

Draft minutes of the 24th Biotrade Stakeholders Forum meeting held virtually on 25 February 2025

1. Virtual Arrival

2. Welcome and Purpose of meeting

The Chairperson welcomed the participants.

The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the Import Promotion Desk (IPD) support programme and highlight the market demand/trends in the European Market. The Swiss Import Promotion Programme (SIPPO) presented their collaboration with IPD project.

The draft agenda was adopted with no changes

3. Minutes of the 23rd Biotrade Stakeholder Forum meeting held on the October 2024

The minutes of the 23rd Biotrade Stakeholder Forum Meeting were presented, and no changes were recorded.

4. Matters Arising

None.

5. Presentations by Maria Gomez on the IPD support program for South African SMEs: European market for natural ingredients and the potential seen for the South African products

- The IPD project is currently in its 5th phase and funded by the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).
- The objective of the project is to strengthen the international competitiveness of companies in partner countries and connect them to buyers and sellers in Europe.
- The project targets the micro-level (business that are interested in expanding into the European Market) and the meso-level (transfer knowledge of the EU markets to Business Support Organisation e.g chamber of commerce, export promotion agencies).
- The project collaborates with other organisations that have the same goals and supports exporters to the know the EU market and importers to connect with exporters (SIPPO, CBI, ITC).
- IPD works in/with 21 countries and South Africa is the latest addition to the project. In SA the following sectors are supported: natural ingredients, sustainable tourism, fresh vegetables and fruits, cut flowers, sustainable sea food, IT outsourcing. In the natural ingredients sector the following sub-sector are targeted: Essential and fatty oils as well as extracts, dried fruits, vegetables and nuts, spices and herbs, tea, processed fruits and vegetables, pulses, seeds and cereals, sweeteners and thickeners.
- The IPD will be conducting a sourcing mission end of March 2025 to identify new companies in the natural ingredients sector that are interested in exporting into the EU

market.

- Interested companies will need to submit a company profile to IPD which will be screened by project managers. The screening will be conducted to determine if the company meet the criteria and once the screening is finalised and company meets the criteria an onsite evaluation will be conducted.
- The selection criteria are that the company must be categorised as a small to medium business, have few or no business contacts in EU, the product of the company must be produced in SA and be in demand in the EU market, and the facility of product production must comply with quality standards i.e HACCP and other general manufacturing standards.
- The IPD project offers the following support to companies: individual coaching for market plan, sustainable policy, export plan. Pre-fair training/workshops are offered companies and matchmaking at the trade fairs. Assist in establishing sustainable long term business partnerships.

Questions and Discussion

- The IPD project does not provide support for flights and accommodation for trade fairs attendance and the main support of the project is matchmaking and providing pre-trade fair workshops/training.
- IPD project works in specific countries, and it is required that the company be registered in one of the partner countries and preferably source raw materials in those countries.
- As part of the IPD project the companies will be provided with training and coaching/mentoring support in preparation of trade fairs attendance.
- Natural Ingredients are in demand due to more people wanting to live a healthier lifestyle and there has been a decrease in demand for organic products but still can be imported and the organic products are largely consumed in Germany. The demand of organic products decreased during and post COVID and due to buying power and inflation in countries such as France and Netherlands. The organic cosmetic products are less in demand compared to food. It was highlighted that the organic niche is still available, and it was advised that for companies that already have organic certification can keep it and for companies that want to do a new organic certification it might not be a good idea now.
- It was further highlighted that organic certification system provides an advantage that the products are viewed as clean (confirmation of OC).
- It was clarified that the IPD project is government funded and there is no percentage that is expected to be paid to the project by the companies.
- **The IPD mission will be taking place from 25 March to 1 April 2025 to source companies that are interested in participating in the project.**

6. Presentations by Anna Reyneke on the collaboration between the Swiss Import Promotion Programme (SIPPO) and IPD project

- SIPPO is founded by State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and operates in 12 countries, six sectors and works with 50 plus Business Support Organisations.
- SIPPO supports BSOs to increase their export promotion capacity and service provision to export-ready companies, thereby promoting market access for exporters and collaborates with Swiss cooperation projects (i.e. ABioSA, GQSP-SA, SSAIP).
- SIPPO focuses in supporting BSOs for enhancement of export promotion services (incl. trade fairs, selling and buying missions, market intelligence, etc). BSO institutional strengthening, BSO Network & Cooperation Development (both locally and internationally) and cross-cutting topics: Sustainability, Digitalisation.
- SIPPO has a longstanding partnership with IPD at global programme level and has collaborated with IPD in supporting BSOs. Currently, the projects are working on a market intelligence partnering with BSOs in the natural ingredient and processed food sectors. The projects have collaborated within the European TRIC network (Trade Related Instruments Connected). The TRIC network is a network of governmentally mandated organisations in EU and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries. Its members operate in the field of trade promotion and capacity building of local organisations to improve international market access of developing and emerging countries.

Question and Discussion

- SIPPO was complimented on the great job that has been done through the years and looking forward in the collaboration with IPD.
- It was clarified that SIPPO works with BSOs only which ultimately benefits SMEs in the sector.
- It was clarified that reduction of certification cost is not an area of expertise of the IPD project and that can be supported by Small Enterprise Development and Finance Agency (SEDFA) or dtic agroprocessing scheme.

7. Documents to be shared with participants

- SAEOPA committed to share list of SME support programmes.
- ABioSA to provide slide on SECO funded projects and GIZ implemented projects and association that are supported by ABioSA for the implementation of SDP.

8. Topics that were suggested by participants to presented/discussed for the coming Biotrade Stakeholder Forum

- Compliance of natural ingredients products

- Quality Management System developed and used by Agulhas Honeybust Tea through ABioSA financial support.
- Pest management.
- AI and BIA BioMoT tool.
- Certification and growth trends in the EU market
- The process of setting up an association in the sector (see link [ABioSA KP](#) on creating a biotrade sector organisation)

Closure

The Chairperson thanked the presenters and the participants. Stakeholders are encouraged to submit topics for discussion or offer to present on their programmes to the 2 coordinating projects (ABioSA and GQSP-SA) for the next Biotrade Stakeholders' Forum meeting scheduled for. The 25th Biotrade Stakeholder Forum will be chaired UNIDO: GQSP on the 24 June 2025, invitation to be circulated.

Appendix 1: Presentations by Maria Gomez on the IPD support program for South African SMEs: European market for natural ingredients and the potential seen for the South African products

Appendix 2: Presentation by Anna Reyneke on the Collaboration between the Swiss Import Promotion Programme (SIPPO) and IPD.

Appendix 3: SAEOPA list of support programmes for SMMEs (Still to be shared)

Appendix 4 : SECO funded and GIZ implemented projects in the sector and associations implementing the SDP supported by ABioSA

Appendix 3 List of attendance and apologies

	First & Surname	Organisation
1.	Adrie El Mohamadi	GIZ ABioSA/BIA
2.	Elsie Meintjies	UNIDO:GQSP
3.	Pri Elamthuruthil	UNIDO:GQSP
4.	Serole Mketsu	GIZ ABioSA/BIA
5.	Hester Kinnear	
6.	Ingeborg Adelfang-Hodgson,	GIZ ABioSA/BIA
7.	Anna Reyneke	SIPPO
8.	Mbali Mashego	
9.	Natasja Smith	
10.	Elisabeth	
11.	Marthane Swart	SKKA
12.	Kersch Naidoo	CSIR
13.	Karen Swanepoel	SAEOPA
14.	Sicelo Kunene	
15.	Serge Pavlovi	
16.	Anthea Gilfillan	
17.	Lize van der Merwe	Agulhas Honeybush Tea/SAHTA
18.	Bauer Georges	
19.	Yolande Le Roux	SAHTA
20.	Cyril Lombard	ABioSA/BIA project advisor

21.	Viwe Mqulo	DFFE
22.	Adelia Pimentel	CTFA
23.	Werner Van der Merwe	Biosylx
24.	Mariette van Rooyen	CECOSA
25.	Mudombi Shakespear	SECO
26.	Nelisiwe Jolinyathi	CECOSA
27.	Wynand Gericke	Rosehip
28.	Nomusa Dlamini	CSIR
29.	Bonolo Nameng	
30.	Nonhlanhla's Al Notetaker	
31.	Rosemary du Preez	
32.	Henk Goosen	
33.	Odette Crofton	DSBD
34.	Anna Busch	GIZ
35.	Henri Minnaar	Highlands Essential oils
36.	Mthandazo Ngcobo	
37.	Malembe Mtsweni	SEDFA
38.	Uys van Rensburg	
39.	Stephanie Kasselmann	
40.	Cosmas Mamhunze	
41.	Unathi Moyo	

42.	Manduna Idah	CUT
43.	Ntsiuoa Kobo	
44.	Kudzi Papaya	
45.	Ngubane, Xolile	
46.	Nnana Makubu	SAEOPA
47.	Magreth Tsuses	
48.	Maria Paula Gómez Salamanca	IPD
49.	Nonhlanhla Gwamanda	NAMC
50.	Mukonazwothe Netshiluvhi	DFFE
51.	Suhel Al-Janabi	
52.	Sandra Kruger	SKAA
53.	Sinah Mosehla	dtic
54.		
55.		