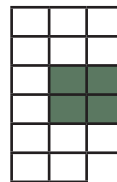


Podocarpus falcatus

(*P. gracilior*)

Podocarpaceae



Indigenous

Am: *Zigba*

Eng: *Podo, East African yellowwood*

Gr: *Zigba*

Or: *Birbirsā*

Ecology

Podocarpus trees are mainly found in the southern hemisphere, particularly in the temperate zones and in tropical highlands. They are conifers, the closest related species being yews and junipers, not pines and they are also known as yellow-woods. *P. falcatus* is a large tree of the semi-humid lower highland forests of the central and eastern highlands of Ethiopia in Moist and Wet Weyna Dega and Dega agroclimatic zones in Gonder, Gojam, Wolega, Shoa, Harerge, Arsi, Bale, Sidamo and Kefa, 1500–2,500 m.

Uses

Firewood, timber (furniture, boxes, plywood, panels), poles, medicine (bark), shade, ornamental.

Description

An evergreen tree with a straight bole, to 25 m or more. BARK: Grey to dark brown, cracking and scaling into irregular rectangles. LEAVES: Narrow, shiny dark green, 2–5 cm, gradually tapering. Young leaves larger and brighter giving a green flush. CONES: 1–3 male catkins, yellow-brown, about 2 cm, female cones hard, rounded to 2 cm, very slow to develop, green with dull purple bloom,

outer shell thin but inner flesh eaten by monkeys and birds.

Propagation

Seedlings, wildings.

Seed

1,300–2,600 seed per kg. Germination 30–40%. Separate pulp from seed immediately after collection by soaking in water for 24 hours, then rubbing and floating. Dry seeds.

Treatment: Crack the hard woody seed coat before sowing.

Storage: Seed can be stored for up to 2 years.

Management

Slow growing. Hardy once established.

Remarks

The species is now rare due to over-exploitation. The wood needs preservatives and careful seasoning to prevent warping.

