

Fourth Access and Benefit Sharing Workshop for Eastern and Southern Africa

Details of the Workshop

Dates: 17th to 22nd October 2011

Place: Makokola Retreat, Mangochi, Malawi

Organisers: Facilitated by the **Access and Benefit Sharing Capacity Development Initiative** and hosted by the **Environmental Affairs Department of Malawi**.

Background of the Workshop

This workshop was the first in the sub-region since the adoption of the Nagoya Protocol (NP) on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of the Benefits Arising from their Utilisation to the Convention in Biological Diversity (CBD) at the 10th Conference of the Parties to the CBD. In light of this development, African countries are now discussing and identifying relevant Access and Benefit Sharing strategies at national, sub-regional, and regional levels for a coherent and effective implementation of the NP. Finding the right, sometime delicate, balance between a rather protective approach and a market oriented approach is the key challenge for any successful ABS strategy. Such a policy choice will determine which capacities, institutions and infrastructures need to be developed and established.

The workshop brought together more than 50 enthusiastic participants from 19 Eastern and Southern African Countries who debated actively on the different policy choices for ABS national implementation as well as on potential coordination and harmonisation strategies at sub-regional and regional level. During the first four days of the workshop, participants exchanged views on the various implications of the NP for national policies and legislation and shared valuable experiences while identifying priority areas for action at the political, technical and administrative level. The case study of the *Strophanthus Kombe* and the benefit sharing mechanism developed by TreeCrops presented illustrated the complexity at times to discern a biotrade case from an ABS case while highlighting the main challenges faced at local level when working in a non-regulated environment.

The workshop ended with a two-day session exclusively focusing on practical approaches and methods of a strategic communication on ABS. During this time, participants were familiarised with several communication tools and good communication practices that they will be able to apply and adapt to promote ABS implementation in their respective countries.

The objectives of this workshop were as follows:

- Present and discuss the NP and its implications for national policies and legislation.
- Illustrate key challenges through a field visit to a national bio-prospecting case.
- Discuss policy choices for national implementation, including: protective versus market oriented approaches, governance and administrative structures, and

definition of rights (concerning ownership of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, prior informed consent and benefit sharing).

- Discuss coordination and harmonisation at the sub-regional and/or regional level.
- Identify capacity building needs and sources of funding.
- Analyse challenges building needs and sources of funding.
- Analyse challenges in the field of Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) in the context of Access and Benefit Sharing and develop practical approaches and tools for dialogue with different stakeholder groups.

Drawn on very constructive exchanges, group reflections and activities, the outcomes of the workshop were as follows:

- Elements for a roadmap for national implementation of the NP were identified and key challenges addressed.
- Key issues requiring regional coordination and harmonisation were identified.
- Capacity building needs at regional, national and local level were identified as well as potential sources of funding.
- Elements of a CEPA approach and tools for dialogue with different stakeholder groups were provided.

Follow the links below for:

- ❖ [Workshop Outline](#)
- ❖ [Workshop Programme](#)
- ❖ [Workshop Report and Outcomes](#)
- ❖ [List of Participants](#)