

# Pandanus spp. – A Minor Forest Produce of Cultural and Economic Significance in South East Asia

Wan-Rasidah Kadir<sup>1</sup>, Siti-Fazueri Radzali<sup>2</sup> & Ahmad-Kamal Ariffin<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Forest Research Institute Malaysia, 52109 Kepong, Selangor, Malaysia

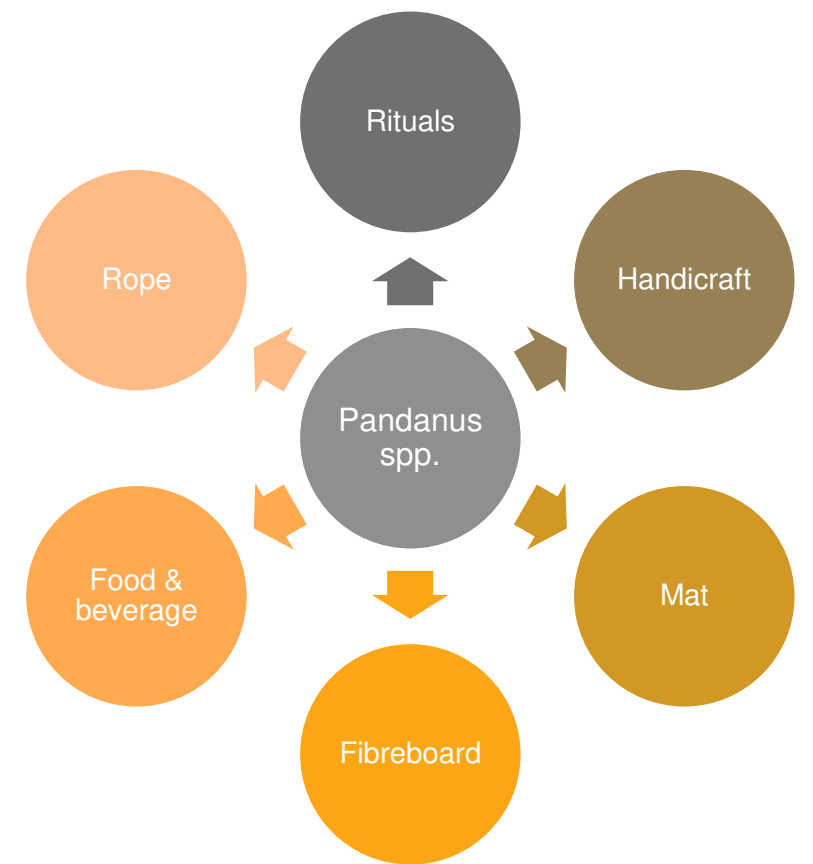
<sup>2</sup>South Johore Development Board, Bandar Penawar, Johore, Malaysia

*Pandanus* with over 750 species, are integral part of rural and indigenous peoples' cultures. The species spread well over wetlands and coastal shores, has its own genus in Pandanales order and Pandanaceae family. Endemic to the tropics and subtropics, Pandanaceae are monocot and flowering plants.

Species most sought after are *Pandanus amaryllifolius* for food preparation and *P. atrocarpus* for weaving and handicrafts. Weavers are dwindling in numbers and without effective measures this traditional knowledge will soon disappear. Random survey carried out in Peninsular Malaysia showed that only one out of five premises still in operation. This is alarming thus a program to revive the industry was initiated.

Recent finding revealed that *Pandanus* spp. are also exploited for medicinal and health food. Another interesting fact is that these species are integral in the daily lives of aborigines in their rituals. The Mah Meri tribes in Carey Island is one example.

The species are fast declining partly due to shrinking interest from new generation, slow replanting effort, urbanization / land use change. A number of *Pandanus* species are under threat as stated in the IUCN Red List Categories and Criteria 2015. This paper highlighted current effort undertaken to replant selected *Pandanus* species aimed at securing raw material for downstream product development particularly weaving industry. As *Pandanus* leaves are reputed to having strong fibre strand, product development could be extended to fibreboard production.



## Common Pandanus species and their utilization

Local Name	Botanical Name	Uses
Mengkuang ladang	<i>Pandanus furcatus</i> Roxb.	Craft material for mat, handbag, hat & cigarette/tobacco case,
Mengkuang sabut	<i>Pandanus atrocarpus</i> Griff.	Small sack, wallet & ritual items
Mengkuang tikus	<i>Pandanus labyrinthicus</i> Kurz ex Miq.	Craft materials for wallet, utility mats, wedding & rituals
Pandan gegas	<i>Benstonea kurzii</i> (Merr.) Callm. & Buerki	Material for roofing & wall for hut/house
Pandan wangi	<i>Pandanus amaryllifolius</i> Roxb.	Food colour, aroma & taste, also perfumery in rituals
Pandan duri	<i>Pandanus tectorius</i> var. <i>samak</i> (Hassk.) Warb.	Material for rough craft, carrying bag, hat and mat
Pandan tak berduri	<i>Pandanus tectorius</i> var. <i>laevis</i> Warb.	Fine handicraft such as saji, fine mat, cigarette case, betel case



## Replanting efforts

