

Draft minutes of the 21st Biotrade Stakeholders Forum meeting held virtually on 20 February 2024

1. Virtual Arrival

2. Welcome, Apologies, Purpose of meeting and approval of draft Agenda.

The Chairperson welcomed the participants. Participants were provided with an opportunity to introduce themselves and organizations they are representing (see Appendix 3). The Chairperson shared that the theme for the 21st Biotrade Stakeholder Forum was IP within the bioprospecting and the biotrade sector and lessons learnt from the Sector Development Plans baseline assessments.

The draft agenda was adopted with an additional item on **09: Any other business** - Review of the current biotrade/bioprospecting platforms namely; Bioprospecting Forum, Biotrade Stakeholder Forum, etc.

3. Minutes of the 20th Biotrade Stakeholder Forum meeting held on the 24th October 2023

The minutes of the 20th Biotrade Stakeholder Forum Meeting were presented. During the presentation, the Chairperson shared that **the dtic**, DSI and DFFE as part of BIOPANZA have taken ownership and hosting of the African Biotrade Festival (ABF) in 2024.

The minutes were adopted with no changes recorded.

4. Matters Arising

ABioSA to share link to the ABF-2023 video. Done. Adrie shared the link to the ABF website and video in the MSTeams chat. Below also included: [ABF 2023 Video Link](#)

5. Presentation by Georges Bauer, SSAIPP: How can IP be used to support bioprospecting and the biotrade sector: possible training topics for 2024.

Georges Bauer from the Swiss-South African Intellectual Property Project (SSAIP) presented on the topic; “How can IP be used to support bioprospecting and the biotrade sector: possible training topics for 2024”.

As part of the presentation, he shared details on:

- his role mentioning that he is the project coordinator Swiss Federal Institute of Intellectual Property.
- mandate and responsibilities of the Swiss Federal Institute of Intellectual Property which among other responsibilities include drafting legislation and representing Switzerland in various international platforms.
- approach and objectives of IP Project in South Africa.

Furthermore, details were shared on the training:

- The IP Project as part of its 2024 activities would like to offer two types of training one could be an introductory training to IP the other could be more in-depth targeting research institutions and more advanced participants.
- Participants were invited to provide feedback and suggestions on what could be

included in the training to ensure that they are relevant.

6. Q&A on presentation

Following the presentation the below points were raised:

- It was suggested that given that sectors are exploring what it takes to register for a GI, the training could provide some direction on how to register for GI, how industry members can protect the IP of their product and information on where one could go to best protect their product.
- Georges agreed that the GI component will also be explored in the project and could be included as part of the training as there is recognition that the South African GI system is fragmented.
- Dr Meshandren Naidoo from SANBI was introduced, and it was shared that he will be working on IP development sustainability of the organisation and natural resources.
- It was agreed that SANBI could contact the IP Project team for a bilateral conversation.
- It was suggested that one of the IP training sessions could be included as an additional item to or parallel to the ABF so attendees of the conference could attend both ABF and IP training.
- It was raised whether the training sessions would be tailor-made for different groups or one size fits all. The response was that currently the proposal is for different levels, but this is also subject to who wants to do the training.
- It was requested that George should share further information e.g concept note regarding the training along with the presentation (see presentation attached)

7. Presentation by Chimwemwe “Chimu” Tembo from KSA on the findings and lessons learnt from the Sector Development Plans baseline assessment.

Chimu presented the findings and lessons learnt from the Sector Development Plans baseline assessment. During her presentation she:

- provided an introduction of the BioSA project and methodology.
- discussed the purpose and approach of the monitoring evaluation which includes systematically tracking, assessing the progress, effectiveness and impact of the project.
- shared details on the ABioSA Phase II Monitoring activities to date wherein she explained which activities were completed or in progress at micro, macro and meso.
- provided insight on the monitoring and evaluation framework that has been developed using the generic module and output indicators both from the overarching ABioSA project logframe and categories of the sector development priorities. She further outlined that the monitoring and evaluation is to be institutionalised in the respective sector associations.
- outlined lessons learned in the process of undertaking the baseline evaluation process and emerging lessons which hold relevance for the broader sector.
- mentioned that there will be a midterm and final monitoring evaluation to follow.

8. Q&A on presentation

After the presentation the following discussion was had:

- It was shared that with the on-coming EU corporate sustainability due diligence directive data is going to be key and more valuable. Data emanating from this process will allow communication with both international and government partners. It was raised that it is important to find the areas in the pre-competitive spaces where industry members could exchange data about.
- It was raised that for the Rooibos and Buchu there is an appetite for collaboration amongst industry members. SARC has realised if we start to work for the biotrade sector this is beneficial for all, to find an identity. Not all sectors are the same there is so much learning and appetite for sector organisations to come together and learn together.

9. Any other business from Stakeholders

Review of the two forums namely Bioprospecting Forum and Biotrade Stakeholder Forum as part of streamlining number of forums in the sector.

- Natalie raised that currently there are a number of platforms in the sector – the Bioprospecting Forum (engagement on regulations) and the Biotrade Stakeholder Forum and enquired whether there could be a way of looking at how to streamline and structure the forums as in both and other platforms, it seems that the same stakeholders attend, perhaps a mapping process could be undertaken to how these different platforms interact with one another. She recognised all the projects and platforms have one goal which is to see the sector grow.
- It was suggested to await the finalisation of the NBES before rationalise the platforms, as the NBES could present an expanded scope.
- It was shared that the changes that will emerge out of the NBES development process will not majorly affect the platforms within the sector. The scope of the NBES has expanded to include horticultural species, cut flowers, artemisia, species where there is a biodiversity-based economy e.g bees and honey,
- It was recognised that this could be an opportune time to look at streamlining platforms and take stock of what has been done to present a more uniform picture of how far the needle has moved.
- It was raised that there have been a couple of reviews done where service providers were contracted to interview certain stakeholders. The feedback was that the Biotrade Stakeholder Forum is well received, and it is a platform for knowledge sharing the Bioprospecting Forum is critical for engagement with the public sector and policy.
- It was agreed the ABioSA and UNIDO/GQSP-SA should communicate with forum stakeholders to receive feedback on the suggested way forward towards the streamlining of platforms in the biotrade sector.

Natalie also presented the four potential topics of interest to be covered during the Biodiversity Indaba and Investment Summit scheduled for 24 – 26 March, namely:

- Discuss further the guidelines on BS4CSU.
- Digital sequencing establishing a multilateral platform.
- Looking at the scope of NEMBA – chapter 6 and exemptions.
- White paper for fair and equitable benefit sharing – improving the models being used for non-monetary and monetary benefit.

10. Wrap-up, way forward, date and theme for 22nd meeting.

As part of the wrap-up and way forward the following was discussed:

- All presentations from today's meeting will be shared with participants.

- Participants were reminded to contact the IP project team with feedback and suggestions on trainings.
- ABioSA and GQSP-SA are to commence on a process of undertaking a mapping of the biotrade sector platforms.
- Participants were reminded to contact ABioSA and GQSP-SA team on suggestions and feedback on the streamlining of the biotrade platforms.
- SANBI and IP Project team to have a bilateral engagement.
- SAEOPA conference scheduled for 18th and 19th July 2024.
- GQSP-SA to send the save the date for next Biotrade Stakeholder Forum Meeting - 22nd meeting, 18 June 2024, GQSP-SA to host.
- 23rd meeting, 23 October 2024, ABioSA-SA to host



Appendix 1: Presentation: How can IP be used to support bioprospecting and the biotrade sector: possible training topics for 2024.

Appendix 2: Presentation: Findings and lessons learnt from the Sector Development Plans baseline assessment.