



Regional BioTrade Programmes

UNCTAD assists regional organisations in the formulation and implementation of programmes that promote biotrade. It distinguishes between Regional BioTrade Programmes and other regional programmes. This document describes what regional programmes are expected to accomplish, how they are organised and the role that UNCTAD may play.

Regional BioTrade Programmes

Regional BioTrade Programmes are programmes of Inter-governmental Organisations (IGOs) with a regional mandate. Such regional programmes typically develop regional strategies and policies in favour of biotrade, but may also provide concrete support to their implementation.

Regional programmes complement ongoing efforts of member countries and concentrate on those efforts that are more cost-effective or efficient to be carried out at the regional level than at the national level. Programmes are developed jointly with Governments and National BioTrade Programmes.

UNCTAD gives support to IGOs operating in regions that are rich in biodiversity. Their member states should have demonstrated clear interest in developing their national capacity to promote biotrade. They also need to be willing to take on the principles and criteria adopted by the BioTrade Initiative.

Formulation process

The formulation of a regional programme is overseen by the Secretariat of a regional IGO. The following steps are typically part of a formulation process:

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| Assessment | An assessment of needs, opportunities and priorities to identify which regional interventions are required with respect to trade and biodiversity. This assessment should be based on assessments of National BioTrade Programmes, when available, and other on-going endeavours. It should be conducted in cooperation with relevant actors, such as the National BioTrade Programmes (if existent). |
| Formulation of proposal | Design of the Regional BioTrade Programme, including structure, intervention areas and responsible organisations. |
| Validation | The assessment and proposal for a Regional BioTrade Programme are discussed and revised with representatives of Governments, and BioTrade National Programmes. Representatives of civil society should also be consulted. |
| Establishment | The IGO Secretariat submits the Regional BioTrade Programme for approval to its member states which will commit to its implementation. |

Organisation of a Regional BioTrade Programme

The structure of a Regional BioTrade Programme is decided upon on a case-to-case basis, but the following elements are normally part of its management structure:

Advisory group	An advisory group may be established to provide general guidance to the Secretariat of the IGO.
Coordination unit	A coordination unit is created within the IGO Secretariat or any other organisation designated by it. The nature of the coordination unit will depend on the activities foreseen in the programme. It is responsible for the development of work-plans, monitoring of their implementation and coordination of involved actors.
Governments	The Secretariat of the IGO reports on the progress of implementation to its member states according to the established reporting procedures of the Secretariat.
Partner organisations	A network of national, regional and international partner organisations may support the implementation of a regional programme. Support may consist of technical assistance, funding, and implementation of concrete activities.
Regional coordination meetings	Regional coordination meetings are organised by the IGOs Secretariat on a regular basis to coordinate activities of partners.

Implementation

Regional BioTrade Programmes address the issues and priorities identified in the formulation phase. Areas of intervention vary per programme but typically include the following elements:

Enabling policy environment	Facilitates the elaboration by the Secretariat of the IGO of regional policies and strategies to create an enabling environment for BioTrade in line with the strategic objectives of the programme.
Facilitation of implementation	Facilitate the implementation of regional policies and strategies through the creation of a regional platform for coordination and exchange of experiences and through the financing of activities that lead to the implementation of regional strategies and policies.
Implementation	Carry out specific activities foreseen in the regional policies and strategies of the programme.

Role of UNCTAD

UNCTAD, through its BioTrade Initiative, may provide general guidance to the formulation and implementation of Regional BioTrade Programmes and may provide technical assistance to the Secretariat and partner organisations when required. UNCTAD may also participate in a programme's Advisory Group and regional coordination meetings. In parallel, UNCTAD may provide assistance to National BioTrade programmes and to priority cross-cutting issue as described in annexes 2 and 5.

UNCTAD's assistance could be financed through:

- 1) funding from the Intergovernmental Agency and its donors;
- 2) through extra-budgetary funding obtained by UNCTAD, especially earmarked for this reason;
- 3) through special projects and programmes that are undertaken by UNCTAD to address cross-cutting issues relevant to the region.

UNCTAD may also assist in fund-raising efforts of regional intergovernmental agencies.