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Dr. Yao is Head of Useful Plant Resources Excavation and Utilization Group based at KIB, and the Director of Yunnan International Joint Laboratory of Health Plant Resources Development (HPRD Lab, <https://hprdlab.iflora.cn/>). He is an experienced researcher in Chinese herbal medicines, with special expertise in conservation and sustainable development of food-medicinal plants and related traditional knowledge. His research interests also cover the cross-cultural communication of traditional herbal knowledge in the worldwide, as well as the ethnobotany of regional flora.

He obtained his doctoral degree from University of Zurich in 2018, and then, worked as a postdoc fellow at Institute of Medicinal Plant Development, Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences. Using a cross-disciplinary perspective, he has revealed the ethnomedical knowledge of several Chinese herbal medicines and their global relatives, such as *Lycium* and *Panax*. Moreover, he has also contributed impressive works in the cross-cultural communication of traditional herbal medicines. Many of his works has been published in the global well-recognized peer-reviewed articles, which have been cited for over 1100 times.

He is a member of the International Society for Ethnopharmacology since 2015. Currently, he is also a board member of Section Ethnobotany for Botanical Society of China, a life member of the Good Practice in Traditional Chinese Medicine Research Association, an editorial broad member of Journal of Ethnomedicine and Ethnobiology, and an associate editor of Frontiers in Pharmacology -Ethnopharmacology.