

i Protegemos las Plantas Utiles de Paisés Andinos Centrales! (undécimo)

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Summary

PROLOG

In recent years, there has been growing interest in obtaining information on plants that will prove useful for nutritional, medicinal, industrial and other purposes. The human race now views plants as a major resource.

However, the demand for this type of information has not been met because of a shortage of suitable botanical documentation. The information available in the media is extremely limited. This is especially true of Peruvian species, an area of botany that has not been widely explored.

The Andes are one of the world's most important sources of nutritional plants. According of Cook (1925), the Incas cultivated at least seventy different species of plants. In addition, they used a variety of wild plants in their homes. However, the arrival of the Europeans radically changed the agricultural systems established by indigenous cultures.

There are almost no useful plants remaining in Central America today. Although our studies of these plants are far from complete, I feel it is necessary to report what we know immediately, since those plants are disappearing minute-by minute in the face of the onslaught of modern agricultural technology. It is our duty to protect these plants for future generations.