



## **National BioTrade Programmes**

National Biotrade Programmes promote trade and investment in products and services derived from a country's biodiversity. These programmes seek to strengthen institutional capacity to:

1. develop a general policy framework that is supportive to biotrade, and
2. provide concrete assistance to biotrade initiatives through support to value chains and provision of technical assistance to economic actors.

UNCTAD, through its BioTrade Initiative, provides assistance to developing country Governments in the formulation and implementation of National BioTrade Programmes. Such beneficiary countries need to be rich in biodiversity and its Governments should demonstrate clear interest in developing a national capacity to promote biotrade. They also need to be willing to take on the principles and criteria adopted by the BioTrade Initiative. Government interest needs to be officially expressed to UNCTAD.

## **Formulation of National BioTrade Programmes**

National BioTrade Programmes are defined through a formulation process that normally takes around twelve months to complete. A relevant organisation chosen by the Government, such as the Ministry of Environment, oversees the formulation process. UNCTAD provides technical assistance to this organisation. In some cases UNCTAD may be able to provide financial support, but always through extra-budgetary resources. This process includes the following steps:

<b>Pre-assessment</b>	An identification of the status of trade in products and services derived from biodiversity in a country. Including: an assessment of status of biodiversity in the country; an assessment of current trade flows of biodiversity products and services, opportunities and problems; prioritisation of products, services and intervention areas, an assessment of the legal framework relevant to biotrade; identification of relevant organisations active in this area.
<b>Programme formulation</b>	Design of the National BioTrade Programme, including structure, intervention areas and responsible organisations.
<b>Validation</b>	Discussion and revision of the assessment and programme proposal with experts and representatives of government and civil society, through meetings and workshops. The purpose is to complement information and establish a common understanding of the needs of beneficiaries and the proposed intervention strategy.
<b>Fund-raising</b>	Fund-raising from national sources and international donors to guarantee the implementation of the national programme.
<b>Creation of the programme</b>	Government officially establishes the National BioTrade Programme, for example through Ministerial decree.

## Organisation of National BioTrade Programmes

The structure of a national programme varies per country and is based on the national reality. The following elements are normally part of its management structure:

Advisory board	Provides general guidance to the national BioTrade programme. Participating organisations are expected to include aspects related to BioTrade in their on-going programmes and activities.
Executive committee	Composed of a small number of key institutions. Approves annual work-plans of the programme and holds regular meetings with the technical focal point/executing agency to monitor implementation (see below).
Policy focal point	Liaison between the executing agency and the Government. Responsible for promoting a national policy environment that enables biotrade. It normally presides the Advisory Board and the Executive Committee.
Technical focal point(s)/ Executing agency(ies)	One or more technical focal points may be used for programme implementation. A focal point is normally partly mixed or wholly private in character. It hosts the unit responsible for coordinating the implementation of the National BioTrade Programme. It administers funds and executes and coordinates the day-to-day implementation of the programme.
Partner organisations	Form part of a network of organisations that support the implementation of the national programme. They may receive funding from the Technical Focal Point to carry out activities that are foreseen in the national programme and are in line with their expertise.

### **Intervention areas of a National BioTrade Programme:**

National BioTrade Programmes address the issues and priorities identified in the formulation phase. Areas of intervention vary from country to country but typically include the following elements:

Enabling policy environment	A National BioTrade Programme provides inputs to relevant Government organisations for the formulation or revision of national policies, strategies and legal frameworks. It may also facilitate processes aimed at the above.
Strengthening of value chains	This concerns selection of priority products or sectors and the subsequent support to the strengthening of their value chains, through value chain analysis, assistance in the formulation of strategies, and support to the implementation of such strategies. The latter may include active facilitation of the execution of strategies and co-financing of priority activities.
Provision of technical assistance	Provision of technical assistance on priority issues. This may include issues like: incorporation of social and ecological issues in productive processes, the strengthening of technical and managerial capacity of SMEs, the provision of market information, trade promotion, access to finance.
Dissemination of information	Dissemination and generation of information to facilitate decision making of public and private sector, and to inform the general public of issues related biotrade.
Financing	BioTrade programmes promote access to finance for BioTrade initiatives. In some cases a special BioTrade investment fund is created within the context of the programme.

Above-mentioned interventions are implemented in an integrated way. They are carried out through a network of public and private sector institutions, according to their expertise and mandates. Activities are financed through budgets of partner organisations, the National BioTrade Programme, contributions by beneficiaries, or a combination thereof.

National BioTrade Programmes revise and adopt the biotrade principles and criteria developed by UNCTAD to guide their interventions. Over time, the objectives of the National BioTrade Programmes are expected to be embedded in work-programmes of relevant organisations and in national strategies. The latter may include national biodiversity and national development strategies.

The UNCTAD BioTrade Initiative gives general guidance to the National BioTrade Programmes, it supports the articulation of national actors when required, facilitates the exchange of experiences, and provides technical assistance. The latter may be provided through extra-budgetary funds especially earmarked to support country programmes, or through special programmes that are undertaken by UNCTAD in addressing thematic areas. UNCTAD often assists in fund-raising efforts of beneficiary governments for their national programmes. National BioTrade Programmes are financed through contributions of Government and beneficiaries, and external multi and bilateral donors. UNCTAD normally does not finance these programmes.