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A segment of rbcl gene as a potential tool for forensic discrimination of Cannabis sativa seized at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

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Abstract

Cannabis sativa, known by the common name marijuana, is the psychoactive drug most widely distributed in the world. Identification of Cannabis cultivars may be useful for association to illegal crops, which may reveal trafficking routes and related criminal groups. This study provides evidence for the performance of a segment of the rbcl gene, through genetic signature, as a tool for identification for C. sativa samples apprehended by the Rio de Janeiro Police, Brazil. The PCR amplified and further sequenced the fragment of approximately 561 bp of 24 samples of C. sativa rbcl gene and showed the same nucleotide sequences, suggesting a possible genetic similarity or identical varieties. Comparing with other Cannabaceae family sequences, we have found 99 % of similarity between the Rio de Janeiro sequence and three other C. sativa rbcl genes. These findings suggest that the fragment utilized at this study is efficient in identifying C. sativa samples, therefore, useful in genetic discrimination of samples seized in forensic cases.

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