Concept note
Second Meeting of Medicinal Plants Focal Points of IORA RCSTT cum Exhibition, Lucknow, India, March 18-19, 2015

Introduction
From among 350,000 plant species identified so far, about 10% (some estimate up to 70,000) are described to be used for medicinal purposes in the world. About 6% of all the described species have been analyzed chemically, and only a small fraction have been analyzed pharmacologically. Approximately 100 plant species are used in 25% of all the drugs prescribed in developed world. The annual herbal trade is predicted to be around US$62 to US$ 120 billion, which is poised to reach US$ 7 trillion by 2050. In an average, medicinal herbs are used by 60% of the population in most countries where as, 70-80% of Chinese, Indian, African and German population use herbal medicine since 19th century (1). In addition, every population of nations around the world, one way or other depends upon plant source for medicine.

Genesis
Considering the vast potential of medicinal plants in the member nations of IORA (Indian Ocean Rim Countries Association), the IORA RCSTT-Medicinal Plant Network was established. The aim of this network is to extend co-operation and sharing information and resources among IORA Member States. To achieve these, initially a network "IORAMPNet" (Indian Ocean Rim Association Medicinal Plants Network) was created for providing global information on medicinal plants and herbal medicines to member nations. In this context, the first meeting of medicinal plants focal points of IORA RCSTT cum Exhibition was held at Salalah, Oman during 23rd to 25th June 2014. The meeting was attended by the resource persons and private sector from Egypt, India, I. R. Iran, Malaysia, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Thailand and the Sultanate of Oman covering different topics like policy making, regulation, standardization, technology transfer and commercialization, import and export of medicinal plants and herbal medicines and networking in IORA region in the framework of IORA Medicinal Plants Network. Considering the potential of trade in Medicinal plant and their products in the IORA Nations, an Ad-Hoc committee on Standards and Standardization for medicinal plants and herbal medicines was constituted with Prof. Anil Kumar Tripathi, Director, CSIR-CIMAP of India as Chairman and focal points of Malaysia, I. R. Iran, Thailand, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Egypt and The Sultanate of Oman as members. This committee was mandated to draft a document on “minimum standard acceptable to all Member States for commercialization of value added products of medicinal plants and related technology in the IORA region”. Also the committee was to evaluate and analyze the systems of certification operating in member nations. It is with this objective that the second meeting of medicinal plants focal points of IORA RCSTT cum Exhibition in being organized in India by CSIR-CIMAP, Lucknow with the support of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

Aim of the second meeting
1. The status of Medicinal Plants in respective IORA member countries and dialogue partners.
2. Quality standard and standardization of medicinal plant and products.
3. Minimum quality standard requirements.
Details of Discussion

In India, manufacture and quality control of medicines come under the purview of Drugs & Cosmetics Act, 1940, and Drugs & Cosmetics rules 1945. Medicinal plant, products and traditional medicine are governed under these acts and rules with subsequent amendments to take care of the changing environments. An attempt was made by drafting an amendment to Drugs and Cosmetics Act, and Rules (D&C Act and Rules) on 24th October 2013 (2). This includes regulatory provisions for defining phytopharmaceuticals (botanical-based drugs) and a schedule providing requirements of scientific data on quality, safety, and efficacy to evaluate and to permit marketing authorization for plant-based leads as drugs on the pattern similar to the synthetic chemical moieties (3). Similarly, efforts are on to make amendments for traditional medicines used in Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani and Homeopathy by Ministry of Ayush, Government of India (4). In this second meeting, it is expected that all member nations and dialogue partners will deliberate upon the regulatory standards prevailing in their respective countries.

Hence, the following points will be discussed in detail.

1. Information on existing guidelines on quality standards for botanical ingredients / products (like the National Pharmacopoeia, etc.) in each country.

2. Information on the prevailing regulatory requirements for the registration of botanical products and traditional medicines.

3. Some general information on the cost involved and the time frame that is typically needed to obtain registration / market authorization for a botanical product.

4. Positive and negative lists of botanicals, which are permitted or prohibited for medicinal/therapeutic use, respectively.

5. The nature of evidences required to support indications/claims for listed medicinal plant/ products/ complimentary medicines.

After discussion, the members will prepare a document incorporating the view points of all the member nations of IORA.

References


Tentative Programme*

17th March 2015
Arrival of delegates in the evening

18th March 2015
10.00 AM - 12.00 Noon Inauguration
Presentation from IORA, Ministry of External Affairs, CSIR-CIMAP and Experts from Indian context

12.00 Noon  High Tea

12.30 PM to 1.30 PM
Presentation by focal points

1.30 PM Lunch

2.00 PM to 4.00 PM
Presentation by focal points

4.00 Pm to 5.00 PM
Presentation by business delegation

5.00 PM Tea

6.00 PM Cultural programme

8.30 PM Dinner

19th March 2015
9.30 AM to 10.30 AM
Presentation by focal points

10.30 AM Tea

11.00 AM to 12.00 Noon
Presentation by business delegation

12.00 Noon to 2.00PM
Discussion on standard and finalizing the document

2.00 PM Lunch

2.30 PM  Valedictory

3.00 PM  Visit of CSIR-CIMAP and Biotech Park

8.30 PM Dinner

20th March 2015
Departure of delegates

*Detailed agenda will be finalized after receiving the nominations
Agenda
1. The status of Medicinal Plants in respective IORA member countries and dialogue partners
2. Quality standard and standardization of medicinal plant and products
3. Minimum quality standard requirements