



CHARACTERIZATION OF NATURAL OCCURRENCE OF *Oenocarpus distichus* IN THE STATE OF MARANHÃO, BRAZIL

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Summary

In Maranhão State's Amazon, bacaba stands out as an important resource to local populations. It is employed in human and animal feeding, building houses, traditional medicine and manufacturer goods. The economically viable part of this species is the processed pulp known as bacaba, sold *in natura* or frozen. Considering the great potential of sustainable economic exploitation of native fruit trees, such as the bacaba, occurrence areas of natural populations of *O. distichus* in three municipalities of the Gurupi micro region and two of the Chapada das Mangabeiras were mapped in order to subsidize future researches regarding conservation and use of the germplasm. Bacaba populations were mapped in cities of the two microregions: 1) Gurupi where soils, in general, are of low natural fertility with predominance of dystrophic plinthudults and red-yellow dystrophic and plinthic soils and; 2) Chapada das Mangabeiras, where yellow dystrophic hapludox soils are found; and in the escarpments the litholic dystrophic neosoils are common. In these micro regions, bacaba populations are reduced to individuals found in backyards.

Key words: *Oenocarpus distichus*, Amazon, *in situ* conservation