

Mobilising foundational information on medicinal / ethno-botanical collections in Bews Herbarium.

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This project aims to mobilise foundational biodiversity data - historical plant collection records - in a way that will benefit the bio-economy. The primary focus is to digitise existing collections of medicinal and useful plants, as well as stated known uses on the labels, that are housed in the Bews Herbarium. This will feed new data into our indigenous knowledge base and will be available for take-up by bioprospecting and green economy initiatives. The next phase will cover all species of priority ethnobotanical genera in the collection, and a selection of taxa or families with a higher-than-expected number of species with ethno-botanical importance (after Douwes et al. 2008). This will feed into national distribution datasets for taxa of ethnobotanical importance, assist conservation efforts for these economically important species and their relatives, and add to mitigation plans in relation to global change. All records will be made publically available via BRAHMS on the shared data platform at SANBI. This is a suitable pilot project for testing and refining the process of hosting non-SANBI data on the SANBI platform through BRAHMS.

From an FBI perspective the project will add Foundational species-occurrence records to the National database. One junior data capturer will be trained and will be familiarised with herbarium techniques and BRAHMS data-basing. One senior part-time technician will be up-skilled to implement and run BRAHMS-based digitisation projects and geo-referencing.