Schinopsis brasiliensis Engl.[1/]

FAMILY

Anacardiaceae

VERNACULAR NAMES

Barauna, brauna.

BOTANICAL DISCRIPTION

General

One of the largest trees found in the semi-arid region of Northeastern Brazil. There are trees from 12 to 20m in height and from 30 to 60 cm in diameter.

Inflorescence

In panicles of white, small flowers, occuring from November to December and November to February.

Fruit

A samara or drupe of light brown colour, measuring 30 to 40 mm in length.

Foliage

Leaf petiolate, subcoriaceous, dark green on the upper surface and light coloured on the under side, with 10 pairs of oblong folioles, tip obtuse and oblique-acute at the base.

Bark

The bark is approximately 17.0 mm thick with a dead external layer, rough, rigid, light grey to black.

1/ Based on the work of I.E.Pires and C.E.S.Nascimento, EMBRAPA / CPATSA, P.O.Box 23, Petrolina, PE, Brazil.

When injured it shows a resinous exudate, which is transparent and without odor.

WOOD PROPERTIES AND PRODUCTS

Hard and heavy, with a brownish-yellow colour, becoming dark brown with age and when exposed to air. The presence of resin and tannin renders a large durability when it is submitted to adverse conditions.
The wood is appropriate for construction, rafters, pillars, beams, sleepers, fuel, charcoal, etc.

NATURAL DISTRIBUTION

A species typical of the "Sertão" and "Agreste" of the state of Pernambuco and Bahia. It has been found in the states of Paraíba, Rio Grande do Norte, Ceará and Piauí. Trees are generally found in the "caatingas" of Northeastern Brazil.

CLIMATE

The climate where barauna grows is dry sub-humid tropical to dry tropical, where the dry period may reach up to 12 months, with a water deficit reaching a level of 1 300 mm.

SOILS

This species is found in all soil types with the exception of those that are deep and sandy; preference for deep and fertile soils has also been noted.

HABITAT

The tree thrives best in the high lands of the "caatinga", and does not appear in pure formations;

it is found mixed with species such as Astronium sp. Tabebuia sp. Caesalpinia sp. Ziziphus sp. and Bombax sp.

SEED HANDLING

Little information is available; however, it is known that the seeds are susceptible to borer attacks while stiil on the tree. Studies are required on the physiological maturation. The seeds present coat dormancy which will also need to be studied. The weight of 1000 seeds is about 106 g.

SILVICULTURE

This species is normally not planted. A review of the forest experiments in the Northeast and other studies under semi-arid conditions, show an average survival of approximately 60%, with a very slow growth.

The seedlings are raised by employing traditional methods. The seed dormancy causes delay and irregular germination.

STATUS

S. brasiliensis is suffering a slow decline. The studies underway on the species are limited to studying its behaviour in pure stands.

PROTECTIVE MEASURES TAKEN AND RECOMMENDED

In situ conservation is highly recommended. Studies of the reproductive system and the establishment of base populations should also be undertaken to preserve the genetic variation and to provide reproductive material.

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