

Belém, Pará, Brazil, 27 February 2020

RECOMMENDATION LETTER

It is with much enthusiasm that I recommend the proposal prepared by the Ph.D. candidate Mayara Pastore to the IAPT Research Grant Program in Plant Systematics. Her Ph.D. project addresses a systematic and biogeographic study of *Maripa* (Convolvulaceae), a genus of lianas from Tropical America, with 20 known species mainly distributed in the Amazon forest.

The taxonomic revision proposed in her project will help to provide accurate conservation assessments of the species, which occur in rainforest areas with fast and uncontrolled recent deforestation. The phylogenetic studies aim to understand the relationships within the genus and the other two genera accepted in the tribe Maripae, *Dicranostyles* and *Lysiostyles*, whose evolutionary history and geographic distribution may reveal general patterns for the Amazon forest.

I met Mayara during the Flora of the *cangas* of the Serra dos Carajás project, which I coordinated during 2014-2018. During this period, she's got a scholarship (DTI-CNPq) for conducting studies on endangered species and elaborating taxonomic treatments in the scope of the project, which were published in scientific journals, including the treatment of Convolvulaceae for the *cangas* of Carajás. Mayara has a remarkable experience in fieldwork in the Amazon forest in Brazil, what is essential the dimensioning and success of the proposed project. The applicant has also a broad understanding of taxonomy and morphology of the Convolvulaceae, and also great familiarity with methods for studying specimens in herbaria.

The proposed project has institutional support for its development and laboratory structure for the morphological and molecular analysis in Museu Paraense Emílio Goldi (Belém), and collaboration with Instituto Tecnológico Vale (Belém), and Instituto de Botânica (São Paulo). However, funding is only partially guaranteed so far for visiting the herbaria and fieldwork proposed in the project. Additional resources are required for the sampling of *Maripa* in non-Brazilian Amazonian countries, such as Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, where endemic species of the genus occur.

If Mayara's proposal were approved, IAPT would be contributing to the training of qualified human resources in Plant Systematics based in the Amazon forest, tropical America, and the understanding and conservation of the flora of this unique, unknown and threatened biome. In addition, it would collaborate to promote the recent created Ph.D. course in Tropical Botany of Museu Goeldi (MPEG) and Federal Rural University of Amazonia (UFRA).



Dr. Pedro Lage Viana
Coordenação de Botânica – MPEG/MCTIC
Programa de Pós-Graduação em Botânica Tropical MPEG/UFRA
Curator of Herbarium MG