

Diversity of *Citrus macroptera* in Garo Hills Region of Meghalaya and Their Usage

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Abstract—The Garo Hills are the part of Meghalaya subtropical forests region, India. Garo Hills comprises of five districts i.e., West Garo Hills, East Garo Hills, South Garo Hills South-West Garo Hills and North Garo Hills. The region covers an approximate area of 10,102 km² and lies in the latitudes of 25°29'59.99" N and the longitudes of 90°19'60.00"E. The northeast India is considered to be the natural home and the origin of different cultivated and wild species of Citrus. Citrus has a wide range of genetic variability within the genus due to frequent inter-specific and inter-generic hybridization, apomixes, polyembryony and natural bud mutations. Citrus macroptera Mont. is one wild species of citrus found to grow naturally and is available in all districts of Garo Hills. An ethno-botanical study reveals the large use of Citrus macroptera by Garo tribe for different puposes and has socio-economic importance signifying commercial potential in the state. Traditionally this fruit is utilized in terms of medicine, therapeutic and nutritional value. However, natural population of Citrus macroptera is vanishing at an alarming rate due to lack of proper conservation and increasing human interventions. Therefore, the present study aims to ensure its availability for future utilization and to know the usage of this species in the state by the Garo tribe which helps in understanding the role of wild species citrus in the local economy.