS USED IN TRADITIONAL ZULU CULTURE

Africa - a continent steeped in ancient rituals and cultural practices - many plant based

South Africa - with an impressive 2300 species of flowering plants - has the greatest floral diversity in Africa

KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) - home to the proud Zulu nation, the Isiganga (medicinal healer) & Sangoma (spiritual healer)

DURBAN (KwaZulu-Natal) - The Durban Botanic Gardens is a relic from the Marikani Junction herb "market"

Traditional Medicines are used by 80% of the population for primary health care. Annually 700 species, making up over 2000 plant material are sold in Durban's informal "herb" markets alone.

Trade - In KZN, like in elsewhere and across the world, indigenous plant fibres, seeds and processed plant parts, mainly from local & other forest reserves

Umsobushushu Harvesting - To supply this lucrative trade, plants are collected from the natural environment, under pressure from urbanisation, agriculture & forestry. Increased demand now exceeds supply for many plant species, leading to critical over-exploitation and local extinctions

INTELEZI - Harvested as an alternative of plant parts, bark, leaves and stems, used in traditional medicine. The plant is a common weed in coastal areas. The bark is harvested and is a very popular medicinal herb. It is used to treat various ailments, including fever, pain and other ailments.



Conservation through Propagation

PROPAGATION IN THE DURBAN BOTANIC GARDENS

The Durban Botanic Gardens is home to a variety of indigenous species such as endangered cycads

CONSERVATION EDUCATION

Conservation education: In eThekweni training programmes are in place to encourage propagation of medicinal plants. eg Silverglen Medicinal Plant Nursery

MICROPROPAGATION

Micropropagation: Tissue culture has become a vital avenue for protection of endangered species through *ex situ* propagation. eg *Siphonochilus aethiopicus* is locally extinct but is available in cultivation through micropropagation



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DURBAN
(eThekweni)
The Durban Botanic Gardens is 11km from the Warwick Junction Herb "Muthi" Market

...000 species of plants are collected in the wild for traditional medicinal use and household items

TRADITIONAL MEDICINES are used by 80% of the population for primary health care. Annually 771 species, making up 4000 tonnes of plant material are sold in Durban's informal "Muthi" Markets alone.

...ORAL WOODEN & FIBRE PRODUCTS are crafted by hand used by 96% of rural and urban Zulu households

Trade

In KZN, 260 000 harvesters and weavers trade in indigenous plant fibres, semi- and processed plant parts, mainly from rural & urban street markets

Unsustainable Harvesting
To supply this lucrative trade, plants are collected from the natural environment. Under pressure from urbanisation, agriculture & forestry, increased demand now exceeds supply for many plant species, leading to CRITICAL OVEREXPLOITATION AND LOCAL EXTINCTIONS

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PROPAGATION IN THE DURBAN BOTANIC GARDENS
The Durban Botanic Gardens is a world heritage site and a major centre for plant conservation and propagation. It has a long history of propagating indigenous plants for medicinal and cultural purposes. The gardens have a large collection of indigenous plants and are a major source of material for the Muthi markets. The gardens also offer a range of propagation services to the public.

CONSERVATION EDUCATION
The Durban Botanic Gardens offers a range of conservation education programmes for schools, universities and the general public. These programmes focus on the importance of indigenous plants and the need to conserve them for future generations.

MICROPROPAGATION
The Durban Botanic Gardens offers a range of micropropagation services to the public. These services include the production of clones of indigenous plants for medicinal and cultural purposes. The gardens also offer a range of propagation services to the public.

