

# Webinar on NATURAL PRODUCTS, CAM THERAPIES, AND TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE

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## *John W. James*

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### **How I came to be producing a new medicinal plant product in Madagascar**

What if you could take a safe natural plant which has been shown to help your body repair the damages of injury and age? What if you found yourself uniquely able to bring such a product to the world?

In 2008, I traveled to Madagascar as the scientific advisor for a documentary film crew, focusing on traditional medicines. We interviewed dozens of healers using plants to treat a wide variety of health problems. That's when I first met Aloe macroclada, a plant which seemed to cure everything. Fast-forward 14 years and we have Mioty Voajanahary SARL (Malagasy for 'harvest nature'), a producer of dried gel of Aloe macroclada in bulk as a key ingredient in nutraceutical products. We led the way for the Madagascar Ministry's implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity/Nagoya Protocol (CBD), practicing reciprocity in numerous ways and setting up the business to benefit as many Malagasy as possible. The journey from discovery to a full-fledged business in Madagascar has been challenging and rewarding. We did it by first working with communities and local governments, finding ways to collaborate with many Malagasy along the way, before working up to meetings with the Central Ministry. We've learned much about CITES, the CBD, the Malagasy government, exporting an off-white powder in bulk, as well as patience and persistence.

#### **Recent Publications:**

Drapeau C, Benson KF, James J, Jensen GS (2015) Aloe macroclada from Madagascar Triggers Transient Bone Marrow Stem Cell Mobilization. J Stem Cell Res Ther 5: 287.

#### **Biography**

John had over 20 years of experience in pharmaceutical R&D before applying that experience to the GMP production of ALOMAC. First learning of Aloe macroclada in 2008, John tested it in a human clinical trial which showed significant increases in circulating stem cells. He started working towards producing ALOMAC in 2012, establishing Mioty Voajanahary SARL in 2014.

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