

Medicinal Plants:  
**The  
Fountainhead**



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## India's Medical Heritage and its Contemporary Relevance

India has one of the richest ethno-botanical traditions in the world and our local communities use over 7,000 species of plants. These are of diverse habits from orchids and ferns to trees, grasses, shrubs and climbers in ecosystems ranging from Ladakh to Kanyakumari and stretching to the north-east hills of Mizoram and Nagaland.

### INMEDPLAN

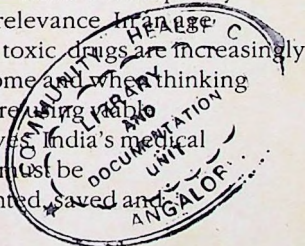
India's traditional medical systems are part of a time-honoured and time-tested culture that still intrigues people today.

A culture that has successfully used nature to treat primary and complex ailments for over

3,000 years obviously has a contemporary

relevance. In an age

when toxic drugs are increasingly unwelcome and when thinking people are seeking viable alternatives, India's medical heritage must be documented, saved and used.



## What is Inmedplan?

Both rural and urban populations make use of our health traditions to meet a wide variety of health needs. At the Foundation for Revitalisation of Local Health Traditions, we are helping preserve tradition in a modern way through a collaborative effort called the Indian Medicinal Plants Distributed Databases Network, or Inmedplan. Inmedplan is a network of nine nodal agencies and several satellite agencies whose databases conform to Inmedplan

database standards. These agencies, spread across the country, specialise in botany, ecology,



phytochemistry, pharmacology, pharmacognosy, ethnomedicine, bibliography and abstracts, agrotechnology and traditional systems of medicine.

## Objectives

Inmedplan has been set up to network specialised database producers who are engaged in building reliable multi-disciplinary information in the area of plants and plant-based natural products. It aims to serve the information needs of agriculture, community health, medical research, the pharmaceutical industry and medicinal plants conservation. The network agencies are also striving to establish world class standards.

## Need for a Database Network on Medicinal Plants

Multi-disciplinary information on plants used for medicine is available in specialised centres scattered across the country. There is, therefore, a vital need for a network that links up these centres so that users can have a single window access to diverse information on Indian medicinal plants. The Inmedplan Secretariat at Bangalore thus acts like a supermarket that can supply to users a range of quality information on medicinal plants produced by specialised research institutes in different parts of the country.

## Network Secretariat



**FRLHT**

The Foundation for Revitalisation of Local Health Traditions is the Network Secretariat for Inmedplan. Enquiries on medicinal plants can be addressed to the Secretariat which will gather and supply the required information from the nodal agencies concerned to the users.

The Secretariat will publish Inmedplan database standards from time to time. A quarterly newsletter is also being distributed to enhance user awareness.

In addition, the Network Secretariat liaises with international databases like NAPRALERT, WCMC and others and this information is available on accessing Inmedplan.

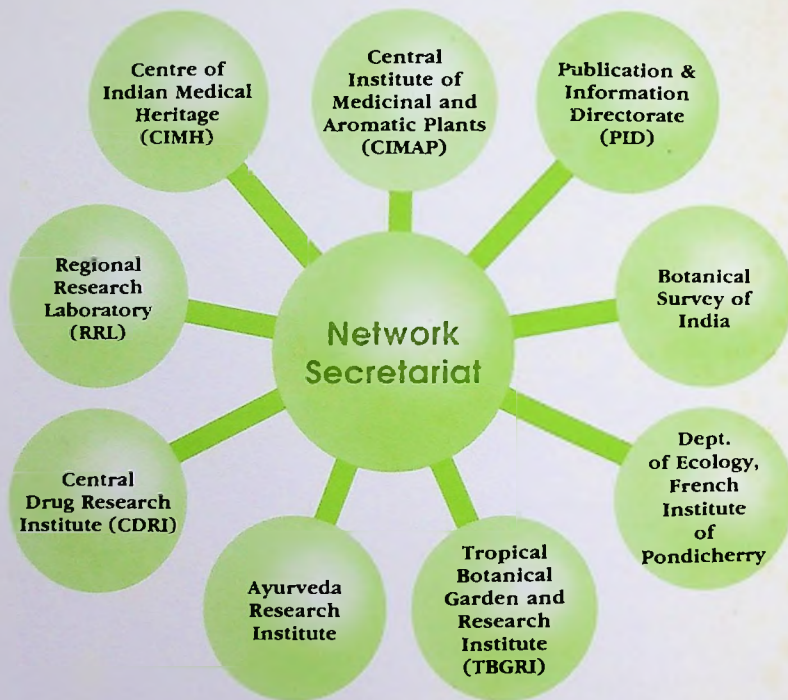


FRLHT has a graphic database at Bangalore which is being equipped with suitable hardware and software to scan/digitise colour photographs and line drawings of plants and process them into approved formats. Outputs from the centre will be made available in two formats : one low resolution version with adequate details for reviewing on computer screens and obtaining representative hard copies, and the other high resolution version will be made available on demand for printing quality images.



A user can request for data by writing, sending an Email or phoning the Secretariat. Inmedplan is currently an organised offline distributed network which will provide online access as soon as user demand grows to a viable level.





## The Nodal Agencies

Nodal agencies specialise in a particular area of data. The agencies and the information they manage is as follows:

### 1 Agrotechnology

#### Central Institute of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (CIMAP)

P. B. NO. 1, P.O. Ram Sagar Misra Nagar, Lucknow 226 016

Contact Person : Dr. Sushil Kumar

Information Available:

Propagation, manures & fertilizers, harvesting yield, pests & diseases, cultivation economics, sources of planting material supplies and other relevant information.

### 2 Bibliography & Abstracts

#### Publication & Information Directorate (PID)

Dr. K.S. Krishan Marg, New Delhi 110 012

Contact Person: Mr. H.C. Jain

Information Available:

Plant reference, source, title, author, institution and abstract of the article. The journal and the year in which published.

## 3 Botany

### **Botanical Survey of India**

192, Kaulagarh Road, Dehra Dun - 248 195

Contact Person : Dr. D.K. Singh

Information Available:

Family, genus, species, local names, infraspecific categories, habitat, altitude, status, phenology, Indian & world distribution, reference specimens, herbarium etc.

## 4 Ecology

### **Dept. of Ecology, French Institute of Pondicherry**

11, St. Louis St., P. B. 33, Pondicherry 605 001

Contact Person: Dr. B.R. Ramesh

Information Available:

Natural conditions in which medicinal plants occur viz., topography, climatic factors, edaphic factors, distribution pattern etc.,

## 5 Ethnomedicine

### **Tropical Botanical Garden and Research Institute (TBGRI)**

Karimancode, Pacha- Palode P.O.  
Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala 695 562

Contact Person: Dr. P. Pushpangadan

Information Available:

Location of ethnic source, disease for which plant used, plant part used, plant part condition (fresh/dried), medicine form, administration mode, etc.,

## 6 Pharmacognosy

### **Ayurveda Research Institute**

Poojappara, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala 695 562

Contact Person: Dr. N. Lakshmi

Information Available:

Macroscopic and microscopic description of plant, officinal part, histology, taste, odour and other distinguishing features.

## 7 Pharmacology

### **Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI)**

Chatter Manzil, P.B. No. 173, Lucknow 226 001

Contact Person: Dr. R.K. Sharma

Information Available:

Screening data (x 115), type of test, test results etc,

## 8 Phytochemistry

### **Regional Research Laboratory (RRL)**

Canal Road, Jammu 180 001

Contact Person: Dr. S.G. Agarwal

Information Available:

Isolation technique, constituent /compounds, chemical class, structure, part containing constituent, percentage yield, analytical techniques, bioactivity evidence (invivo/invitro) biosynthetic studies etc.,

## 9 Traditional (Indigenous) Systems

### **Centre for Indian Medical Heritage (CIMH)**

P.B. No. 7102, Ramanathapuram, Coimbatore 641 045

Contact Person: Dr. S.N. Venugopal

Information Available:

System of medicine (ayurveda), scripture references, indigenous classification, properties, processing, clinical usage, formularies in which used, etc.,

• Tibetan, Unani, Siddha centres still to be identified •



### **The Network Secretariat**

#### **Foundation for Revitalisation of Local Health Traditions**

No.50, 2nd Stage, 3rd Main, M.S.H. Layout,

Anand Nagar, Bangalore 560 024

Contact Person: Mr. Ravi Chander

## **FRLHT's role in the conservation of medicinal plants and the revival of India's traditional health systems.**

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FRLHT is playing a pioneering role in medicinal plants conservation. With the help of other NGOs and State Forest Departments, the Foundation has helped establish 30 medicinal plants conservation areas in South India which protects biodiversity as well as medicinal plants. Fifteen medicinal plants conservation parks are being set up along with a production unit in Karnataka's BR Hills which will manufacture herbal medicine through a tribal co-operative.

The Foundation's research department has already formulated a threatened medicinal

plants list along with a list of priority plants based on realistic criteria. Ongoing work includes nomenclature correlation studies for Sanskrit and botanical plant names, eco-distribution mapping of priority plants of South India and establishment of nursery techniques for selected wild medicinal plants.

FRLHT's thrust areas include building centres of excellence in traditional medicine for primary health care as well as specialised fields of traditional medical knowledge; promoting research in theoretical foundations of traditional medicine, and designing programmes for developing international co-operation in the field of traditional medicine.

FRLHT is a public trust. It has on its governing body eminent scientists, traditional physicians, modern medical professors and representatives of community health organisations, government and industry.

## **Satellite Agencies**

Whereas nodal agencies are subject specialists it is difficult for any single agency to gather all the information on any subject.

The Inmedplan Secretariat, therefore, invites other agencies to participate in the effort to build up a national database network on medicinal plants for the country. The Secretariat will be publishing the Inmedplan national database standards for each specialised subject. Satellite agencies should use the common standards to represent their data. Information from satellite agencies will be duly acknowledged with a "source tag" and distributed by nodal agencies on mutually acceptable terms.





**C/o. Foundation for Revitalisation of Local Health Traditions**

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