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**Title:**

Forest and people: Ethnobotany for sustainable livelihoods in the mountain regions

**Session description:**

Forest-dependent people living in mountain regions use wild food and medicine to sustain their livelihoods, especially in times of crises. Ethnobotanical studies focus on human-nature interaction over time concerning provisioning, medical, cultural and even spiritual functions. Non-timber forest resources or wild products are fundamental for the livelihoods of a large part of the world's human population, especially marginal rural areas in mountain regions, including the Carpathians. Use of wild products has a long tradition in many forested countries and reflects traditional ecological knowledge and social practices. Traditional ecological knowledge is a cumulative body of knowledge, practice and belief, which is evolving and handed down through generations by cultural transmission. This knowledge is considered as important aspect of implementing sustainable forest management on the ground.

This session aims to explore the human-nature relations, focusing on the role of wild products for sustainable livelihoods in rural areas of the Carpathian mountains. Changes in patterns of wild products use differ by region and have been associated with lifestyle changes, urbanization, lesser contact with nature and many other reasons.

The research questions of this session are, but not limited to: What is the role of ethnobotanical studies in sustainable forest management initiative? What is the role of wild products for rural communities in the Carpathian region and other mountain regions? What is the historical use of wild products? How to promote sustainable use of wild products in different socio-economic contexts? How to maintain traditional ecological knowledge and local practice related to wild products?