



WORLD BOTANICAL ASSOCIATES

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September 4, 1984

Dr. Djaja D. Soejarto, Associate Professor of Pharmacognosy
and Research Associate, Field Museum (Botany)
College of Pharmacy, University of Illinois at Chicago, P.O. Box 6998
Chicago, Illinois 60680 Your Ref.: SX109

Dear Dr. Soejarto:

Thank you very much for your letter of August 2 with the enclosed correspondence on your Mniaceae project. This was very helpful as it showed that a lot of work and money went into the cleaning of Mniaceae samples. The main thing I was concerned about was whether your samples were washed or remoistened, and as I have learned this was not the case.

My approach to the collection of moss samples has been one of practicality. I don't expect to obtain pure samples of a moss in large quantities, but reproducible activity that leads to discovery of novel active agents is what I feel is really important. Will the collecting of moss and liverwort samples lead to the discovery of novel antitumor agents?

We have been successful in obtaining reproducible activity in other species of moss. In some instances, such as with Plagiomnium venustum, I believe contaminants are responsible, and these are probably micro-organisms.

I have sorted out the rhizomes of Polypodium glycyrrhiza from a 110 pound sample of Cladopodium crispifolium; the rhizomes weighed 1.75 pounds. I didn't keep any quantitative records for the same fern rhizomes in Plagiomnium venustum, but believe that it would not represent more than 2% in the first large recollection you received, and probably not more than 5% in one of the WBA collections we sent you. As far as I know, extracts of Polypodium glycyrrhiza rhizomes were negative in the NCI screens.

I noted in one letter it was pointed out that mixtures of mosses may be a factor. As for the presence of other species of moss, these probably do not constitute more than 0.001% of the weight of the samples that I have gathered.

Again, thank you for your information, and feel free to contact us if we can be of any assistance to you.

Sincerely,

Richard Spjut, Botanist, M.A.

cc A. Douglas Kinghorn
Daniel Norris

Charles Edson
Matthew Suffness