



**WILLINGNESS TO BUY AND PREFERENCES OF GERMAN
CITIZENS CONCERNING PROTECTED ORNAMENTAL
PLANTS FROM BOLIVIA**

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ABSTRACT

Mega-biodiverse but poor countries, like Bolivia, have the challenge to find a way of development that allows the conservation of their particular nature heritage. Commercialization of protected biodiversity (a component of Biotrade initiatives) may open new income sources, but there is little information about potential markets and the attitude of the potential consumers towards this possibility. Thus, this study analyzes the German citizens' attitudes towards a possible trade of protected ornamental plants. State preferences techniques: contingent valuation and choice experiment methods were used for the evaluation and the results were interpreted from the perspective of the neoclassical demand theory and the theory of random utility (consumer behavior model). 206 inhabitants from Göttingen, Germany, older than 16 years were interviewed. The results reveal that Göttingen's inhabitants express a positive response to the offer of ornamental plants. They show a high willingness to buy and even to pay more for ornamental protected plants from Bolivia. This behavior is mainly influenced by factors such as the type of management, origin of plants, price, knowledge about protection in plants, relation with nature issues, type of plants, educational level and income per month. These results would suggest a positive scenario to promote protected plant trade. However, under the conditions of a real market, the "protection status" -as an attribute- of the offered ornamental plants would be less decisive for purchasing plants according to a choice experiment method. This has shown that among other alternatives, price and management are also determinant factors. Hence, to evaluate the potential of commercialization, protected plants must also be analyzed according to standard marketing characteristics looking at attributes such as color of flowers and leaves, size of plants, etc. The results of this pioneer study instigate more investigation about Biotrade and specific and detailed market analysis for protected plants.

Key words: Biotrade, protected plants, willingness to buy, sustainable management, state preferences.