GERMINATION OF *Singonanthus mucugensis* SEEDS ON BLOTTING-PAPER

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The rupicolus species *S. mucugensis* (everlasting flowers) is native from Mucugê fields in Bahia State on an average altitude of 1000m at the Chapada Diamantina. This ornamental species has a high value on the market of dry flowers, reaching R$ 10,00/kg. This explains the serious predatory extractive collection of the flower buds. As a conseguence, the chance for the production of physiologicaly mature seeds is dangerously low and the natural reproduction has.being decreasing. Beyond that, at some places of its wild occurrence where cattle is being extensively raised, most of *S. mucugensis* populations are disappearing. One way to assure this species' survival is by a planned seed germination and ex situ cultivation on protected areas where the young flowers collection will follow a sustainable handling. This species seeds are very tiny and the weight of 100 seeds is 6.1mg. Each fruit bears three seeds. Seeds of *S. mucugensis* harvested during 1997 were set up over blotting-paper watered by distilled water inside hard transparent plastic boxes to germinate. The boxes tops were closed by a plastic film to diminish loss of humidity. The plastic boxes were kept in a growth chamber at 30^{o}C day and 20^{o}C night, with 12 hours of photoperiod and without humidity control. The seeds were observed under a stereoscopic microscopic and it was possible to determinate that the germination started 20 days after sowing and 40 days after it, the germination level was of 60%. Based on the results, they may be classified as orthodox seeds.

Key words: Everlasting flowers, orthodox seeds, predatory extraction