

Minutes of the 18th BioTrade Stakeholders Forum held virtually on 21st February 2023

1. Virtual Arrival

2. Welcome, apologies and purpose of meeting

The Chairperson welcomed the participants. The purpose of the meeting is to share information and update Stakeholders on progress made by the different organizations/institutions supporting the BioTrade Sector. Feedback was given that this forum has been described as a valuable forum for biotrade stakeholders. Members were encouraged to volunteer for doing presentations at the forum meetings and share ongoing activities.

The draft agenda was presented and adopted with no changes. Proposer – Anna Reyneke, SIPPO; Secunder – Karen Swanepoel, SAEOPA. A list of attendees and apologies received is given in Appendix 1.

3. Minutes of the 16th meeting held on 10th May 2022 and 17th meeting held on 23rd August 2022

The minutes of the 16th BioTrade Stakeholder Forum Meeting were approved without changes. Proposer – Karen Swanepoel, SAEOPA; Secunder – Anna Reyneke, SIPPO.

Confirmation of documents distributed for the 17th meeting was done.

4. Matters Arising

All items had been actioned.

5. Presentation on SheTrades

Ms Liya Cherian, Specialist: Programme Implementation (Export Development), SECA, outlined the objectives of the SheTrades Programme which is to i) register women owned businesses on the SheTrade ZA hub (done in collaboration with ITC); ii) to provide support to women owned business with export-related activities; and, iii) to assist women owned business to access global value chains. The presentation was detailed as to how the programme works and some success stories were shared. It is a 3-level journey which includes talk/start, build and grow. A demonstration was given on how the hub works and the tools available on the hub. The presentation and additional documentation is attached to these minutes.

6. Q & A on SheTrades

Following questions, it was clarified that diabetic-friendly products are in high demand in Mauritius; there are 9 champions of SheTrades in provincial and branch level who could be approached to make similar presentations to a wider audience; SheTrades is cooperating closely with the JCCI (Johannesburg Chamber of Commerce and Industry).

The members of the biotrade forum were requested to please encourage interested enterprises to register on www.shetrades.com and the client is expected to go to the Seda branch thereafter.

www.seda.org.za. At the next meeting, members are kindly requested to give feedback as to actions taken in this regard.

7. UNDP/GEF 6: Honeybush Grant Finance supporting community-based enterprises in honeybush farming

Mr Joseph Mulders, UNDP/GQF 6: M & E, social and environmental risk management, elaborated on the UNDP/GEF 6 project which deals with the development of value chains from products derived from genetic resources in compliance with the Nagoya Protocol on ABS and NBES. The grant mechanism that would be made available to SMMEs in honeybush community and the opportunity to apply is expected to be July/August 2023. The scale, eligibility, target and way forward were explained. Specific networks and databases will be targeted to disseminate the information on the grant mechanism. The presentation is attached to the minutes.

8. Q & A UNDP/GEF 6 presentation

The challenges around African ginger were discussed. A presentation is yet to be made to the honeybush tea association. There is an EU-funded Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) in SA which also has a component on capacitating honeybush producers. Members who have contact details for the honeybush tea association and/or the EU-funded programme were requested to send contact details through to Mr Mulders.

9. Ecosystem Development for Small Enterprises (EDSE)

Ms Odette Crofton, EDSE Programme Management Unit Manager presented the extensive EDSE programme.

The Overall Objective is to Support inclusive and sustainable economic growth and employment creation in South Africa. The programme modality is through budget support and complementary support with a total programme funding of 56,445,800. The programme execution period has an

operational and implementation phase of 87 months = 24 Jul 2017 – 24 Oct 2024 and a closure phase of 24 months = 25 Oct 2024 – 25 Oct 2026.

The specific objectives / outcomes of the programme are:

1. To improve the competitiveness of SMMEs and their ability to meet procurement requirements of large multinational/local corporations, government and state-owned enterprises.
2. To improve access to finance for SMMEs with limited/no access to finance.
3. To improve the regulatory and administrative environment for SMMEs.

The 3 Key Result Areas (KRAs) are:

KRA 1-Competitiveness of SMMEs, and their ability to meet procurement requirements of large multinational/local corp, gov & SOEs improved

KRA 2 – Access to finance for SMMEs with limited or no access to finance improved

KRA 3 – capacity of

relevant gov depts./agencies in enhancing regulatory & administrative environ for SMME strengthened.

There are a number of interventions viz., SheTrades, Community of Practice; Market access for digital entrepreneurs training with SEDA (M.A.D.E); Cluster development as a key tool in regional development; and , Red Tape Reduction support. Given the complexity of the programme, members are strongly recommended to review the presentation attached to the minutes.

10. Q & A EDSE presentation

The EDSE programme is extensive and consideration could be given for a 2nd presentation from EDSE.

11. General feedback from other Stakeholders

- 11.1 SECO-funded, UNIDO implemented, Phase II of the GQSP-SA project starts on 01 June 2023. The value chain remains the same – essential and vegetable oils and the focus species remains unchanged.
- 11.2 Ms Suzanne Herbst indicated that there is an apparent lack of industry consultation w.r.t. the IKS regulation and enquired if anybody in the meeting had information or could share contact details of whom to contact.
- 11.3 The BioTrade Festival being organized by ABioSA, the dtic and DFFE will take place at Sandton Convention Centre from 14 – 16 September 2023. Details to follow. A presentation to be made at next meeting.
- 11.4 SIPPO is in the 2nd year of the 2nd phase of the programme which works with BSOs and supporting processed foods and natural ingredients sectors. Preparations are progressing for the In Cosmetics Trade Fair which will be held in Barcelona, Spain, in March 2023. SIPPO will be collaborating with the Ms Liya Cherian to share information on SheTrades.
- 11.5 The ED of SAEOPA indicated that essential and vegetable oil producing enterprises are being bought out by major role players. There is a current surplus of some of the non-indigenous major oils produced in SA. The Indigenous Plant Users Forum (IPUF) conference will be taking place in the Kruger National Park in August 2023 (<https://ipuf.co.za>).

12. Wrap-up and way forward

Members who had undertaken to send contact details for different initiatives were requested to do so. Members were requested also to share the knowledge gained during this meeting as widely as possible. A reminder was given that feedback on what members had done to spread the news on the SheTrades project would be required at the next meeting.

13. Date of 19th meeting and Closure

The 19th meeting will be held on 20th June 2023 at 10:00, chaired by ABioSA. A save the date to be sent to all members of the forum. Members were requested to suggest topics for future meetings. The format of the meeting will be virtual in order to reach as many stakeholders as possible.

The 20th meeting will be held on 24th October 2023 and chaired by the GQSP-SA.

Action List

No.	Agenda item no.	Action	Responsible	Due date
1.	n/a	Distribute presentations	GQSP-SA	A.S.A.P.
2.	n/a	Members to circulate information on the SheTrades to their network and encourage participation	All	Continuous
3.	n/a	Prepare for 19th BioTrade Stakeholders Forum meeting	ABioSA	20th June 2023
4.	n/a	Given the scope of the EDSE programme, consideration of a 2nd presentation to the Forum would be beneficial	ABioSA/GQSP-SA	TBC



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