



**Conservation and propagation of *Morella serrata* and *Eriocephalus punctulatus*: two medicinal plants commonly used to treat diabetes in the eastern Free State, South Africa**

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The Basotho people living in the eastern Free State still rely on traditional medicines for their health care. The reasons for continued usage of traditional medicines, most of which are plants, is because they are affordable, accessible and lack side effects. One of the health problems increasing at an alarming rate within the study area is diabetes and medicinal plants are used in treating it. A previous study identified two of these plants as being threatened with local extinction thus necessitating a conservation strategy. This study is aimed at using biotechnological tools establishing propagation protocols to conserve the species. Seeds germination is being by treating with various growth media, stratification and red light. Tissue culture is used to micro-propagate the species from leaf, shoot and root explants. The last step of the research will be to compare the anti-diabetic of mico-propated plants and the wild growing ones.

For more information: Refer to Mr Pitso's profile listed under Researchers/Project leaders