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ABSTRACTS

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indications not being mentioned in the herbals. This examination may be critical concerning the issues at hand. The purpose of the article is to a) follow the development of the medical use of valerian through the centuries; b) discover why and how the tranquilizing effect obtained the central position among its potential uses; and c) examine, through the example of valerian, the similarities and the differences in the description of the uses of a medical substance in the herbals vs. in the medical encyclopedias. These differences seem to be considerable. **Monday- Panel 6**

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Gender Analysis in Agrobiodiversity Management: The Case of Kerala, India

The maintenance of crop diversity on farmers fields in hot spots of plant genetic diversity is considered a "global life insurance policy" in the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD 2001:1). This paper provides evidence of the importance of the contribution of poor women farmers to the conservation and utilisation of plant genetic resources (PGR) for food and agriculture. As a consequence, its equitable recognition and economic reward is a key issue in the sustainable management of agrobiodiversity. The present investigation into the institutions governing PGR, with special emphasis on gender equity and collective action, aims at the identification of innovative institutions with special focus on women's interests. The paper considers empirical evidence from Kerala, a hot spot of biodiversity in India, and investigates properties of local biodiversity resources, and the role of collective action in conservation. This paper explores the main issues of institutional and gender analysis in the conservation and utilisation of agrobiodiversity. Starting with the question about the properties of the resource "agrobiodiversity", it identifies resulting problems and challenges. The analytical approach proposed is based on Hagedorn et al.'s (2002) "institutions for sustainability" framework. The framework is extended through the explicit focus on different farming-systems in agro-biodiversity management through the term "interface" (Long 2001) and the crucial interplay between men and women farmers through the term "intraface" (Padmanabhan 2002). The paper presents empirical evidence from Kerala, a hot spot of biodiversity in India, to illustrate problem situations and identify first movements towards collective action resulting in innovative institutions. **Wednesday- Panel 8**

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Diversity and Selection of Wild Food Plants in Six Regions of Northwestern Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal)

This paper compares the traditional knowledge and use of wild edible plants in six rural regions of the northwest of the Iberian Peninsula. Five of them are in Spain: Campoo, Picos de Europa, Piloña, Sanabria and Caurel and the sixth is in Portugal, Parque Natural de Montesinho. Through semi-structured interviews with local informants, data on the use of 99 species was collected. A quantitative approach was used to document the relative importance of each species and to indicate differences in the selection criteria for consuming wild food species in the regions studied. Social, economic and cultural factors need to be taken into account when trying to understand why some wild foods and traditional vegetables have been consumed while others have not. The data indicate that a high percentage of species are used in most regions (16 species are used in 5 or 6 regions). These shared species include many wild fruit plants (e.g. *Rubus ulmifolius*, *Fragaria vesca*) and the most popular species of each category of use (e.g. vegetables such as *Rumex acetosa*, condiments such as *Origanum vulgare*, or plants used to prepare herbal teas such as *Chamaemelum nobile*). According to the similarity of the species gathered, the six regions can be grouped in two clusters. Therefore, affinity seems to be linked to closeness. The Portuguese region is the most dissimilar due to a very high number and frequency of wild condiments.

Monday- Panel 1