

Enhancing support for sustainable environmental and social development in South Africa's Rooibos sector

Context

Rooibos represents one of South Africa's oldest and most successful indigenous natural product industries. The Rooibos industry trades about 20 000 tons per annum and employs an estimated 6 000 people in its supply chain. The industry has a deep understanding of and commitment to the importance of both environmental and social sustainability as reflected in its participation in voluntary sustainability standards, such as the Union for Ethical Biotrade (UEBT) Standard or Rainforest Alliance. Ethically sourced Rooibos offers an opportunity to effectively contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of South Africa's rich biodiversity, support the well-being and sustainability of local farmers and farmer communities and secure market access.

Notes

Partnership objective

Support the Rooibos industry to develop against prioritized areas of the UEBT/Rainforest Alliance Herbs and Spices Program for improved:

- sustainability,
- market access, and
- to strengthen the ability to respond to due diligence requirements from the EU market.

Activities

- Support Rooibos sector for engagement with the Sustainability Differential and Sustainability Investment
- Exchange on Biodiversity Action Plans and regenerative agriculture
- Continued policy and regulatory engagement on land conversion
- Development towards the Living Wage



About BIA

The BioInnovation Africa project is implemented by GIZ with the objective to support African and European private sector in developing mutually beneficial value chain partnerships based on high ethical, social and environmental standards including equitable benefit sharing and the sustainable use of Africa's genetic resources. The programme is active in Cameroon, Madagascar, Namibia and South Africa.

Partners	EU: MartinBauer, Union for Ethical Biotrade SA: South African Rooibos Council GIZ: BioInnovation Africa Programme (BIA)
Implementation	2023 – 2025

Achievements from Phase 1 of Partnership

- Guidance for sustainable development based on the UEBT Standard and industry input
- Shared understanding between industry, certification bodies and auditors
- 35 entities consulted and trained: farms, processors, government, environmental agencies & audit bodies
- 10 Biodiversity Action Plans developed and implemented
- 2 500ha land under rehabilitation







