



Implementing the 2010 Targets

37th Global Biodiversity Forum

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GBF Workshop Session on “Verifying Biodiversity Trade”

The workshop on “Verifying Biodiversity Trade” brought together approximately 60 people from the private sector, NGOs, and intergovernmental organisations to explore options for verifying the sustainability of biodiversity-based businesses. This is particularly relevant to the COP8 agenda items on incentives, private sector engagement and the 2010 targets. It is also directly relevant to the promotion of sustainable and equitable trade through CITES and the WTO Doha Agenda. Specifically, the participants call on the Parties to (a) support the integration of biodiversity into existing ethical certification processes, (b) strengthen the role of trade promotion initiatives in support of BioTrade, (c) finance much-needed biodiversity product development, and (d) build greater consumer awareness of biodiversity-benefiting businesses. By making trade work for biodiversity, bio-entrepreneurs can become key actors in conservation and poverty alleviation.

The co-organisers of the workshop included the UNCTAD BioTrade Initiative, the Brazilian Biodiversity Fund (FUNBIO), PhytoTrade Africa, Fundación Amigos de la Naturaleza (FAN Bolivia), Alexander von Humboldt Institute (Colombia), Corporación de Promoción de Exportaciones e Inversiones (Ecuador), Comisión para la Promoción de las Exportaciones (Prompex, Peru), the Peruvian Institute for Natural Products, the Uganda Export Promotion Board, the Rainforest Alliance, the Marine Aquarium Council, ECL AP, and the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD).

Together, the representatives from these organizations and others explored options for verifying biotrade. BioTrade refers to those activities of collection, production, transformation, and commercialisation of goods and services derived from native biodiversity under criteria of environmental, social and economic sustainability. The challenge we face is verifying whether trade in biodiversity-based products is working for biodiversity.

The workshop addressed this issue in the context of the 2010 targets, specifically goal 4 on promoting sustainable use and consumption and target 4.1 on ensuring that biodiversity-based products are derived from sources that are sustainably managed, and their production areas are managed consistently with the conservation of biodiversity. Bio-entrepreneurs have a key role to play in meeting the 2010 targets.

Session 1 looked at BioTrade principles & criteria and the challenges of implementation & verification. Companies described their experiences in integrating these principles and criteria into their business models and into the development of their value chains. This experience has shown that it is possible

to develop working matrixes that can be used as practical guides and ensure equitable stakeholder involvement.

Session 2 focused on whether small & medium biodiversity businesses recognise a need for biodiversity certification. Within the market, it is clear that there is a need for differentiation to show which companies and products comply with the BioTrade principles. This differentiation, however, should not be an additional burden to these companies and the communities in which they operate.

Session 3 explored existing biodiversity-related certification schemes and mechanisms such as geographical indications. Development of a new biodiversity certification scheme is clearly not the right approach. Rather further opportunities to integrate BioTrade principles into existing schemes need to be explored. In this context, an adaptive critical path approach should be adopted, which leaves more flexibility for differing biodiversity-business conditions.

Finally, in session 4 there was a roundtable discussion on biodiversity, business and trade. The participants recognised the critical need for the Parties to the CBD and other relevant international agreements, such as CITES, Ramsar and the WTO, to promote market incentives, strengthen trade initiatives, finance product developments, and raise consumer awareness so that biodiversity-based businesses are better able to contribute to the conservation of biodiversity and the alleviation of poverty.