This report was generated from the SEPASAL database (www.kew.org/ceb/sepal) in August 2007. This database is freely available to members of the public.

SEPASAL is a database and enquiry service about useful "wild" and semi-domesticated plants of tropical and subtropical drylands, developed and maintained at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. "Useful" includes plants which humans eat, use as medicine, feed to animals, make things from, use as fuel, and many other uses.

Since 2004, there has been a Namibian SEPASAL team, based at the National Botanical Research Institute of the Ministry of Agriculture which has been updating the information on Namibian species from Namibian and southern African literature and unpublished sources. By August 2007, over 700 Namibian species had been updated.

Work on updating species information, and adding new species to the database, is ongoing. It may be worth visiting the web site and querying the database to obtain the latest information for this species.
**Vetiveria nigritana (Benth.) Stapf [2182]**

**Family:** POACEAE

**Synonyms**
- Mandelorna insignis Steudel
- Vetiveria zizanoides (L.) Nash var. nigritana (Benth.) A. Camus
- Andropogon nigritanus Benth.
- Andropogon squarrosus L.f. var. nigritanus (Benth.) Hackel

**Vernacular names**
- (Mozambique) gencha [5480]
- English (Namibia) vetiver [5083] [5115]
- German (Namibia) Dachgras [5083] [5115]
- Ju’hoan (Namibia) ila-doa [5083] [5115]
- Kwanyama (Namibia) enenge [5083]
- Oshiwambo (Namibia) omanenge [5083] [5115]
- Rukwangali (Namibia) marenge [5083] [5115]
- Silozi (Namibia) sivamba [5083] [5115]
- Thimbukushu (Namibia) rungutji [5083] [5115]

**Partial distribution**

<table>
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<th>Plant origin</th>
<th>Continent</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Botanical country</th>
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**Display help**

In names list include: [ ] synonyms [ ] vernacular names and display: [ ] all [ ] names per page

*Your query found 1 taxon*
ISO countries: Malaysia

Descriptors

**Category**

**DESCRIPTION**
Herb; Tussock Forming/Tufted/Caespitose [3] [2182]; Erect [5123]; Terrestrial [3] [5123]; Rhizomatous [5123]; Perennial [2182] [5115]; Unarmed - unspecified parts; Aromatic - stems [1304]; Plant Height 1.5-3 m [2182] [5104]

**CLIMATE**
Tropical Summer Rains [3] [2182]; Annual Rainfall >= 500 mm [5106] [5115]

**SOILS**
Sometimes Waterlogged (frequency unknown) [2182]; Poorly Drained [2182]; Seasonally Waterlogged [2255]

**HABITAT**
Forest [3]; Wooded Grassland [2182]; Watercourses [3] [5123]; Anthropogenic Landscapes [3]; Floodplains [5123]; Altitude 0-1300 m a.s.l. [3] [2255]

**SOURCES OF PLANTING MATERIAL**
RBG Kew Seed Bank; Other Seed Sources [5181]

**CONSERVATION**
IUCN Status - Lower Risk, Least Concern (LC) [5400]

**FURTHER DATA**
Botanical Illustration [3] [2182]; Additional References [5349]; Botanical Photograph [2182]; Databases [5123] [5341]; Grid Map [2182] [5115]

**SEPASAL DATASHEET**
Nomenclature Checked

STATUS

Uses

**Major use**

**Use group**

**Specific uses**

**MATERIALS**
Fibres
- stems, basketry (from fibre), baskets; stems, necklaces [1140] [1304]; unspecified aerial parts, thatch [5118]; stems, toys/games [1304]; stems, hats [1304]
- Other Materials/Chemicals
  - stems, beads

**MEDICINES**
Digestive System Disorders
- roots, humans, intestine, constipation, enemas [1304]

Infections/Infestations
- roots, humans, genitourinary system, gonorrhoea, enemas [1304]

**ENVIRONMENTAL USES**
Boundaries/Barriers/Supports
- animal barriers, homesteads [5118]; boundary markers, live fences [5608]; other types of boundaries/barriers/supports, live fences, croplands/orchards [5608]
- Firebreaks
  - live plant in situ [5608]

Picture

None recorded

Notes

**NOMENCLATURE/TAXONOMY**

Name has changed to Chrysopogon nigritanus (Benth.) See Flora of Zambesiaca Vol 10 (4) p. 36 (2002) [3].
DISTRIBUTION

Namibia:
Infrequent to common [5115] [5123].

Namibia:
Occurs only in the far north [5115].

Southern Africa:
Infrequent [2182].

Worldwide:
Tropical Africa, sporadic east to the Phillipines [2182].

Namibia:
Occurs in the Kaokoland, Owambo and Okavango districts [5183].

DESCRIPTION

Height:
1.2-2.4 m [2255].

Inflorescences:
Spikelets (sessile) 5.5 - 7.0 mm long (pedicellate slightly shorter). Glumes dark purple, short-spiny, tips rounded [2182].

Leaves:
Leaf blades to 90 mm long and up to 7 mm wide (margins cutting) [2182].

Lifeform:
Graminoid [5104].

MATERIALS - FIBRES

Necklaces, stems:
The aromatic stems, especially below the inflorescence, are cut into short sections and hollow stems are strung as beads to be worn around the neck by the Kwanyama Ovambos in Namibia (Loeb 1956). It is also used for hoops, hats and toys [1304].

MEDICINES - DIGESTIVE SYSTEM DISORDERS

Roots, humans, intestine, constipation, enemas:
Powdered roots are boiled in water, cooled and used as an enema by the Kwanyama Ovambos in Namibia (Loeb 1956) but they do not make clear the purpose other than "alimentary disorders". Presumed to be for constipation [1304].

MEDICINES - INFECTIONS/INFESTATIONS

Roots, humans, genitourinary system, gonorrhoea, enemas:
Powdered roots are boiled in water, cooled, and used as an enema for treatment of gonorrhoea by the Kwanyama Ovambos in Namibia (Loeb 1956) [1304].

ENVIRONMENTAL USES - BOUNDARIES/BARRIERS/SUPPORTS

Boundary markers, live fences:
It has been used to mark out boundaries of properties in northern Nigeria, Malawi and Zambia [5608].

Homesteads, animal barriers:
Used by the Kwanyama Ovambos in Namibia as kraal fences [5118].

Other types of barriers, live fences, croplands:
Tobacco farmers in Zimbabwe report that putting a vetiver hedge around their fields keeps out creeping-grass weeds, such as kikuyu and couch [5608].

ENVIRONMENTAL USES - FIREBREAKS
**Live plant in situ:**
It is a good barrier to ground fires if planted as a hedge around croplands [5608].

**ALTITUDE**

0-1100 m [2255].
Southern Africa: 300 - 1,000 m [5104].

**DRAINAGE**

Southern Africa: Occurs in wet places [2182].

**SOILS**

Southern Africa: Often on black turf soil [2182].

**VEGETATION**

Namibia: With Acacia and Combretum [5123].
Southern Africa: Savanna [2182].

**ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS - MISCELLANEOUS**

Southern Africa: Occurs in wet places [2182].

**FLOWERING/FRUITING/SEED SET**

Flowering, southern Africa: July to June [2182].

**CYTOLOGY**

For the genus $x = 5, 10$ (polyploidy) [5150].

**SEED/GENE BANK SOURCES**

National Plant Genetic Resources Centre, National Botanical Research Institute, Private Bag 13184, Windhoek, Namibia.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND DATASHEET PROGRESS**

Updated for southern Africa by E. Irish; checked by A. Jarvis; Sepasal Namibia, National Botanical Research Institute, September 2005.

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**References**


SEPASAL's development has been funded by The Clothworkers' Foundation and its Internet development is funded by The Charles Wolfson Charitable Trust. Nutritional information on African wild foods is funded by Nestlé Charitable Trust.

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