

BioTrade at the 59th UNCTAD Trade and Development Board

Special lunch event: Trade working for biodiversity in practice

During a special lunch event at the 59th Trade and Development Board, representatives of governments and the private sector joined delegates to present and discuss their experiences with BioTrade as a means of supporting the sustainable use of biodiversity. The event opened with a screening of a video that illustrates the work of the BioTrade Initiative in Ecuador, particularly with alpaca knitwear and medicinal plants infusions (Click here to see the [video](#)).

The event illustrated the ways in which BioTrade can support national sustainable development and the green economy, with presentations by representatives from the Geneva-based Missions of Mexico and Ecuador, as well as from the private sector. The experiences shared exemplified how BioTrade can encourage broader trade and environmental policy frameworks to integrate sustainable use of biodiversity and poverty reduction into national legislation.

H.E. Ambassador Miguel Carbo Benites of Ecuador emphasized the efforts that his country has made to reflect the importance of trade and biodiversity for sustainable development in the Constitution of Ecuador, and the National Plan for Good Living, which dictates all public policies made in the country. In particular, this plan sets out environmental and economic policies that incorporate BioTrade, including for economic development of small enterprises and employment policies, which are implemented in cooperation between relevant government ministries, including the Ministry of Environment, the Vice Ministry of External Trade and Economic Integration and the Commission on Biodiversity of the National Assembly.

Ambassador Benites illustrated these policy developments with reference to the experience of Jambi Kiwa, a community-based SME working with medicinal plants and infusions now exporting to the EU that was featured in the BioTrade Initiative video that opened the session.

Mr. Rodriguez of the Mexican Embassy highlighted the importance of biodiversity to the development of the country, as well as efforts taken by the government to use it as an engine for sustainable development. Additionally, he presented two value chains of important native species that are being developed with the support of UNCTAD. One works with the skins of Morelet's crocodile, a formerly endangered species of caiman whose skins are often used in luxury leather products. The second is for *Candelilla*, a plant-derived wax significant for cosmetics. For the latter species, Mexico is working closely with BioTrade and in collaboration with the private sector initiative of cosmetics companies, the Natural Resources Stewardship Circle (NRSC) on a pilot project for value chain development.

Mr Claude Fromageot, Director of Sustainable Development for the Yves Rocher Group and Director of the Yves Rocher Foundation, represented the NRSC and closed the session with remarks about the growing importance of biodiversity for the private sector and their commitments to support the approach of the BioTrade Initiative through the pilot project in Mexico and elsewhere. The specific examples presented showed clearly how promoting the sustainable use of biodiversity can align with trade and development to achieve mutual and compatible goals of poverty reduction and conservation.