



HELVETAS

VIETNAM
LAOS
MYANMAR



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Economic Affairs,
Education and Research EAER
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO

Regional Biotrade Project Southeast Asia (Vietnam, Lao PDR, Myanmar)



CASE 1: Organic Chili in Vietnam



Selected because:

- An annual agricultural crop
- Clear export demand
- Benefits producers financially
- Unclear whether there is a meaningful biodiversity impact

Basic information:

- Produced in Cao Bang province
- Socially and environmentally committed partner company
- Product has multiple organic certifications



Not a native species

**Not rare or
endangered**

**Not a perennial
product**



**Not a key ecosystem
species**

**Does not grow in
mature ecosystems**

**Minor food source
for pollinators**

**Animals living on it
killed as pests**

**Not a host for
epiphytic plants**

- Organic chili is better than conventional, ***but overall does not contribute to biodiversity conservation***
- Annual species grown in agricultural settings are unlikely to provide significant biodiversity benefits
- Exceptions may be possible:
 - If additional biodiversity-specific interventions are taken (i.e. biodiversity action plans)
 - If grown in a more complex system like polyculture
 - If the species itself is endangered and domestication takes pressure off wild stocks



CASE 2: Siam Benzoin in Vietnam



- Siam benzoin is produced from *Styrax tonkinensis*, a fast growing tree that grows in disturbed areas
- Commonly planted for paper, but most resin from wild production
- Resin is tapped by cutting bark high above the ground
- Used widely in fragrances as a fixative, and for medical, flavour and other purposes
- Market is dominated by Laos, but production is being re-established in Vietnam

A native species

**Not rare or
endangered**

**Perennial, up to 60
years**

**A key ecosystem
species in early
succession**



**Does not grow in
mature ecosystems**

**Source of food for
some animals**

**Not known to be a
host plant for nesting**

**Not a host for
epiphytic plants**

- Siam benzoin production *has a positive impact on biodiversity*
- Especially good where styrax forest areas link national protected areas
- Despite the positive impact there is a serious sustainability issue in the longer term
- Producers not allowed to maintain the forest in a state that would preserve benzoin production, but illegal cutting is widespread
- Could a policy of sustainable work better than ineffective protection?



CASE 3: Indian Prickly Ash in Laos

- *Zanthoxylum rhetsa* is also a pioneering species,
- Berries used as a spice and a fragrance and flavour ingredient
- Can be harvested from wild stands, but also semi-domesticated
- In forest areas, often cut to harvest berries, more often picked when cultivated
- Best quality is from Huaphan province of Laos, in areas where other economic opportunities are limited



- Tree could become less common as agricultural practices change
- Some positive effects on pollinators and birds
- Cultivation in gardens can be combined with pasture for cattle
- Most important impact is at landscape level
- Provides an alternate income that does not require expansion of slash-and burn cultivation





- Indian prickly ash has a positive impact on biodiversity and people
- Production could be expanded significantly if markets can be found
- Fits well with “Clean and Green” strategy for production
- Exporting these value-added, intermediate products does not fit with export promotion policies (yet...)

CASE 4: Jujube in Myanmar

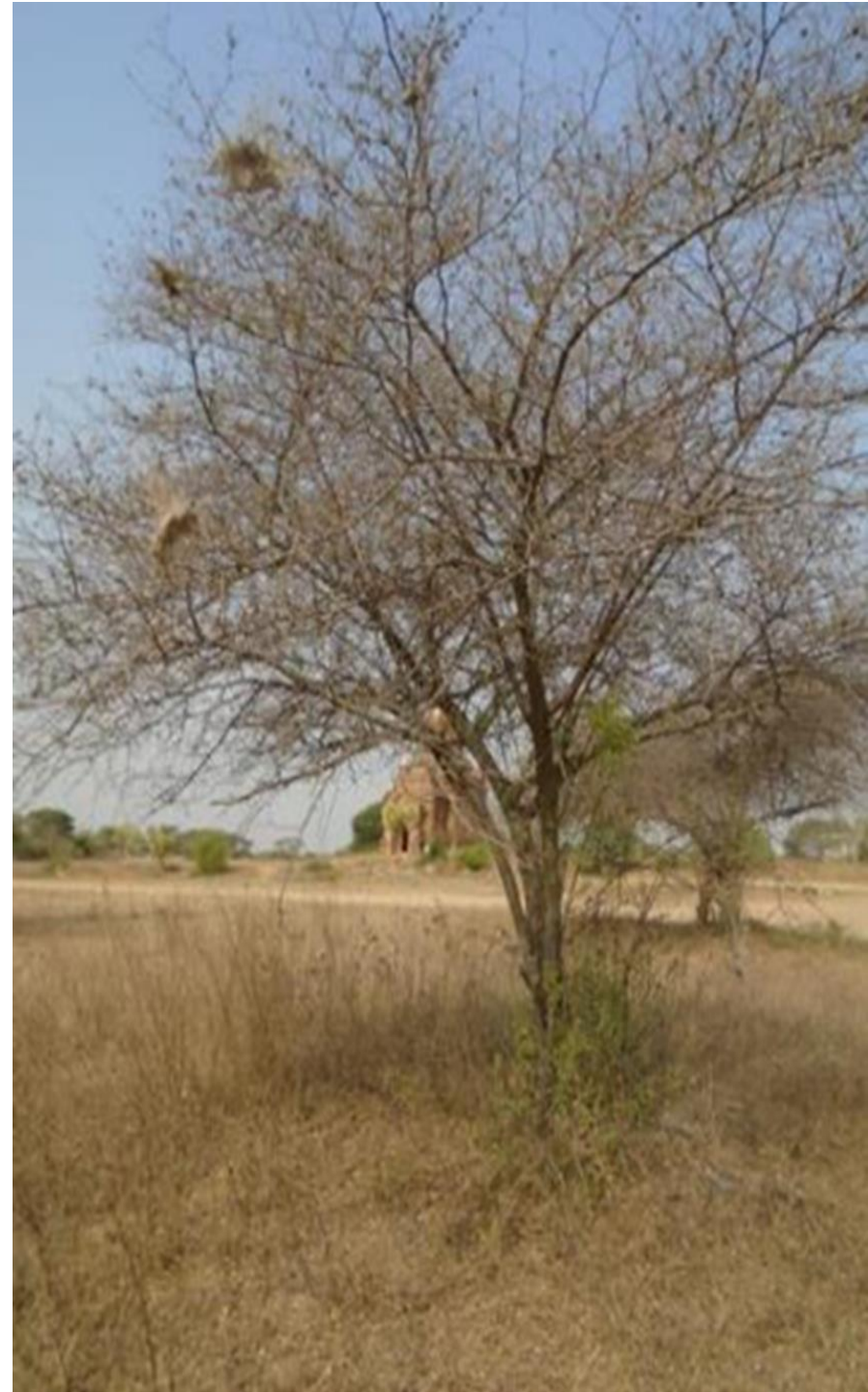
- Two species, *Ziziphus mauritana* and *Z. jujuba*
- Both grow naturally in the central dry zone of Myanmar
- Fruit is collected and eaten immediately or dried
- Dried fruit used to make a variety of confectionaries, syrup, and powder
- Seed kernels are also used in Chinese medicine





- Jujube is highly drought resistant and well adapted to dry areas
- Provides food for a number of, birds, animals and pollinators
- Endemic bird, white throated babblers, use it
- A key species in the open savannah of the central dry zone, providing habitat for numerous animals
- A very positive species for biodiversity

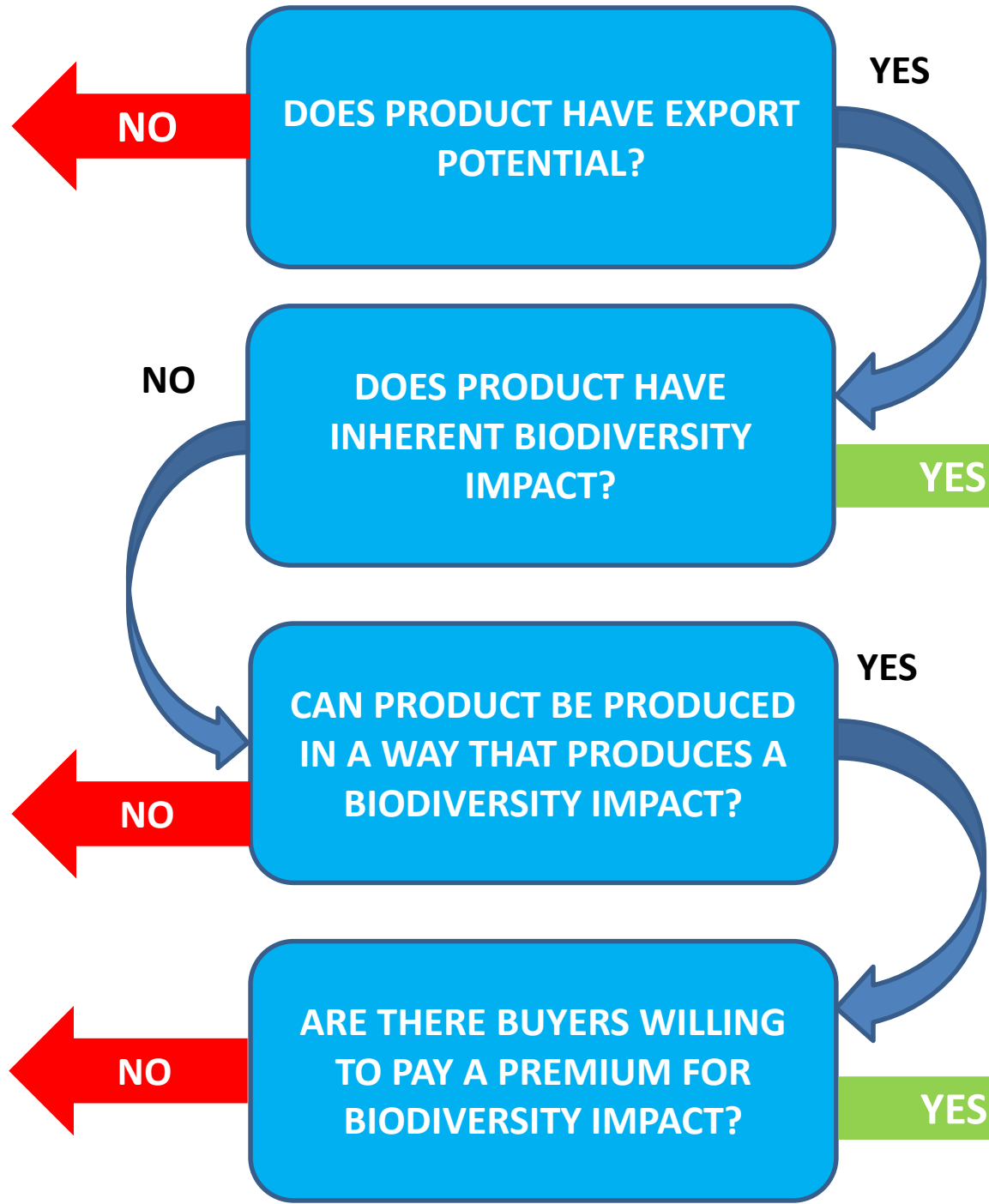
- Jujube is especially good for women's economic inclusion
- Domestic market for syrup has grown rapidly, already providing benefits
- Accessing export markets for jujube powder and concentrated pulp would increase benefits further
- Currently only a few companies work with jujube
- Not a recognized priority product for government



- Take biodiversity into consideration when selecting products
- Engage with buyers that value biodiversity
- Partner with biodiversity expert organizations to support intervention on biodiversity topics
- Pay more attention to policy issues relevant to biodiversity in selected value chains



REJECTED



SOURCING WITH RESPECT

GROUP WORK

Divide into three groups by country
Review “Key Facts” sheet for your cases
Work as a group, 20 minutes on each
question

- Vietnam: Siam benzoin
- Laos: Indian prickly ash
- Myanmar: Jujube
- Note your answer to questions on flipchart and be prepared to present findings to other groups.