



A historical trend in the South Pacific Regional Herbarium (SUVA), Fiji, realised.

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Examining an adequate reference set representing the regional flora at herbaria is fundamental to any collection-based biodiversity studies. This is because new species discovery, biodiversity inventory and conservation planning are reliant on these collections. The rich Pacific collections are better represented in major herbaria in developed countries, partly the result of colonial exploration in the 19th century. Conversely, there remains a negative legacy of these explorations in the South Pacific, namely, the historical collections being mostly housed in foreign herbaria, in many cases duplicates not being redistributed to the country of origin. In Fiji, the South Pacific Regional Herbarium (SUVA), the national herbarium, still lacks specimens for some of their endemic species. The resulting paucity of reference material has hindered the curatorial and collecting effort up to now. This fact was most noticeable during a recent project lead by the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF), when SUVA herbarium catalogues were assessed for uploading into GBIFs data aggregate. This problem is widespread across different taxonomic groups; Poaceae and Elaeocarpaceae to name a few. However, there is a solution to this issue. With increasing global data sharing and digitisation of specimens, identifying herbaria that house specimens for under-represented taxa, has become much easier. Moving forwards, the next step is to retrieve high-resolution images from these foreign herbaria to store in the SUVA herbarium, so that local researchers can learn these taxa to build better reference collections more effectively, and to assist their efforts in updating a Flora of Fiji.

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