

**THIRTY-FIRST WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY GENEVA, 8-24 MAY 1978**  
**WHA31.33 Medicinal plants**

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The Thirty-first World Health Assembly,

Recognizing the importance of medicinal plants in the health care systems in many developing countries;

Noting the increasing awareness of governments and the scientific and medical communities of this matter;

Considering that these plants contain substances which may be of therapeutic value but may also possibly show potential toxicity when improperly used;

Realizing that the use of medicinal plants is likely to continue in many countries; Noting with interest the efforts of WHO to deal with this matter;

REQUESTS the Director-General:

(1) to compile an inventory of medicinal plants used in the different countries, with standardized botanical nomenclature for the ones most widely used;

(2) to compile and periodically update a therapeutic classification of medicinal plants, related to the therapeutic classification of all drugs;

(3) to review the available scientific data relating to the efficacy of medicinal plants in the treatment of specific conditions and diseases, and make available in summary form the results of the review;

(4) to coordinate the efforts of Member States to:

(a) develop and apply scientific criteria and methods for proof of safety and efficacy of medicinal plant products, especially galenicals;

(b) develop international standards and specifications for identity, purity and strength of medicinal plant products, especially galenicals, and manufacturing practices to achieve these ends; (c) develop methods for the safe and effective use of medicinal plant products, especially galenicals, including labelling containing adequate directions for use, and criteria for use or prescription by various levels of health workers;

(5) to disseminate information on these matters among Member States;

(6) to designate regional research and training centres for the study of medicinal plants;

(7) to report on the subject to a subsequent Health Assembly.

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(Committee A, third report)