



A COMMON IT BASED PERMIT APPLICATIONS AND MONITORING SYSTEM IN KENYA FOR ACCESS TO GENETIC RESOURCES AND BENEFIT SHARING (ABS)

A) Executive Summary

The ABS Capacity Development Initiative, hosted by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, was tasked by its donors and the African Steering Committee to focus on African partner countries to support them in the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol and the – further – development of the domestic ABS systems. Kenya was chosen to be one of the partner countries in the current work plan.

An initial country assessment was undertaken by the ABS Initiative in Sep 2015 and a resultant work plan for Kenya was adopted in Apr 2016. One major element of the work plan is the development of a one-stop IT-based online portal to manage ABS applications and permits and to enable Kenyan authorities to perform a targeted monitoring of the utilisation of Kenyan genetic resources and associated knowledge by national and foreign researchers. The ABS Initiative developed a concept for such an IT based system, which was presented at the COP MOP 2 of the Nagoya Protocol in Cancun in Dec 2016.

Researchers planning to carry out research in Kenya or with material from Kenya must seek research permits from NACOSTI, KWS and other designated national resource providers. For certain types of research with genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, an ABS permit by NEMA is required. This ABS permit is evidence that the researchers and the resource providers have entered into Prior Informed Consent (PIC) and Mutually Agreed Terms (MAT). Moreover, in specific cases, an export permit is required and other agencies such as KEPHIS, DVS, and KWS export licensing office are involved. There is a certain level of cooperation in the administration of permits, particularly where a permit is required from one authority before another authority is able to grant a permit. A shared online system would increase compliance with the Kenyan ABS regulations, reduce duplication of effort, reduce the workload for authorities, improve the quality of service to applicants, and facilitate research and development as basis for any benefit sharing.

As the first phase of developing the online system, the Nairobi-based consultancy AMBAND was contracted to come up with a BRD and a system specification to enable development and testing of the system. The process has involved identification of NEMA, KWS, KFS, KEPHIS and NACOSTI core permit processes, detailed study and analysis of current processes (as-is), and design of the to-be processes flow. This was done in a participative and inclusive manner through consultative meetings and workshops. Other players that were also brought in the project include KALRO, DVS, and the NMK. Various documents generated were shared with all the relevant shareholders who have given valuable inputs.

This document presents findings of AMBAND consultancy, gathered from Feb 2017 to Jun 2017 on the establishment of a common IT Based Permits Applications and Monitoring System for Access to Genetic Resources and Associated Knowledge as per Nagoya Protocol requirements. During this first phase, the deliverable is a Business Requirements Document (BRD) to inform the second phase of the system development. The consultants propose embrace of an integrated and web based ABS system to support the permit application processes. The consultants as well benchmarked with the KenTrade (specifically the Trade Net system). Valuable lessons were captured from KenTrade's recent implementation of the single window automated system.

Based on the findings in this study, this report captures specific proposals for a web based ABS automated system at these organizations. A detailed Software Requirements Specification Document has been prepared. Moreover, detailed software design diagrams have been developed in the form of: process flow narrations, context diagrams, document flow diagrams, use case diagrams, swim lanes and flow charts. These outputs form a solid basis for moving to the next step of development, testing and implementation of a web based integrated ABS system that will greatly enhance permit process operational efficiency.

B) Conclusions

AMBAND carried out a business process re-engineering exercise at NEMA, KWS, KFS, KEPHIS and NACOSTI in order to develop a BRD for the proposed ABS system. The results of the work form a solid foundation for the development and implementation of an integrated, web based ABS system. The ABS system will help NEMA, KWS, KFS, KEPHIS, NACOSTI, DVS, NMK and KALRO achieve:

1. **Improved efficiency:** Increase permit processing efficiency by as much as 80%
2. **Improved productivity:** Since all permits application details will be shared by all the government agencies it will be easier to consult each other and make a rapid decision
3. **Better permit service:** The research will be able to interact with the government organizations and be updated on the progress of his application
4. **Enhanced service delivery:** The permit application process will be shortened since all organizations will be able to collaborate and share information on all applications
5. **Higher revenues:** Since the permitting application process will be automated, the involved organizations will process permits faster and within a shortened period translating to higher revenues
6. **Increased applicant satisfaction:**
 - Enables faster, convenient, and quality services to permit applicants
 - Promotes uniformity and fairness in permit application processing
 - Encourages better applicant compliance with the relevant permit issuing organization permitting rules and regulations
 - Enhances permit information dissemination efficiency
7. **Improved organization efficiency:**
 - Streamlines internal permitting processes and procedures
 - Simplifies steps for permit application
 - Reduces permit processing from 6 months or more to less a month
 - Enables more informed decisions on permit issuance or rejection
 - Improves permit information flow between different government agencies
8. **Enhanced records integrity:**
 - Ensures permit records accuracy and integrity
 - Makes permit records readily available
 - Minimizes paper-based permit documentation
9. **Consolidated disparate permitting, licensing and compliance systems**
10. **Permit compliance assessed faster and with greater accuracy**
11. **Increases visibility into process, status and workflow across permit processing departments in the different government institutions**
12. **Timely, accurate and efficient revenue billing and collections facilitated**
13. **Research and permit application-friendly processes with permit self-service application available online**
14. **Reduced permit submission error rates by over 50%**
15. **Field-based staff supported through remote connection to the central database**

AMBAND also prepared a detailed software requirements specification document accompanying this report that highlights functional requirements, detailed software characteristics, nonfunctional requirements as well as hardware requirements.

AMBAND thanks the NEMA, KWS, KFS, KEPHIS, NACOSTI, DVS, NMK, UoN and KALRO as well as GIZ and the ABS Initiative for the opportunity to work together, for their continuous unwavering support throughout this process and their cooperation.