

SPEAKING NOTES



forestry, fisheries
& the environment

Department:
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

7th BioTRADE CONGRESS: GLOBAL GOVERNANCE FOR TRADE AND BIODIVERSITY

SESSION: “Impacts of the BioTrade Principles and Criteria”

DATE: 25 March 2024

Ms. Rebeca Grynspan, Secretary-General to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development,

Ms. Lorena Jaramillo, Session Facilitator,

Esteemed panelist for this session,

And delegates from the Biotrade Fraternity.

Question 1

“First, we would like to turn to our country representatives to share with us how they are implementing the BioTrade Principles and Criteria in the country and what have been the main lessons learned.

Firstly, allow me to extend gratitude to the organisers of the Congress for allowing South Africa through the National Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment to participate in the 7th Biotrade Congress: Global Governance for Trade and Biodiversity. It is an opportune time to contribute to this platform considering South Africa’s advancements in Trade and Biodiversity.

South Africa occupy’ s 2 % of the worlds land yet is ranked as the third most mega-biodiverse country in the world which is based on the unique variety of endemic species. South Africa also boasts cultural diversity where biodiversity underpins and unites across cultures by precipitating a biodiversity economy which spans across terrestrial and seascapes. Through a presidential lead programme referred to as Operation Phakisa, South Africa has led and advanced in the biodiversity and oceans economy.

Sustainability has been an imperative in the biodiversity and oceans economy. South Africa’s efforts to achieve Global Environmental Benefits can be seen where the Country is quite active in meeting its

obligations as a member to the Convention on Biological Diversity, Convention on International Trade of Endangered Fauna and Flora, associated treaties and the most recent Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. South Africa's obligations are domesticated through policy, strategy and legislations. The biodiversity sector of South Africa also recognises the Biotrade Principles and Criteria as an integrated and practical mechanism to achieve its obligations to international treaties. Like the intentions of the Biotrade Principles and Criteria, South Africa meets its global obligations for the biotrade sector through a **"value chain approach"**, and in the case for Rooibos and *Aloe ferox*, actors from all parts of the value chain work together to achieve agreed goals namely, Access and Benefit-Sharing, Conservation and Sustainable Use, and local natural ingredient and product development. Secondly, we also take on an **"adaptive management approach"** toward implementation, which allows for corrective measures to be adopted because of ongoing monitoring of impacts. The scope of adaptive management entails, the review of relevant legislations, system thinking and implementation of legislation affecting the value-chain as opposed to silo in-efficient methods, thus, providing an enabling environment for the sector. Other adaptive measures, includes collaboration in the business support community and tailor making support interventions through funding and building technical capacity. The country recently put out a small grant fund financed by the Global Environment Facility for the Honeybush Value Chain. This grant is an excellent example of a national offering which has been tailored to respond to the needs of community-based enterprises to advance an emerging economy. We have also taken an integrated approach to biotrade where ecosystem integrity and sustainable livelihoods are deeply embedded in biotrade leaving no area or stakeholder behind.

Question 2

Turning now back to our country representatives with a new question – we would like to hear now about any examples of impact or outcomes of the work you shared with us. We'd love to hear about anything concrete that has been achieved, including any figures or examples you can share with us today benefiting biodiversity and people.

The Biotrade Principles and Criteria filters through South Africa's White Paper on Sustainable Use, and the draft National Biodiversity Economy Strategy. The Biotrade Principles and Criteria have also influenced and informed biodiversity conservation and sustainable use in Trade through the country's most recent undertaking in the development of a voluntary Biotrade conservation and sustainable use (CSU) Charter.

The Biotrade CSU Charter provides a voluntary platform for businesses in trade to demonstrate legal and regulatory compliance and responsible sourcing of biodiversity. It is envisaged that the Charter will be co-implemented by the public and private sector (enterprises and industry organizations). The Biotrade CSU Charter will provide a platform to verify compliance aligned to due diligence in incremental steps as enterprises build traction in global trade.

We also implement the Biotrade Principles and Criteria at a project implementation level through partner projects such as the SECO/GIZ/ABS Capacity Development Initiative projects namely, Access and Benefit-Sharing compliant Biotrade, and Bio-Innovation Africa Projects, as well as the National UNDP/GEF 6 Bioprospecting Value Chains Project. The implementation of the Biotrade Principles and Criteria at a project level, has led the principles to go into action across various stakeholder groups culminating in a rise in national innovation and multi-stakeholder confidence to globalise value chains. This impact translates into job creation at a local level, where in the year 2014, the biodiversity sector contributed to approximately 406 000 jobs. In more recent times, our partner projects mentioned earlier created over 3700 permanent and seasonal jobs, increased turnover of beneficiary companies by 51 % in local sales and 178 % in export sales.

