



Workshop

Advancing Private-Public Partnerships to mainstream Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use in Biodiversity Economy Voluntary Sustainability Standards

1. Introduction

Voluntary Sustainability Standards (VSS) are norms and standards that ensure products are harvested, produced, processed, or transported in accordance with certain sustainability metrics, such as environmental impact, human rights, labor standards, and gender equality. These standards play a crucial role in promoting sustainable practices and biodiversity conservation across global supply chains. Today close to 500 VSS exist, which applies to key exports of many countries such as coffee, tea, bananas, cocoa, palm oil, timber, cotton, spices and organic agri-foods.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes international trade as "an engine for inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction." With VSS increasingly being referenced in trade agreements to foster sustainable development and good governance, they can be an effective tool to incentivize governments and companies to adopt practices aligned with environmental, social, and economic objectives.

VSS can also play a vital role in biodiversity conservation, which is emerging as one of the most pressing global issues today. Effective mechanisms like VSS are essential to shift the impact of global economic drivers on nature toward sustainably managing and conserving biodiversity and its ecosystem services.

Recognizing the importance of VSS, one of the focus of UN Trade and Development's current [Global BioTrade Facilitation Programme](#) has been focusing on leveraging VSS and facilitating their adoption to promote sustainable trade flows of biodiversity-based products and services. Building on this foundation, UN Trade and Development is developing a new comprehensive trade and biodiversity programme that aims to implement components leveraging trade and trade-related measures, including VSS, as tools to conserve biodiversity while also generating sustainable livelihoods for local communities through practices and trade involving biodiversity-based products.

In South Africa, the biodiversity economy is a significant contributor to the country's economy and plays a crucial role in biodiversity conservation efforts. Aside from South Africa's leading efforts in conservation and sustainable use through policy and legislation, the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) has also been exploring the development of VSS mechanisms which aims to establish a public-private partnership model for effectively implementing sustainability standards across biodiversity value chains. The mechanism would serve as a national means for further promoting sustainable practices and aligning with existing voluntary standards.

2. Workshop details

The South African National Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment in partnership with the United Nations Trade and Development, and United Nations Development Programme, cordially invites to a workshop financed through the Swiss Economic Cooperation and Global Environment Facility, entitled:



**forestry, fisheries
& the environment**
Department:
Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
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Education and Research EAER
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO



**UN trade &
development** 

Advancing Private-Public Partnerships to mainstream Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use in Biodiversity Economy Voluntary Sustainability Standards

Date: 19-20 August 2024

Time: 09:00-16:00 (daily)

Venue: Hybrid workshop, Protea Hotel, Loftus, Pretoria, South Africa

3. Who should attend?

- Government officials in Conservation and Sustainable Use regulatory and non-regulatory (e.g. VSS) portfolios contributing to the biodiversity economy
- Industry Associations
- Small, medium and micro enterprises
- VSS owner and certification bodies

4. Communication of confirmation: participation and logistical needs

Kindly confirm your participation in the workshop to Mr Bandile Mkhwanazi
bandile.mkhwanazi@undp.org

5. Workshop Programme

Programme Director: Mr Stanley Tshitwamulomoni

Day 1: *VSS - Situational Analysis and Strategy*

Time: 09:00-16:00

1.	Opening session	
08:00-09:00	Registration & Networking	All
09:00-09:15	Opening, Introductions and Purpose of the Workshop	Programme Director
09:15-09:25	Welcome Remarks	Ms Flora Mokgohloa, DDG: Biodiversity and Conservation
09:25-09:35	Welcome Remarks	Ms. Luz Maria de la Mora, Director of Division on International Trade and Commodities Branch, UNCTAD
09:35-09:45	Welcome Remarks	Mr. Daniel Lauchenauer, Swiss Economic Cooperation
2.	Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Use (CSU) Frameworks Facilitator: Mr Bandile Mkhwanazi Rapporteur: Ms Marli Burger	



09:45-09:55	CSU obligations and initiatives - Convention on Biological / Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (video message)	Ms Bianca Lisboa Da Camara Brasil, Secretariat of the CBD Prof. Neil Crouch SANBI
09:55-10:15	- Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS): ABS for Conservation	
10:15-10:55	UNCTAD BioTrade Principles and Criteria (P&C) - Overview and findings of the VSS study - P&C application by Peru (PromPeru)	Ms Lika Sasaki UNCTAD Ms. Caridad Maldonado Adanaqué, Trade, Commission for the Promotion of Peruvian Exports and Tourism (PROMPERU)
10:55-11:15	Connecting international obligations and public policy with VSS (Virtual)	Mr Santiago Fernandez De Cordoba, UNCTAD/UNFSS All
11:15-11:30	Discussion	
11:30-11:45	TEA/COFFEE	
11:45-12:30	Open Discussion: Learnings from CSU in practice Facilitator: Mr Khuthadzo Mahamba	Biodiversity and Conservation, DFFE and other
12:30-13:15	LUNCH	
3.	Voluntary Sustainability Standards: Fauna and Flora Facilitator: Dr Wiseman Ndlovu Rapporteur: Ms Nonhlanhla Skosana	
13:15-13:30	BioFIN- investing in Voluntary Sustainability Standards	Ms Nokutula Mhene, UNDP
13:30-14:10	International VSS in the South African Biodiversity-based Sector Discussion	Ms Deborah Vorhies, Fairwild Foundation
14:10-14:40 15 min. each	National VSS initiatives a) Introduction to local initiatives b) Draft RSA CSU Biotrade Charter c) Wildlife Sustainability Standard and Certification Scheme	Ms Preshanthie Naicker, DFFE Ms Marthane Swart, KSA Consulting Ms Tseleng Mabunda, DFFE



14:40-15:00	Learnings from a Fauna and Flora VSS	Ms Christine Lippai, Wildlife Friendly Enterprise Network
15:00-15:55	Open Discussion: Potential for a landscape approach for SA - Highlight how enterprises in the fauna and flora economy operate Facilitator: Ms Marthane Swart	UNCTAD, Fairwild Foundation; Wildlife Friendly, SMMEs, Industry Associations and other
15:55-16:00	Close of Day 1	Programme Director

Day 2: *Advancing Partnerships for the implementation of VSS*

Time: 09:00-16:00

Programme Director: Mr Stanley Tshitwamulomoni

1.	Opening	
09:00-09:10	Opening and welcome	Programme Director
09:10-09:20	Expectations for day 2	All
2.	VSS in practice Facilitator: Ms Lika Sasaki Rapporteur: Ms Marli Burger	
09:20-09:40	How biodiversity initiatives can relate to other sustainability issues (e.g., deforestation; CSSD) (Virtual)	Mr. Paulo Mortara Baticic, UNCTAD
09:40-10:00	Learning from other Value Chains: Palm Oil (Virtual)	Dr. Herry Purnomo, Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR)/TradeHub
10:00-10:45	Open discussion: SA Business participation in International VSS Facilitator: Ms Marthane Swart	Industry and other
10:45-11:00	TEA/COFFEE	
3.	Partnerships for implementation Facilitator: Ms Renira Boodhraj Rapporteur: Mr Bandile Mkhwanazi	
11:00-13:00	Peer exchange: - Experience from Peru highlighting how their collaborative multistakeholder platform contributed to the growth of biodiversity-based goods and services exports.	Ms. Caridad Maldonado Adanaqué, Trade, Commission for the Promotion of Peruvian Exports



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experiences from the Andean region (rural Bolivia, Ecuador, and Colombia) – A comparative analysis of VSS understanding and implementation in these countries - Experiences from Latin America, Africa, and Asia regions - A comparative perspective on how different regions approach sustainability standards (Virtual) 	<p>and Tourism (PROMPERU)</p> <p>Mr. Rodrigo Ruperez Garcia Del Carrizo, Consultant</p> <p>Ms. Jayasurya Kalakkal, UNEP</p>
13:00-14:00	LUNCH	
14:00-15:00	<p>Open discussion: Partnership for localising VSS-CSU in South Africa</p> <p>Facilitator: Ms Marthane Swart & Ms Preshanthie Naicker</p>	<p>Facilitated with participants Biodiversity and Conservation, DFFE</p>
15:00-15:30	Reflections and way forward	<p>Programme Director All</p>
15:30-15:45	Closing Remarks	DFFE & UNCTAD
15:45	Closure	Programme Director

6. Workshop Output:

The workshop output will entail a report clearly outlining the opportunity for a consolidated biodiversity economy VSS (fauna and flora) with models for private-public partnerships for implementation.