articles is included. Any other profile basing on the three profiles existing in the database can be generated.

There is no database on Indian medicinal plants.

III. DATABASE OF FOOD AND MEDICINAL PLANTS

Against this background, a database of food and medicinal plants was initiated in 1987 at the Department of Botany, Bangalore University, with the financial support of the Department of Ecology and Environment, Government of Karnataka. The major objective of this effort is to collect, collate and disseminate information.

Profiles are being built up on medicinal plants with the following 13 items of information:

1. Current scientific names and other nomenclatural aspects
2. Vernacular names in English, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Sanskrit, Tamil and Telugu (and other languages, if available)
3. Habit and distribution
4. Ethnopharmaceutical and ethnotherapeutic information from Ayurveda, Siddha, and Unani as well as from Homoeopathy and Allopathy
5. Phytochemistry
6. Pharmacology
7. Agronomy
8. Chemotaxonomy
9. Non-medical uses
10. Marketing aspects
11. Information of specimens, samples of drugs, photographs, etc.
12. Comments
13. References to relevant publications and other sources of information

This ideal format is not always complete due to lack of information.

A complete profile of a particular species as mentioned is called a record and the individual items in a record are fields.

Information for most of the fields comes from published literature. We consult the practitioners of traditional medicine, the tribals and others who use plants in medicine in the rural areas to gather unrecorded information.

A conservative estimate indicates that there are about 350 to 400 species of plants in active use in traditional medicine. In addition, there are a few hundreds of others that are in a rather infrequent use. Many species that were introduced into India from outside have proven therapeutic uses in the countries of their origin and there is no reason why we should not put them to use.
Since it is impossible to gather information simultaneously on all the Indian medicinal plants and as this would take decades to achieve, the species are handled under specific therapeutic effects, so that databases can be compiled groupwise to be consolidated later. The database of plants used in the control of gastrointestinal disorders is in this direction.

In addition to the work incorporated in this thesis, the following work has been carried out in our laboratory.

a. Databases

a) Database of plants used in dental care in India
   C. Kameswara Rao and R. Shubharani
b) Database of food plants in Karnataka
   C. Kameswara Rao and M. Sharu Raj
c) Database of plants with antimicrobial effects
   C. Kameswara Rao and P. Sathyanarayana Bhat
d) Database of plants used as memory enhancers (in progress)
   C. Kameswara Rao, Ganesh Kumar and P. Sathyanarayana Bhat
e) Database of plants used in liver diseases (in progress)
   C. Kameswara Rao, Ganesh Kumar and P. Sathyanarayana Bhat

Databases of plants used in various other disease states also are in different stages of preparation.
b. Encyclopaedic Profiles

a) By C. Kameswara Rao and R. Shubharani.

(i) \textit{Azadirachta indica} A. Juss.
(ii) \textit{Barleria prionitis} L.
(iii) \textit{Mangifera indica} L.
(iv) \textit{Psidium guajava} L.
(v) \textit{Spilanthes acmella} Murr.
(vi) \textit{Streblus asper} Lour.

b) By C. Kameswara Rao and Sangeeta Malhotra.

(i) \textit{Abrus precatorius} L.
(ii) \textit{Anagallis arvensis} L.
(iii) \textit{Asclepias curassavica} L.
(iv) \textit{Carica papaya} L.
(v) \textit{Catharanthus roseus} (L.) G. Don
(vi) \textit{Gloriosa superba} L.
(vii) \textit{Gymnema sylvestre} R. Br.
(viii) \textit{Momordica charantia} L.
(ix) \textit{Rauwolfia serpentina} Benth. ex Kurz
(x) \textit{Scoparia dulcis} L.
(xi) \textit{Trigonella foenum-graecum} L.
(xii) \textit{Withania somnifera} (L.) Dunal

c) By C. Kameswara Rao.

(i) \textit{Acalypha wilkesiana} Muell.-Arg.
(ii) \textit{Ageratum conyzoides} L.
(iii) *Kigelia africana* (Lam.) Benth.

(iv) Species of *Passiflora*.

Encyclopaedic profiles of a number of other species are in different stages of preparation.

c. Booklets

The following booklets written in Kannada by P. Sathyanarayana Bhat and C. Kameswara Rao were published by the Directorate of Indian Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy, Government of Karnataka.

c) Unani Vaidya, 1993.
g) Maragala Upakara (in Press) Karnataka State Adult Literacy Council, Mysore).

IV. AYURVEDA

'Ayurveda' consists of two words *Ayu* and *Veda*, meaning in Sanskrit, the science of life. Ayurveda deals with the prevention and cure of diseases, promotion of health and longevity.