

Joint Conference

International Conference on

ENVIRONMENTAL MICROBIOLOGY AND MICROBIAL ECOLOGY

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International Conference on

ECOLOGY AND ECOSYSTEMS

September 18-20, 2017 Toronto, Canada

Local uses and management of spices, condiments and non-edible oil crops**Zufan Nigusu** and **Tamrat Bekele**
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A study aimed at identifying and documenting local uses and management of of spices, condiments and non-edible oil crops in five selected sites in Northern Ethiopia was conducted. A total of 78 informants which consists, 6 agricultural experts, 12 spice vendors, 45 garden owners and 15 cultivated field owners were encountered. This study documented the traditional knowledge of the local people on using, managing and other ethnobotanical aspects based on information through semi-structured interview, field observation, market survey and informant consensus methods. 27 spices and condiments (92.6% herbs, 3.7% shrubs and tree), three non-edible oil crops, *Jatropha curcas*, *Ricinus communis* and *Vernonia galamensis* were collected from homegardens, farmlands, and wild habitats. Local uses and their distribution and traditional conservation methods are noted. Altitudinal ranges, habit, habitat of spices, condiments, and non- edible oil crop plants were documented. Results of preference ranking on 7 spices and condiments showed that *Capsicum annum*, *Allium sativum*, *Capsicum frutescens*, *Ruta chalepnesis*, *Ocimum basilicum*, *Trigonella foenum-graecum* and *Nigella sativa* are the most common food flavorings in the area. *Allium sativum* is the most preferred medicinal spice followed by *Ruta chalepnesis*, *Lepidium sativum*, *Foeniculum vulgare* and *Artemisia absinthium*. The most threatening factors include replacement of spices and condiments by cash crops, grazing, scarcity of water, Pests, and ill-advised method of harvesting. The day to day uses of spices, condiments, non-edible oil crops and plants requires administrative and conservation activities. Technical support from the government and non-government organization to boost the production within the boundary of the agroecosystem is recommended.

Biography

Zufan Nigusu, an MSc holder in biology from Addis Ababa University, is among the few female scientists in Ethiopia who brought change in management of spices, non- edible oil crops and condiments related to the environment. She has had an influence on the development of a new perspective on the use and management of spices, non- edible oil crops and condiments in Ethiopia. Her suggestions got attention by the government and brought a significant change on the ecosystem by preserving the spices, non-edible oil crops and condiments that were about to disappear from the face of the earth. She is an enthusiastic female scientist working hard to bring about change both on-site and in the classroom.

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