

DEVELOPING THE GREAT POTENTIAL OF MEDICINAL PLANTS AND TRADITIONAL MEDICINE IN IRAN

In 2019 the [Report *Science and Technology in Iran*](#), which contains a chapter dedicated to [Medicinal plants and traditional medicine](#), has been published by the Iranian Technology and Innovation Development Institute.

In Iran, a country with an area of 1.64 million km², the complex and varied climate, topography, geological formations and anthropological management of natural resources have led to a heterogeneous and unique biological diversity. Iran enjoys 8,000 herb species and 2,500 other species with medicinal properties and applications. Iran is a country with an ancient knowledge in the usage of medicinal plants and it has a rich heritage of traditional medicine with over 14,000 reference books and works on this theme. Around 120 universities, scientific and research institutions and organizations of science and technology of medicinal plants and traditional medicine contribute to the development of this area.



[The Report highlights the great potential of medicinal herbs and knowledge on traditional medicine](#) in the country and the increasing interest of Iranian people, officials, industries and producers in supporting their development in the field and integrating them into the modern healthcare and science & technology systems

To enhance the great capital of natural resources and knowledge, a *National Council for Science & Technology Development of Medicinal & Aromatic Plants and Traditional Medicine* was established in 2008 by the Vice-Presidency for Science and Technology of Iran. This Committee, as the coordinating unit for all players, is designed to realize cross organizational collaboration and interaction of all stakeholders. A variety of actors from the Government, policymakers and non-governmental organizations are actively collaborating with the Committee including, for example the Deputy for Research and Technology of Ministry of Science, Research and Technology; the Deputy for Traditional Medicine in the Ministry of Health and Medical Education; the Ministry of Agriculture and its affiliated organizations and institutions; the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour and Social Welfare; the National Network of Research and Technology of Medicinal Plants.

With the collaboration of all the actors involved, in 2013 the Council prepared the *National Document of Medicinal Plants and Traditional Medicine*, a 20-year-vision Plan, which has been officially approved and today represents the strategy shared by all players for the development of the activities.



The Report published in 2019 highlights the important results achieved in implementing the National Plan on the various aspects it considers for the development of the sector. Among these, some particularly significant are the following;

- Development of more than 400 companies and 100 knowledge enterprises involved in herbal medicines, natural products and traditional medicine; creation of more than 500 jobs in the knowledge enterprises located at the S&T parks and incubators;
- Production and commercialization of more than 2369 herbal medicines and natural products, all registered in Iran; 990 traditional medicines, all registered in Iran; 55 veterinary supplements and medicines to control diseases in livestock, poultry and aquaculture in the country;
- Expansion of the comprehensive atlas for medicinal plants to include 27 Provinces of the country in order to protect and record the benefits of the plant species;
- Identification of 2300 plant species with medicinal properties and recording their phytology and distribution pattern in Iran; Development of a gene bank and recover of various species of endemic or extinct medicinal herbs and conservation of 1550 medicinal species; Completion of researches on domestication of 170 species of indigenous and endemic plants in Iran.

The Report also presents the major policies and objectives based on the National Document and planned for the future, showing the determination to face the complexity of this challenge, which has aspects connected with science, the protection of the great heritage of biodiversity, economic development at different levels and the improvement of health and well-being of the population.

Some of the significant strategic objectives are oriented to increase the areas of medicinal plants under cultivation, from 150,000 hectares currently used to 500,000 hectares and to organize services including production, distribution and marketing of scientific and technological achievements in medicinal plants for commercial purposes. In particular, it has been planned to enhance the scientific work ensured by universities, incubators and technology parks to encourage greater development of knowledge-based enterprises in medicinal plants, herbal medicines and natural products for manufacturing and commercializing more knowledge-intensive products.

Among these objectives, that ensure an important added value for the country in export activities, it is also planned to raise to 20% the current use of medicinal plants and their by-products within the country's public health system. Another strategic objective pursued by the Plan refers to the training of new generations through an increased number of students within the Universities in the fields related to medicinal plants at all levels and an increased number of Iranian PhD students in the field of Iranian traditional medicine.

The [Tehrantimes magazine](#) follows the development of this sector of activity in the country through articles that inform about the initiatives underway at national level or in the various provinces, and on the political, organizational and financial measures taken by the national authorities. Among the current national policies, low interest loans are granted to the villagers who are interested in cultivation of medicinal plants in rural underprivileged areas of Iran.



To know more

[Medicinal plants and traditional medicine Chapter 6 in en.isti.ir website](#)

[Report *Science and Technology in Iran*](#)

[National Network of Research and Technology of Medicinal Plants](#)

[Some Medicinal Plants Cultivated in Iran in japsonline.com](#)

[Forest Genetic Resources in Iran by Mostafa Jafari in FAO website](#)

[Article in tehrantimes.com](#)

[Traditional medicinal herbs and medicine Festival in tehrantimes.com](#)

[Article in tehrantimes.com](#)

[Article in wur.nl](#)

[Article in irandestination.com](#)

[Photos in tasminnews.com](#)

[Publications in raftpubs.com](#)

