

Markets and Biotrade: Food exports requirements and barriers to export to China, Japan, EU and the US

Workshop Report
11-14 May 2010

MINCETUR and PROMPERU organized two workshops on “**Markets and biotrade: Food exports requirements and barriers to export to China, Japan, EU and the US**”, held in Lima on May 11 and 12, and Tarapoto, May 13 and 14, within the framework of the Project: “Capacity Building for Biotrade” (CBBT) in Namibia, Nepal and Peru, implemented by GTZ/UNEP-UNCTAD CBTF and Peru’s National Program for the Promotion of Biotrade.

Trade issues are at their peak in Peru, with several FTA signed (with the US, Canada, Singapore, China, Thailand and EU), in progress (with Korea and Japan), and others to be negotiated in the near future (India, Australia, Russia).

The promotion of biotrade is particularly relevant for Peru, a megadiverse country. The capacity of this sector has been recently strengthened with the creation of a Biotrade National Program with the support of UNCTAD Biotrade Initiative, a National Commission on Biotrade, integrating public and private institutions, as well as the implementation of several projects funded by GTZ, SECO, GEF and CAF.

For instance, natural products such as Tara Cochinilla, Brazilian nuts, Sacha inchi, Camu camu and Yacón, together accounted for more than US\$ 87 million in exports in 2009, mainly to US, EU and Japan markets. These products have a great potential for biotrade and constitute a unique opportunity for producers, communities, and small and medium enterprises.

However, issues related to biodiversity and food exports have proven particularly complex to negotiate and although FTAs aim to open access to international markets and provide more favourable conditions for trade, access to these markets is not enough. Experiences of MINCETUR, PROMPERU and GTZ’s projects in promoting food exports and supporting applications of novel foods from Peru, such as Sacha Inchi and Yacón, have shown that increasing awareness of regulations and barriers is urgent, as is strengthening capacity to fulfill the requirements for exporting natural products, to overcome trade barriers for novel foods, and to comply with the principles and criteria of biotrade. As a first step to raise awareness and strengthen capacity of enterprises and public officials, MINCETUR and PROMPERU organized these workshops.

The objectives of the workshops were to provide overall knowledge regarding requirements for exporting natural products with potential for biotrade, with emphasis on the novel foods regulations in the European Union, and other similar regulations for exporting to China, Japan and the US.

Participants included representatives from producer, export and trade enterprises, public sector representatives from trade, environment and other sectors, as well as interested public.

The two workshops covered the same topics and most speakers participated in both meetings.

The workshop in Lima was inaugurated by the Viceminister on Foreign Trade, who highlighted the importance of promoting the biotrade sector and improving the capacity of business to comply with biotrade principles and regulations for food exports to the most important markets, in order to reduce poverty and biodiversity degradation.

The General Coordinator of the UNEP-UNCTAD CBTF, Asad Naqvi, made a speech at the workshop in Lima regarding the project. He also highlighted the urgency to act now on

biodiversity conservation as its degradation generates significant economic losses for countries rich in biodiversity and the world in general, particularly in terms of the depletion of ecosystem services and water supply.

Among the other key speakers was Claudia Solano from Promperu, who participated in the Colloquium on Novel Food organised by EFSA, with the support of the CBBT Project. She explained the EU novel food regulations and emphasized perspectives for the future. Two experts from the Food and Drug Administration of the US, Ana Maria Osorio and Edmundo García, also made presentations at the workshops.

Both workshops were fully attended, with more than 120 participants in total. Presentations were well received and they can be downloaded from the website of the National Program for the Promotion of Biotrade: www.biocomercio Peru.org

Participants

Workshop in Lima

Number of participants: approx. 75 people

32 from the business sector

14 from NGOs, donors agencies, independent consultants, research institutions, and universities

28 from the public sector, such as the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism (MINCETUR), Promotion of Exports (PROMPERU), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Health.

Workshop in Tarapoto

Number of participants: approx. 68 people

19 from the public sector

19 from the private sector

30 from NGOs, donors agencies, research institutions and universities.