



Genetic diversity in populations of *Acrocomia aculeata* (Arecaceae) in the northern region of Minas Gerais, Brazil

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Genet. Mol. Res. 11 (1): 531-538 (2012)

Received August 3, 2011

Accepted January 25, 2012

Published March 8, 2012

DOI <http://dx.doi.org/10.4238/2012.March.8.1>

ABSTRACT. Macaúba (*Acrocomia aculeata*) is a palm of economic importance, widely distributed in natural forests from Mexico to Uruguay. We analyzed the genetic diversity of populations of macaúba (*A. aculeata*) in the northern region of the State of Minas Gerais, Brazil. Young leaves from 10 macaúba individuals encompassing 49 genotypes of macaúba were collected from Montes Claros, Itacambira, Brasília de Minas, Mirabela, and Grão Mogol. After extraction and amplification of samples, the amplified fragments were separated by electrophoresis. We found high levels of genetic diversity within the populations. Genetic diversity indices were high, except in the Itacambira and Mirabela

populations. Results show that Mirabela and Itacambira populations can require conservation strategies because they present lower values of genetic diversity.

Key words: *Acrocomia aculeata*; North of Minas Gerais; Genetic diversity