

Study of the genetic variability of Marginal populations of *Pistacia lentiscus* L.

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1. Introduction

Pistacia lentiscus L. is an evergreen shrub belonging to the *Anacardiaceae* family and widely distributed in the Mediterranean region. The aerial part of this species has traditionally been used in the treatment of hypertension and possesses stimulant and diuretic properties (Bentley and Trimen, 1980). The essential oil extracted from leaves is commonly used as a decongestant and for varicose veins problems (Ansel, 2002). Mastic gum from *P. lentiscus* has been used by traditional healers for the relief of upper abdominal discomfort, stomachaches and peptic ulcer (Al-Habbal et al., 1984). Oil extracted from mastic is used to soothe rheumatism, stomach pains and to shrink tumors cells (Teyssou, 2007). The fixed oil extracted from mature fruits is commonly used in Tunisian traditional medicine as an anti-ulcer, wound healing and antiseptic (Rejeb et al., 2006; Mezghani, 1992).

In the Mediterranean region, marginal populations of *P. lentiscus* are an important floristic element in the vegetation and an economically important plant that requires the adequate measures of conservation and sustainable management programs. To maintain and improve this local genetic resource, there is a need to maintain its genetic diversity, which should be based on comprehensive information regarding the structure of the populations.

The genetic diversity of Mediterranean populations was already started in 2013 and this training allowed the achievement of this study that involved 10 Mediterranean countries (Tunisia, Italy, Greece, Lebanon, Portugal...). The aim of this training was the achievement of the analysis of all Mediterranean populations and the valorization of the obtained results by writing a scientific paper.