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Geopharmaceuticals of Himalayan *Sowa Rigpa* medicine: Pharmacopoeial description, geochemical identification, their diversity and current utilization in Bhutan

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ABSTRACT

Ethnopharmacological relevance: Geological materials/minerals have been used in the Himalayan *Sowa Rigpa* and Bhutanese traditional medicine (BTM) for treating various disorders for thousands of years.

Aim of the study: Our study reports the chemical identification of various geological materials and their ethno-medicinal uses for the first time.

Materials and methods: A five stage process was conducted including: (1) a survey of specialized ancient ethnomedical literatures (Pharmacopoeias and formularies); (2) freely listing the mineral ingredients reported in the ancient *Sowa Rigpa* medical texts and translating their ethnomedical uses in equivalent terms in English; (3) cross-checking the chemical names and chemical composition of identified minerals with various mineral databases and mineral handbooks; (4) Authentication and standardization of *Sowa Rigpa* names through open forum discussion with BTM practitioners; (5) further confirmation of the chemical names of identified minerals by consulting experts and pharmacognosist.

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