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Mount Kenya University Botanical Garden Shares Its Diversity Internationally

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MOUNT KENYA UNIVERSITY BOTANICAL GARDEN IS TAKING STEPS TO BECOME INTERNATIONALLY

The Mount Kenya University Botanical Garden has received international peer reviewed research article in the June 2018 edition of the prestigious International Journal of Biodiversity and Conservation.

The publication Assessment of diversity and conservation status of Mount Kenya University Medicinal Botanical Garden, Kenya <http://www.academicjournals.org/abstract/9888Bif358741> is a result of an intensive three year joint research between the School of Pharmacy and the Research Grants and Endowments

The research aimed at establishing the degree of biodiversity of plants with special emphasis on medicinal plants. The researchers documented a total of 60 plant species in the Botanical garden belonging to 60 plant families. The research also established that 90% of the plants have medicinal properties.

The researchers established that the Mount Kenya University Botanical Garden is at a privileged position as a plant biodiversity hotspot. Two species of plants which have not been protected at any other place in Kenya is the *Asplenium* species. One of the researchers has established that it has biologically active compounds which possess anticancer activity.

Mr. Jared Misongwe, lecturer in the School of Pharmacy and the principal investigator in the study, stated that the next step is to escalate the conservation efforts of the indigenous medicinal plants. Misongwe who is also the coordinator of the Mount Kenya University Botanical Garden is finalizing his PhD research and has conducted his research on medicinal plants from the botanical garden. He has deposited his research findings in the course of his PhD research. He has also identified compounds that show promising anticancer activity. The MKU Botanical Garden is going to be the next generation of plants, he was quoted as saying during a meeting held in the School of Pharmacy.

The research conducted the landmark step of finalizing a proposal for the complete documentation of the botanical garden. The documentation of the plants will facilitate research that any scientist wishing to conduct research on the plants at the garden can do so electronically. The specific regulations for the use of geospatial mapping data will also be hosted on the University website and will create a convenient access to the rich biodiversity.

visiting researchers and students as a decision making concerning conservation.

The MKU Botanical Garden was established by the University Management Board in 2005. The garden is a natural products at the <http://www.mku.ac.ke/index.php/mku-botanical-garden-research>. This noble initiative is now paying dividends in the form of international quality research. The researchers intend to develop further collaborations with other bodies who share an interest in conservation, ethno medicine and agriculture.

Mount Kenya University, the Department of Pharmacy is very concerned with medicinal drugs obtained from plants or other natural resources. The university is taking a leading role in developing mitigation strategies to address climate change and conservation. Climate Change and Conservation is a global topical issue with the President recently signed into law the Climate Change Act, 2016.

The Climate Change Act, 2016 provides a regulatory framework for enhanced response to climate change and enhancing mechanisms to address climate change. The Act also aims at facilitating climate change adaptation and building, an area in which MKU is providing leadership.

The next phase of development of the MKU Botanical Garden is the establishment of a conservation area in the Botanical garden for managing and protecting endangered and endemic species. This is in line with the provisions of the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act, 2013 and the Medicinal Plants Policy of 2005.