Commercially important medicinal and aromatic plants of Nepal and their distribution pattern and conservation measure along the elevation gradient of the Himalayas

Khem Raj Bhattarai¹ and Madhu Ghimire²

This study aims to assess and evaluate the number of commercially important medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs) found in the trade and explore their distribution pattern and conservation measures along the Himalayan elevation gradient of Nepal. The species data for this study are based on primary as well as secondary sources, where as elevation range data are based only on secondary sources. The number of MAPs species and number of conservation sites present in each 100 m elevation band is estimated by interpolation. The assessed numbers of commercial MAPs are assigned in to different life forms group to find the life form spectrum of commercial species. The number of MAPs species and conservation sites present in each 100 m elevation band are evaluated as a response variable where as elevation gradient is the predictor. The relationship between them is elucidated by scatter plot as well as generalised liner models.

In this study, we have assessed 143 species as commercial MAPs. The variation of MAPs species is found related to elevation. The MAPs species richness increases with increasing the elevation up to 1000 m then decrease with further increasing the elevation thus unimodal type of pattern is observed. The maximum numbers of MAPs are found at 1000 m but maximum numbers of conservation sites are found above this elevation range. We did not find the significant pattern between conservation sites and MAPs species richness along the elevation gradient of the Himalayas. The conservation sites of Nepal are less concentrated where MAPs species diversity is rich.

Key words: Medicinal and aromatic plants, elevation gradient, species richness, generalised linear model

N epal contains diverse physiographic and climatic variation along the elevation gradient and harbours different ecosystems with valuable floral wealth. Nepal is ranked 9th among the Asian countries for its floral wealth as more than 9,000 species of flowering plants are estimated. Among total floral wealth of Nepal, about 10 % of species are reported with medicinal and aromatic properties. Various parts of these annuals, biennials and perennial plants have been used as medicines, perfumes, and food. Pandey (1961) for the first time reported 73 medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs). Then, Department of Medicinal Plants (DMP, 1970) reported 483 species; Malla and Shyaka (1984) reported 690 species of MAPs in Nepal. Manandhar (2002) has reported ethno-botanical information of 1,500 plant species, majority of them have medicinal value. Before implementation of master plan for the forestry sector (1988), this group of plants have been termed as

minor forest products and these were relatively neglected from the state. Later, due to their high volume and commercial value in no way is described as minor. They were recognised as important because of their diverse uses and high commercial value. Every year thousands of collectors and gatherers of hilly region sustain their livelihood from the collection and sales of MAPs. The sustainable collection of MAPs can provide valuable cash for rural people therefore government should focus to this sector for research and conservation to bring out it in to competitive world.

Although, the collection and trade of MAPs have been a source of income for rural people of Nepal, the literatures concerning assessment of commercial species, distribution pattern and their conservation measures are not well addressed. There is lacking on quantitative assessment of their natural population

¹ Vegetation Ecologist, National Herbarium and Plant Laboratories, Godawari, Corresponding author: Bhattaraikhemraj@hotmail.com GPO Box 7426, Sundhara, Kathamndu, Nepal.

² Asst. Botanist, National Herbarium & Plant Laboratories, Godawari

and testing their pattern along the climatic elevation gradient. Natural forests are decreasing due to ever increasing human population in the Himalayan region so diversity pattern should be examined before their clearance (Bhattarai, 2005). Many species of MAPs are already threatened from collection pressure (Ghimire *et al.* 2005). The natural populations of commercially important MAPs might have disappeared or might be under the serious risk of extinction, so it is urgent to explore their patterns and find out factors controlling upon the patterns, so that effective conservation measures can be implemented.

Different methods and approaches have been applied to describe the variation in vascular plants species diversity and composition along elevation gradients in different floristic areas of the world (Shmida and Wilson, 1985; Oland and Birks, 1999; Vetaas and Grytnes, 2002; Bhattarai and Vetaas, 2003, 2006) but study in the medicinal and aromatic plants along the elevation gradient has not been done so far. These plants are belonging to wide range of families so it might represent all life forms as well as taxonomic groups. Although, this sector contributes significant amount in the Nepalese economy documentation has not been done how many of those commercially important medicinal and aromatics plants are belong to different life forms groups like trees, shrubs, climbers and herbs.

Factors causing variation in species diversity may differ between life forms of plants, which may provide the finer resolution on how patterns are exist and what are the underlying factors behind the distribution mechanism (Bhattarai and Vetaas, 2003). Thus, this study will ask the following three major questions: (1) which species of MAPs are in the trade and commercially important for Nepal? (2) how is the distribution pattern of these commercially important MAPs along the elevation gradient of the Himalayas; Nepal? and, (3) is there any trend between conservation measures and MAPs diversity along the elevation gradient?

Materials and methods

Location of study area and its elevation gradient

The study considers the whole central Himalayas, Nepal, (26° 22' to 30° 27' N and 80° 4' to 88° 12' E), an area 800 km east west by 150-200 km north south. There is the Indo-Gangetic plain in the south, hills and valleys in the middle and ice-carved mountains in the north. In the northern part of the Indo-Gangetic plain there is a flat plain about 30-40 km wide from east to west, which is called Terai in Nepal. After a 30-40 km north-south extension of this flatland, the Siwalik hills rise abruptly to an average elevation of 1300 m. The Himalayan elevation gradient extends from ca. 60 to more than 8,000 m within 150-200 km and includes compressed tropical/ subtropical, temperate, sub-alpine, and alpine climatic zones.

Data sources and interpolation

We have collected data from the primary as well as secondary sources. The elevation range data for MAPs are collected from DPR (2001); Press et al. (2001), ANSAB and SNV (2003). The functional group data were based upon Press et al. (2001) that is a most reliable and up-to-date source about the flora of Nepal as is based on extensive field studies, reviews of published literature, and examinations of herbaria. To examine the relationship between species richness and elevation, the total elevation gradient between 100 and 5500 m was divided into 55 100-m elevation intervals (vertical elevation band). The number of species presences in each elevation band is estimated by the interpolation (Bhattarai and Vetaas, 2006). A species was defined as being present in every 100-m interval between its upper and lower elevation limits. For example, Swertia chirayita with its elevation limit between 1500 and 3000 m, was assumed to be present in each elevation band of 1500, 1600, 1700, 1800 and so on up to 3000 m (Rahbek, 1997; Vetaas and Grytnes, 2002). The term species richness is defined as the total number of MAPs species found in each 100 m elevation band (Grytnes and Vetaas, 2002). The MAPs species were assessed as commercially important based on extensive visits of the trade centres and interviewing of traders from Kathmandu, Dolakha, Trisuli, Pokhara, Butwal, Pyuthan, Nepalgunj, Hetaunda between 1996-1998, and secondary sources (Malla et al. 1993; Edwards 1996; Bhattarai and Acharya, 1996a; Bhattarai and Acharya, 1996b; ANSAB and SNV, 2003; DOF, 2002; HNCC, 2005). The samples of MAPs sent by different District Forest Offices to National Herbarium and Plant Laboratories for identification also contributed to make a decision whether these species are in trade or not.

Bhattarai and Ghimire

To find the number of conservation activities occurring per 100 m elevation band along the elevation gradient of Nepal, the altitudinal range of each conservation area, National Park, Wild life Reserve and Hunting Reserve of Nepal are taken from Biodiversity Profile Project (1995). The interpolated elevation range is converted in to dummy variable by considering 1 for presence and 0 for absence and number of conservation sites per 100 m elevation is estimated (Crawley, 2002; see Table 2).

Numerical analysis

To examine the relationships between species richness and elevation we have used Generalized Linear Models (GLM; McCullagh & Nelder, 1989; Dobson, 1990) (see Table 1). The response variable, species richness, is a discrete data type (counts) and may follow a Poisson error distribution (McCullagh & Nelder, 1989), which requires a logarithmic link. The models were checked with up to third-order polynomial regressions. We used a F-test to check the significance of models, as this is more robust (Crawley, 2002). We used S-plus (version 4.5) for all the regression analyses and graphical representations.

Results

Lifeforms spectrum of commercial MAPs

Neither all species reported in the different literature as medicinal and aromatic plants are found in the trade, nor all species found in the trade are reported as medicinal and aromatic plants. A total of 143 species are assessed as commercial MAPs in Nepal. These commercial MAPs are belonging to different life forms such as tree, shrub, climber and herbaceous groups (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1: Diagramme shows composition of commercial MAPs species richness belong to each life form.

Distribution of MAPs along the elevation gradient

The MAPs are found growing between 100 m to 5500 m along the elevation gradient in Nepal. The uppermost range of distribution is different for different life forms groups. The variation in species richness of MAPs belonging to each life forms group is shown in Table 1 and Fig. 2. The MAPs belonging to trees life form group are found up to 4400 m a.s.l. but the MAPs species belong to shrub life forms group are found up to 5100 m a.s.l. Similarly climbers are found up to 3200 m a.s.l. and herbaceous MAPs are found up to 5500 m a.s.l. All life form groups when regressed separately and in combination against elevation significant trend was observed in the second order term in the GLM and confirm the hump shaped relationship along the elevation gradient of Himalayas (Table 1). Thus, the pattern of distribution along the elevation gradient is almost similar for all life forms groups.

The MAPs species richness increases with increasing the elevation up to certain elevation range and then decreases with further increasing the elevation. Thus optimum MAPs species richness observed at the middle of the gradient. This optimum richness site is different for different life forms of MAPs. The MAPs belonging to trees and climbers life forms are found optimum at 1000 m; shrubs are found optimum at 2000 m and herbaceous are found optimum at 2500 m a.s.l. The optimum richness site is 1000 m a.s.l for these combination (total MAPs). Thus a total MAPs species richness increases up to 1000 m and decreases afterwards showing a midelevation peak in richness (Fig. 2, Table 1).

Relationship between conservation sites and richness of MAPs

To date, there are nine national parks, three-wildlife reserves, one hunting reserve, three conservation areas and one protected forest (Table 2). When a relationship between number of conservation sites and elevation gradient is sought, the unimodal type trend is observed (Fig. 2). These conservation sites are distributed along the elevation gradient ranging from 75 m to 8,848m, highest the peak in the world. This is a longest bio-climatic gradient in the world. The numbers of conservation sites are increased with increasing elevation up to 1400 m and decreases afterwards with further increasing elevation. Thus

Life forms	Polynomial order	Degree of freedom	Resi. deviance	%-Deviance explained	P-value
Trees MAPs	2	41	47.75	86	$\mathbf{P}=0$
Shrubs MAPs	2	47	19.66	84	P<0.001
Climbers MAPs	2	32	8.00	89	P<0.001
Herbs MAPs	2	52	30.18	91	$\mathbf{P}=0$
Total MAPs	2	52	74.56	92	$\mathbf{P} = 0$

Table 1: Summary of	generalised linear models	(GLM) for each	life forms	of MAPs
	a	· -	/		

Res. Deviance = Residual deviance

maximum numbers of conservation sites are found around 1400 m a.s.l. (Fig. 2). Although, there are large numbers of conservations sites available in Nepal, unfortunately, no positive trend could be observed between commercial MAPs species diversity and number of conservation sites (r = -0.32, Fig. 3) along the elevation gradient. When these conservation sites are ordinate, the length of gradient i equal \pm 05.5 in SD unit, (Fig. 5).When we took only 12 prioritise MAPs of Nepal and sough the same relationship we did not find the trend (r = 0.05), as the Generalised Additive Model (GAM) smoother also could not detect the pattern.

Discussion

Variation in MAPs species along the elevation gradient

This study found a mid-elevation peak for MAPs species richness along the elevation gradient, which is consistent with several other studies (Terborg, 1977; Grytnes & Vetaas, 2002). This study also supports the results obtained by Bhattarai and Vetaas (2003, 2006), Bhattarai *et al.* (2004) along the elevation gradient of the Himalayas.

Malla and Shakya (1984) also reported mid elevation peak richness for MAPs of Nepal. Although, MAPs



Fig. 2: Scatter plots show the relationship between MAPs species (belongs to different life forms), conservation sites and elevation gradient. The x-axis represents the elevation in m above sea level.



Fig. 3 : Scatter plot shows the relationship between number of conservation sites and MAPs diversity along the elevation gradient.

belong to heterogeneous group plants consisting of angiosperm, gymnosperm as well as cryptogrammic plants thus this mid-elevation peak might be true reflection of total floral diversity of Nepal. Rahbek's (1995) review concluded that the mid-elevation peak is a common pattern.

However, this study does not support monotonically decreasing species richness with increasing elevation, as suggested by Stevens (1992). He predicts that elevation range will increase with increasing elevation

due to the wider climatic tolerances of high-altitude species. The location of herbaceous MAPs richness is different from the total MAPs species richness (including herbs, shrubs, climbers and trees) as observed by Bhattarai and Vetaas (2003). along the elevation gradient. This discrepancy might be associated with different limits of distribution i.e. different hard boundaries for tree species and nontree species. Herbaceous species in the Himalayas are reported up to 6500 m (Miehe, 1989), but tree species hardly extend beyond 4300 m, i.e. the timberline.

Table 2 : National parks, wildlife reserves, hunting reserve, conservation areas and protected forest and their altitudinal range in Nepal

S.N.	Name of the protected areas	Conservation type	Altitudinal range (m asl)
1	Rara National Park	National Park	2800-4048
2	Shey Phoksundo National Park	National Park	2000-6883
3	Langtang National Park	National Park	792-7245
4	Makalu Barun National Park and Conservation Area	National Park	435-8463
5	Sagarmatha National Park	National Park	2845-8848
6	Shiva puri National Park	National Park	1336-2732
7	Khaptad National Park	National Park	1400-3300
8	Royan Chitwan National Park	National Park	150-815
9	Royal Bardia National Park	National Park	152-1441
10	Koshi Tapu Wildlife Reserve	Wildlife Reserve	75-90
11	Royal Shuklaphanta Wildlife Reserve	Wildlife Reserve	90-270
12	Parsa Wildlife Reserve	Wildlife Reserve	100-950
13	Dhorpatan Hunting Reserve	Hunting Reserve	2850-5500
14	Annapurna Conservation Area	Conservation Area	1151-8091
15	Kanchanjunga Conservation Area	Conservation Area	1200-8586
16	Manaslu Conservation Area	Conservation Area	1360-8163
17	Nagarjun Royal Forest	Protected forest	1300-2200

Sources: Biodiversity profile project (1995)

Bhattarai & Vetaas (2003) from field sampling found maximum tree species richness around 800 m, therefore this mid-elevation peak is close to that found by Bhattarai & Vetaas (2003). The range of a species along an elevation gradient is constrained by these hard boundaries. These boundaries present at the two ends of an elevation gradient produce some degree of resistance to dispersal.

Although variation of species richness is influenced by several factors like aspects, forest types, canopy cover, slope, conservation sites, grazing, competetion etc, the influences of these factors depends upon the scale of the study. These factors influence the species richness pattern only at local scale (Bhattarai and Vetaas, 2005). This is a macro-scale study so such local factors can not influence upon the species richness pattern.

Several suggestions have been proposed to explain the mid-elevation peak in richness; in particular climatic factors have received more attention (Oland & Birks, 1999; Md. Nor, 2001; Bhattarai *et al.* 2004). Bhattarai & Vetaas (2003) found that the mid-elevation peak in richness is a function of water-energy dynamics. The maximum species richness will be found at locations with maximum rainfall and optimal energy conditions (O'Brien, 1993, 1998). We propose that the maximum MAPs species richness around 1000 m might be associated with optimum energy and maximum rainfall (Bhattarai and Vetaas, 2003).



Fig. 4 : Relationship between conservation sites and number of prioritized MAPs species. The line is fitted by GAM smoother, which is fitted only to guide the reader's eye

The increase in MAPs species richness from lowland up to 1000 m is in contrast with report of decreasing tree species richness with higher elevation (Yoda, 1967). The mid-elevation peak in MAPs species richness may result from large-scale mass effects, of species from the lower elevation and the higher elevation (montane-flora) (Shmida & Wilson, 1985). The mid-elevation receive input from both directions. Thus, mass effects or source-sink dynamics may be important to influence variation in species richness within an elevation gradient (Grytnes & Vetaas, 2002).

This study did not support the claim made by Malla and Shakya (1984) as a 1000-2000 m is rich for diversity of MAPs. They did not separate the MAPs in to each life form as well as they did not make any statistical test about the distribution pattern of the MAPs. Most plant groups excluding ferns have optimum richness around 1000 m asl (Bhattarai and Vetass, 2003, 2006; Bhattarai *et al.* 2004). This is a first report that the optimum richness for MAPs is found at 1000 m asl.



Fig. 5: The ordination of conservation sites of Nepal. The conservation sites are distributed in the DCA diagram according to their respective elevational range from Terai to Higher Himalayas.

Commercial MAPs of Nepal

Regarding the number of MAPs species, there is no same consensus how many species are actually present. It might be due to several systems of medicine (e.g. Ayurved, Tibetan, Chinese, Sidha, & Unani) are being practiced in Nepal and, have been considered MAPs differently. If we take an account of these different systems of medicine in terms of plant use, then large number of species would fall under the MAPs' category. Thus, the number of MAPs actually depends on system of medicine and degree of their uses.

Although, several authors have reported different numbers of MAPs in Nepal (DMP, 1970; Malla and Shakya, 1984; Malla et al. 1993; Manandhar, 2002; Watanabe et al. 2005), this paper does not emphasize upon the listing the MAPs as it has been found in most of the Nepalese literature. The important issue is to assess and evaluate how many commercial MAPs species are found in the trade, how is their diversity pattern and conservation measures in their natural habitats. Among the MAPs, only commercial species are being collected for trade. Due to their high commercial value, MAPs are threatened by large-scale exploitation for trade (Ghimire et al. 2005). According to Forest Regulation (third amendment 2005) there is a list of 188 NTFPs but taxonomically there are less species. These days National Herbarium and Plant Laboratories have been receiving NTFPs samples from District Forest Office for identification. These most samples are arrested due to illegal trade. About 20-25 % of the species from those samples have not been found included in the royalty list. This suggests that, there might be more than 188 species of NTFPs in the trade so several species may not have been incorporated in to royalty list. Shrestha and Shrestha (2061) have reported 101 NTFPs as major commercial species of Nepal. Similarly ANSAB and SNV (2003) reported 125 commercial species of NTFPs in the trade. Both reports could not evaluate how many commercial species are actually found in the trade. Some of the species of NTFPs, which ANSAB and SNV (2003) have reported as a commercially importance is not found in the trade at all e.g. Sapium insigne, Dalbergia sissoo and Toona ciliata. However, these species might have subsistence use only. We have observed some additional species of MAPs in the trade, which have not been yet reported as commercial MAPs (see appendix 1).

Our judgement upon the commercial species is largely based on volume of trade, frequency of trade occurrence, royalty rate, revenue collection, market rate, market demand, and threats status. Even though there might be more species in the trade, we have only assessed 143 MAPs species as commercially important (appendix 1). Some species, which are occasionally found in the trade with low price and low volume, are not considered as commercial species of MAPs. Although we could assess only 143 MAPs as a commercially important, it is not a final list for commercial MAPs, still there might be several species left to be incorporated. However we have not considered other Non-timber forest product (NTFPs) like Canes *(Bet)*, Babiyo etc. in this study so that number of species might be more than 150. If there were a complete list of commercial MAPs, then it would be possible to find out where these species are distributed, and what might be threats upon them.

Conservation areas and MAPs species richness

There are 17 protected areas in Nepal (Table 2). These are distributed from terai to the highest peak in the world (8848 m). The protected areas, including six declared buffer zones cover 27,874 km² or, 19.21% of the total area of the country. The maximum numbers of protected areas are located between 1400 to 4500 m a.s.l. (See Fig. 2). Unfortunately, the maximum diversity of flowering plant is found below 1400 m a.s.l. (Bhattarai & Vetaas, 2003, 2004, 2006). The maximum diversity of MAPs are also found around 1000 m along the elevation gradient. Although, the main aim of these protected areas is to conserve the overall biodiversity of the region but this study did not find the trend between the diversity of MAPs and protected areas. This may indicate that Nepalese conservation activities might have focused to conserve the flagship animal species like onehorned rhinoceros, tiger, Indian elephant, snow leopard, musk deer, swamp deer and gharial rather than plant species. In Nepal there are several endangered plant species (e.g. Ceropegia pubescens, Cyathea spinulosa, Cycas pectinata, Podophyllum hexandrum, Gnetum montanum, Talauma hodgsonii, Tetracentron sinensis) but there are no special declared plant conservation sites for these species. It is surprising that complete checklist of flora present in protected areas of Nepal has not yet been prepared. This indicates that our conservation efforts are less focused towards plant diversity (Bhattarai, 2004). Hunter and Yunzon (1993) have made remarks that conservation activities are focused to higher elevations where diversity of plant is less.

However, there are 60 MAPs species categorised as threatened (Shrestha and Joshi, 1996; Bhattarai *et al.* 2002) in Nepal. Government of Nepal has selected 30 species of MAPs and all species of *Genus* Lichen for research and management, and 12 species of MAPs are prioritised for development of agrotechnology (Sharma *et al.* 2004; and Bhattarai *et al.* 2004). There is no breeding programme for MAPs to select best genotype to adapt at the man made conditions (Bhattarai et al. 2004). This may indicate that sufficient attention is lacking for overall development of MAPs. Moreover, there is no special project undertaken to solve the agricultural related problem for these wildly growing plant species. However, tissue culture has been initiated in the National Herbarium and Plant Laboratories for micro propagation of Kutki, Sughandhawal, Serpagandha, Pipla and Chiraito, (Rajkarnikar et al. 2004), which are all belongs to commercial MAPs as well as prioritise species of the country. The vitro planting material developed in the laboratory generally is not brought in the field for their performance test (pers. comm. with GD Bhatt). The laboratory works alone cannot solve the domestication and other cultivation problems of wild species. Even though, MAPs is one of the prioritised sectors by Tenth Plan of the Government of Nepal, it has not received proper attention for the up-liftment of the poor rural people through the development of MAPs.

Acknowledgements

We are thankful to Dr. P.R. Shakya, and Mr. Puran Prasad Kurmi for stimulating discussions during the preparation of the manuscript. We acknowledge Mr. Hari Krishna Saiju, Director General of Department of Plant Resources, and our immediate boss Dr MK Adhikari for their cooperation to bring out this publication.

References

- ANSAB & SNV 2003. Commercially Important Non Timber Forest Product (NTFPs) of Nepal. Asia Network for Sustainable Development (ANSAB), Kathmandu, Nepal. pp. 168.
- Biodiversity profile project. 1995. Biodiversity profile project, Publication No 12-14. Departmetnt of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation. His Majesty's Government of Nepal, Kathmandu.
- Bhattarai, K.R. & Acharya, N. 1996a. Various aspects of NTFPs in Tipling and its adjoining areas of Upper Dhading, Central, Nepal. Report submitted to Asia Network for Small Scale Agricultural Bioresources (ANSAB), Kathmandu, Nepal (unpublished report).
- Bhattarai, K.R. & Acharya, N. 1996b. Identification, Qualitative assessment, trade and economic significance of Chraito (Swertia species of Nepal).

Report submitted to Asia Network for Small Scale Agricultural Bioresources (ANSAB), Kathmandu, Nepal (unpublished report).

- Bhattarai, K.R. & Vetaas, O.R. 2003. Variation in plant species richness of different life forms along a subtropical elevation gradient in the Himalayas. *Globe Ecology and Biogeography*, **12:** 327-340.
- Bhattarai, K.R. 2004. Variation in species richness at the fine scale and at the broad scale in the Himalayas, Nepal. Dr Scient. thesis submitted to Department of Botany, University of Bergen, Allegaten 41, N-5007, Bergen, Norway.
- Bhattarai, K.R. 2005. Variation in species richness and spatial turnover among different vegetation types along an elevation gradient in east Nepal. *Banko Janakari*,**15**(1): 25-32.
- Bhattarai, K.R. & Vetaas, O.R. 2005. Local factors influencs herbaceous species diversity in macro-scale. *Banko Janakari*, **15**(2): 26-32.
- Bhattarai, K.R., Acharaya, N., & Adhikari, M.K. 2004. Domestication of medicinal plants in Nepal: An overview. *Bulletin of Department of Plant Resources no 26*. Department of Plant Resources. Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Bhattarai, K.R. and Vetaas, O.R. 2006. Can Rapoport's rule explains tree species richness along the Himalaya elevation gradient, Nepal?. *Diversity and Distribution* (in press).
- Bhattarai, N.K., Tandon, V. & Ved, D.K. 2002. Highlights and outcomes of the Conservation Assessment and Management Planning (CAMP) Workshop, Pokhara, Nepal. *In: Sharing local and national experiences in Conservation* of Medicinal and aromatic plants in South Asia (Eds Bhattarai, N.K. and Karki, M.). IDRC South Asia Regional Office, New Delhi, India. Pp. 46-53.
- Crawley, M.J. 2002. Statistical Computing: An introduction to data analysis using S-Plus.John Wiley and Sons, Ltd, England.
- Department of Medicinal Plants (DMP). 1970. Medicinal Plants of Nepal. Bulletin no. 3. Kathmandu.
- Department of Forest (DOF) 2002. Hamro Ban. Babarmahal, Kathmandu.
- Dobson, A.J. 1990. An introduction to generalized linear models. Chapman and Hall, London.
- DPR. 2001. Flowering Plants of Nepal (Phenerogams). Department of Plant Resource, Nepal. 339.
- Edward, D. M. 1996. Nontimber forest products from Nepal. Aspect of trade in medicinal and aromatic plants. FORESC Monograph No.1/96Forest Research and Survey Center.
- Ghimire, S.K., McKey, D.; & Yildiz, A.T. 2005. Conservation of Himalayan medicinal plants: Harvesting patters and ecology of two threatened species, *Nardostachys grandiflora*

DC. And Neopicrorhiza scrophulariiflora (Pennel) Hong. Biological Conservation, **124**: 463-475.

- Grytnes, J.A. & Vetaas, O.R. 2002. Species richness and altitude: A comparison between null models and interpolated plant species richness along the Himalayan altitudional gradient, Nepal. *The American Naturalist*, **159**: 294-304.
- Hill, M.O. 1973. Reciprocal averaging: an eigenvector method of ordination. *Journal of Ecology*, **61**: 237-249.
- Hill, M.O. and Gauch, H.G. Jr 1980. Detrended correspondence analysis: An improved ordination technique. *Vegetatio*, **42:** 47-58.
- HMG. 1970. Medicinal Plants of Nepal. Bulletin of the Department of Medicinal Plants No. 3. Thapathali, Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Herbs and Non-timber forest product coordination commette (HNCC). 2005. Kheti thata Anusandhanko Lagi Prathmikta Kramama Pareko Jadibutiharuko Jankari (Prioritise medicinal and aromatic plants for research and cultivation). Jadibuti abayum gairkasth Ban Paidabar Samanya Samiti, Thapathali Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Hunter, M.I. & Yonzon, P. 1993. Altitudinal distributions of birds, mammals, people, forest and parks in Nepal. *Conervation Biology*, 7: 420-423.
- Lieberman, D., Lieberman, M., Peralta, R. and Hartshorn, G.S. 1996. Tropical forest structure and composition on a large-scale altitudinal gradient in Costa Rica. *Journal* of *Ecology*, 84: 137-152.
- Lomolino, M.V. 2001. Elevation gradients of speciesrichness, historical and prospective views. *Global Ecology* and Biogeography, **10:** 3-13.
- Malla, S.B. & Shakya, P.R. 1984. Medicinal Plants. In: Nepal Nature Paradise, Majpuria, T.C. (eds.), White Lotous Co. Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand, pp 261-297.
- Malla, S.B. Shakya, P. R., Rajbhandari, K.R., Bhattarai, N.K. & Subedi, M.N. 1993. Minor forest product of Nepal. General status and trade. Report submitted to Forestry sector institutional strengthening programme. Componenet no. 2. Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Manandhar, N.P. 2002. **Plants and People of Nepal.** Timber Press Portland, Oregon, USA.
- McCullagh, P. and Nelder, J. A. 1989. Generalized linear models. 2nd edn, Chapman and Hall, London.
- Miehe, G. 1989. Vegetation patterns on Mount Everest as influenced by monsoon and fÖhn. *Vegetation*, **79**: 21-32.
- Md. Nor, 2001 Elevation diversity patters of small mammals on Mount Kinabalu, Sabah, Malaysia. *Global Ecology and Bigeography*, 10, 41-62.
- O, Brien and E. M. 1993. Climatic gradient in woody plant species richness: Towards an explanation based on analysis of southern Africa's woody flora. *Journal of biogeography* 20:181-198.

- O, Brien and E. M. 1998. Water energy dynamics, climate and prediction woody plant species richness: An interim general model. *Journal of biogeography* 25: 379-398.
- Oland, A. & Birks. H.J.B. 1999. The altitudinal gradient of vascular plant species richness in Aurland, western Norway. *Ecography*, **22:** 548-566.
- Pandey, P.R. 1961. Distribution of medicinal plants of Nepal. Symposium on Medicinal Plants (Ceylon). Dec. 15-61, 1961.
- Press, J.R., Shrestha, K.K., & Sutton, D.A. 2001. Annotated checklist of the flowering plants of Nepal. The Natural History Museum, London.
- Rajkarnikar, K.M., Bhatta, G.D. & Adhikari, M.K. 2004. Bibilography on Plant Tissue Culture. Research on Plant Tissue Culuture. In: *Bulletin Department of Plant Resources*, 24, 18-24.
- Rahbek. C. 1995. The elevational gradient of species richness, a uniform pattern?. *Ecography*, **18**: 200-205.
- Rahbek , C. 1997. The relationship among area, elevation and regional species richness in neotropical birds. *American Naturalists*, 149: 875-902.
- Sharma, U.R., Malla, K.J. and Uprety, R.K. 2004. Conservation and management efforts of medicinal and aromatic plants in Nepal. *Banko Janakari*, **14**: 3-11.
- Shrestha, T.B. and Joshi, R.M. 1996. Rare, Endemic and Endangered plants of Nepal, pp. 244.
- Shmida, A. and Whittaker, R.H. 1981.Pattern and biological microsite effects in two shrub communities, southern California. *Ecology*, **62**: 234-251.
- Shmida, A. and Wilson, M. W. 1985. Biological determinants of species diversity. *Journal of Biogeography*, **12:** 1-20.
- Shrestha, U. B. and Shrestah, S. 2061. Major Nontimber Forest Products of Nepal. Bhundi puran Prakasan, Kathmandu, Nepal, 411.
- Stevens, G. C. 1992. The elevational gradient in altitudinal range, an extension of Rapoport's latitudinal rule to altitude. *American Naturalist*, **140**: 893-911.
- Terberg, J 1977. Bird species diversity on an Andean elevational gradient. *Ecology* 58: 1007-1019.
- Wantanabe, T., Rajbhandari, K. R., Malla, K.J., and Yahara, S. 2005. A Hand Book of Medicinal Plants of Nepal. Bangkok and Kobfaii Publishing Project, 262.
- Wilson, M.V. and Shmida, A. 1984. Measuring beta diversity with presence-absence data. *Journal of Ecology*, 72: 1055-1064.
- Yoda, K. 1967. A preliminary survey of the forest vegetation of eastern Nepal. *Journal of Art and Science*. **5:** 99-140.
- Vetaas, O.R. & Grytnes, J.A. 2002. Distribution of vascular plants species richness and endemic richness along the Himalayan elevation gradient in Nepal. *Global Ecology* and Biogeography, **11**: 291-301.

Appendix 1: Commercial Medicinal and aromatic plants of Nepal

Sn	Species	Local name	Sn	Species	Local name
1	Abies spectabilis	Talispatra	42	Citrulus lanatus	
2	Acacia catechu	Khayar	43	Coleus barbatus	
3	Accacia rugata	Sikakai	44	Cordia dichotoma	Bonori
4	Aconitum ferox	Bisma	45	Cordyceps sinensis	Yarshagumba
5	Aconitum heterophylloides	Nirmasi	46	Cucuma zedoraria	Kachur
6	Aconitum heterophyllum	Atish	47	Curculigo orchioides	Kalomusli
7	Aconitum spicatum	Bikha	48	Curcuma angustifolia	Haledo
8	Acorus calamus	Bojho	49	Cymbopogon flexousus	Lemongrass
9	Aegle marmelos	Bail	50	Cymbopogon jwarancusa	
10	Aesculus indica	Lekhpangra	51	Cymbopogon martini	Pamaroja
11	Agave americana	Ketuki	52	Cymbopogon winterianus	Citronella
12	Aloe vera	Ghiukumari	53	Cyperus rotundus	Nagemothe
13	Allium hypsisturm	Jimbu	54	Dactlorhiza hatagirea	Panchaunle
14	Allium wallichii	Ban lasun	55	Dalbergia latifolia	Bijaya sal
15	Amomum subulatum	Aalainchi	56	Datura metel	Dhatura
16	Andrographis paniculata	Kalmegh	57	Delphinium denudatum	Nirmbisi
17	Artemisia indica	Titepati	58	Delphinium himalayai	Mauremulo
18	Asparagus racemosus	Kurilo	59	Desmotichum fimbriatum	
19	Astilbe rivularis	Thulookhati	60	Dioscorea deltoidea	Githa
20	Atropa belladonna	Belladona	61	Dioscorea bulbifera	Tarul
21	Azadirachta indica	Neem	62	Dioscorea pentaphylla	Bhayakur
22	Bassia butyracea	Chiuri	63	Dioscorea spp	
23	Bauhania vahlii	Bhorlo	64	Diospyros melanoxylon	Tendu
24	Bauhania varigata	Koiralo	65	Daphnephyllum himalens	Raktachandan
25	Berberis aristata	Chutro	66	Embelia ribes	Bayobidanga
26	Berberis asiatica	Chutro	67	Elaecarpus sphaericus	Rudrachha
27	Bergenia cialita	Pakhanbet	68	Ephedra gegardiana	Somlata
28	Bergenia purpurascens	Pakhanbet	69	Eulophia dabia	Kalodana
29	Betula utilis	Bhojpatra	70	Gaultheria fragrantissima	Dhashingare
30	Bombax ceiba	Simal	71	Gentiana kurroo	Karu
31	Brachycorythis obcordata		72	Gigardiana diversifolia	Allo
32	Butea monosperma	Palanshbeej	73	Glycyrhiza glabra	Jesthimadhu
33	Calotropis gigantea	Aank	74	Grewia optiva	Bhimal
34	Cannabis sativa	Bhanga	75	Guizotia abyssinica	Jusetil
35	Cassia fistula	Rajbrksha	76	Hippophae salicifolia	Dalechuk
36	Cedrus deodara	Debdar	77	Hippophae tibetna	Dalechuk
37	Centella asitica	Godtapre	78	Holarrhena pubescens	Indrajau
38	Chlorophytum borivilianum	Setomusli	79	Iris decora	Padampuskar
39	Choerospondias axillaris	Lapsi	80	Jatropha curcas	Sajiban
40	Cinnamomum camphora	Camphor	81	Juglanus regia	Okhar
41	Cinnamomum tamala	Tejpat	82	Juniperus indica	Dhupi

Bhattarai and Ghimire

Banko Janakari, Vol. 16, No. 1

Sn	Species	Local name	Sn	Species	Local name
83	Jurinea dolomiaea	Dhupjadi	114	Pyrus pashia	Mayal
84	Justicia adhatoda	Asuro	115	Rauvolfia serpentina	Sepagandha
85	Leuucas cephalotes	Dornapuspi	116	Rheum australe	Padamchal
86	Lobelia pyramidalis	Yaklebir	117	Rhododendron anthopogon	Sunpati
87	Lycopodium clavatum	Nagbeli	118	Rhododendron arboreum	Laligurans
88	Madhuca longifolia	Mauha	119	Ricinus communis	Ader
89	Maesa chisia	Bilaune	120	Roscoea purpurea	Phasel
90	Mallotus philippensis	Sindure	121	Rubia manjith	Manjitho
91	Mentha arvensis	Patena	122	Sapindus mukorossi	Rithaa
92	Mesua ferrea	Nageswori	123	Satyrium nepalense	Gamdol
93	Mimosa pudica	Lajbattijhar	124	Saussurea lappa	Kuth
94	Morchella conica	Guchhichyau	125	Schleichera oleosa	Kusum
95	Morchella spp	Guchhichyau	126	Selenium wallichinum	Bhutkesh
96	Mucuna pruriens	Kauso	127	Semicarpus anacardium	Bhalayodhela
97	Nardostachys gandiflora	Jatamasi	128	Shorea robusta	Sal
98	Neopicrorhiza scrophulariiflor	<i>a</i> Kutki	129	Sida cordifolia	Balu
99	Ocimum basilicum	Babari	130	Solanum virginianum	Bini
100	Ocimum sanctum	Tulshi	131	Swertia angustifolia	Bhalechiraito
101	Panax pseudo-ginseng	Nepali ginseng	132	Swertia chirayita	Chiraito
102	Paris polyphylla	Satuwa	133	Swertia multicaulis	Sharmaguru
103	Parmelia nepalensis	Jhauau	134	Taxus baccata	Lauthsalla
104	Parmelia spp	Jhauau	135	Terminalia arjuna	Arjun
105	Persea odoratissima	Kaulo	136	Terminalia bellirica	Barro
106	Phyllanthus emblica	Amala	137	Terminalia chebula	Harro
107	Pinus roxburghii	Khotesalla	138	Trichoxanthus palmata	Indrayani
108	Piper chaba	Chaba	139	Tinospora sinensis	Gurjo
109	Piper longum	Pipla	140	Trigonella foenum-graecum	Methi
110	Pistacia chinensis	Kakersinga	141	Valeriana jatamansii	Sugandhawal
111	Podophyllum hexandrum	Lagupatra	142	Woodfordia fructicosa	Dhayaro
112	Polypodium vulgaris	Bisfez	143	Zanthoxylum armatum	Timur
113	Prinsepia utilis	Dhatelo			