

PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES INFORMATION SHEET

Name of the Partnership/Initiative	
Southern African Natural Products Trade Association (SANProTA)	
Date of initiation:	September 2001
Expected date of completion:	December 2005 (Phase 1)
Partners Involved:	
Governments:	Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe
Intergovernmental organizations:	International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)
Major groups:	Southern African NGOs, Southern African CBOs, Southern African private sector ¹
Others:	The Popular Coalition for the Eradication of Hunger and Poverty
<i>Leading Partner:</i>	SANProTA Executive Office
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Background and Rationale	
<p>For the majority living in the marginal rural areas of Southern Africa, the main sources of income remain rainfed arable and livestock production with low input/low output technology. Yet in areas of low and erratic rainfall the natural resource base has a limited capacity; and rapid population growth, coupled with possible adverse climate changes, has overloaded the ability of the agricultural sector to sustain rural livelihoods. The effects of HIV/AIDS on the active labour force have added to the difficulties facing farmers. The consequences are visible and serious: an increasing proportion of rural households unable to generate sufficient income for a decent standard of living; and accelerating environmental degradation from the destruction of fragile eco-systems and trees for farming and fuel.</p> <p>As a matter of urgency, the search is on for any sources of income that could supplement the inadequate earnings from farming. In this search, natural products (NPs – defined here as solely the tangible products and derivatives of flora) derived from communal resources offer one of the few realistic opportunities for poor remote rural households. At a local level, many NGOs in the region have, with donor support, recognised and investigated the potential of NPs, to promote both income generation for rural communities and the non-destructive use of the environment.</p> <p>In 2000, a broad range of NGOs in Southern Africa, led by SAFIRE, took the initiative to collaborate on a concentrated effort to develop trade in NPs accessible to impoverished communities across the region, comprising initially Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe</p> <p>Through the consultative process, which was supported by IFAD through an NGO Extended Cooperation Programme Grant, it was recognised that world demand for NPs is large and growing, and that there is a</p>	

need for a dedicated institution in the private sector both to promote NP development and trade, and to press for the necessary action at the macro level. The stakeholders committed themselves to the creation of the **Southern African Natural Products Trade Association (SANProTA)** on a professional and permanent basis, to support community-based trade in NPs. An Interim Steering Group was mandated to take all necessary steps to launch the new entity by September 2001. The first phase of SANProTA will come to a close in December 2005.

The rationale of IFAD's support to SANProTA relates to: (a) IFAD's target groups and their household food security strategies, specifically in remote and marginalised agro-ecological areas; (b) technologies that build on traditional knowledge systems, are gender-responsive, and enhance and diversify the productive potential of resource-poor farming systems by improving productivity and addressing production bottlenecks; (c) access to productive assets (land and water, financial services, labour and technology, including indigenous technology) and sustainable and productive management of such resources; (d) a policy framework that provides the rural poor with an incentive to reach higher levels of productivity, thereby reducing their dependence on transfers; and (e) an institutional framework within which formal and informal, public and private sector, local and national institutions provide services to the economically vulnerable, according to their comparative advantage. Within this framework, IFAD also intends to develop commodity-based approaches to rural poverty alleviation, specifically targeting those items that are produced and consumed by the rural poor. This is also an objective of SANProTA. Finally, the establishment of a consolidated network for knowledge-gathering and dissemination will enhance the Fund's capacity to establish long-term strategic linkages with its development partners and to multiply the effect of its agricultural research and training programme.

SANProTA is being established as a means to focus on the plight of marginal farmers in dry areas and on the imperative to build up multi-source rural livelihoods to reduce vulnerability to rain failure. With its focus on identifying and ensuring the effective exploitation of international markets for natural products, SANProTA will assist the most resource-poor households, who are the most dependent on the harvesting of such products, to increase their incomes. Furthermore, sustainable and productive management of the natural resources will be promoted by SANProTA through its engagement with community groups able to build up and maintain a business enterprise, who have every interest in conserving the resource base upon which their trade depend and would in many cases be assisted by NGOs to establish or strengthen sustainable management regimes. In addition, SANProTA is intended to be a permanent and effective regional institution with the capacity to invest directly for the benefit of rural producers.

Its location within the private sector, both owned and managed by its membership, distinguishes it from NGO-donor-supported initiatives of an earlier era. This departure from familiar modes of engagement for development interventions present IFAD and the international development community with an opportunity to support an important and timely experiment.

Main objectives of the Partnership/Initiative

Please provide a brief description:

SANProTA is a regional trade association, involving members from five countries in Southern Africa (Botswana, Malawi, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe). Its primary objective is to supplement the income of poor rural communities, particularly those living in marginal dryland areas, through the commercialization of a range of natural products, derived from sustainably managed, indigenous floristic resources.

SANProTA operates as a conventional trade association with a substantial set of additional functions as a development institution. It is a regional not-for-profit service provider, acting as a mechanism for community-based natural product producers and traders to generate business for themselves. It also provides an operational focus for development interventions on behalf of the sub-sector.

SANProTA does not itself engage in trade or in financing the business of members, but facilitates the trade of members and other community-based operators in the natural products sector.

SANProTA has been developed within the context of the WSSD, and will use the Summit as a platform to expand its membership, strengthen its financial resource base, and forge new and complementary partnerships with governments, inter-governmental agencies, the private sector and NGOs.

Please also provide a brief description of the relationship of the Partnership/Initiative with the objectives of Agenda 21 as well as relevant goals and objectives of the United Nation Millennium Declaration:

The primary contributions of SANProTA to the above are:

1. Increased income, food security and general welfare of poor rural people.
2. Alleviation of poverty in rural communities, particularly in marginal dryland areas, through the development of supplementary income sources derived from natural product-based enterprises
3. Biodiversity conservation through the promotion of sustainable use of biological resources
4. Combating desertification and drought through the diversification of rural livelihoods in marginal and drought-prone areas.

Expected results:

Please provide a brief description:

At the end of its first phase of operations, SANProTA is expected to have achieved the following results:

1. Successful commercialization of at least five natural products, produced at primary level by poor rural communities, and integrated into mainstream local, regional and international natural product markets
2. The creation of enduring and sustainable partnerships between a minimum of 225,000 rural producers and private sector buyers within and beyond the region
3. The generation of a minimum of US\$10 million per annum as direct income to poor rural producers in Southern Africa

Specific targets of the Partnership/Initiative and timeframe for their achievement:

The specific objectives of SANProTA are:

- to provide a platform for regional professional exchanges in natural product trade development, manifested by the sharing of information amongst members, sectoral stakeholders and other interested parties, and active contacts with governments and concerned international organisations;
- to research and develop existing and new natural products, achieved when the results of additional research and full-scale trials into natural products and related processes are made available to members; and
- to create and engage in markets for natural products from rural communities, leading to a sustained increase in community-based domestic and export natural product trade. These objectives pertain to SANProTA's current programme of activities, running from 1 January 2002 to 31 December 2005.

Coordination and Implementation mechanism

Please provide a brief description of expected coordination/implementation mechanism of the

Partnership/Initiative.

SANProTA is managed through an Executive Office, currently hosted by SAFIRE in Zimbabwe (SAFIRE is a regional NGO, and founding member of SANProTA). The Executive Office is directly accountable a Management Board, elected from amongst SANProTA's members, and this Board in turn reports to the full assembly of members.

Although SANProTA, as an Association, is directly responsible for the implementation of its own activities, its goals cannot be achieved solely as a result of these activities. The Association acts as a facilitating mechanism to enable its members to attain a common set of goals, both individually and collectively. Thus, while SANProTA supports the development of new natural products, and the penetration of new local and export markets for these products, the onus on actually stimulating and assisting rural communities to produce and market these products rests exclusively with its members.

Two mechanisms will facilitate this process. The first will be through the existence of national-level groupings of SANProTA members, who will collectively seek to overcome national-level obstacles to the successful commercialization of these products, and to develop national-level responses to issues requiring their attention (e.g. the development of national environmental and quality certification standards). The second will be through the creation of transnational Interest Groups of members, formed around specific products (e.g. the Baobab Oil Interest Group), and seeking together to address issues of common concern relating to that particular product (e.g. the identification of low cost, value-adding processing technologies).

Arrangements for funding

Please describe available and/or expected sources of funding for the implementation of the Partnership/Initiative (e.g. donor government(s); international organization(s)/financial institution(s); foundation(s); private sector; other major groups, etc.)

Out of a total budget of US\$3.33 million for 4 years, the current sources have already been identified:

IFAD Technical Assistance Grant:	US\$1.00 million
Members' contributions	US\$0.53 million

A further US\$1.80 million is being sought.

Note that:

- a) Notwithstanding the fact that full financing has yet to be attained for its initiative, SANProTA is already operational. Further funds will not be required until January 2003.
- b) SANProTA's contributions are expected to leverage an additional US\$0.5 – US\$1.00 million in private sector funding for natural product research, development and marketing.

Arrangements for capacity building and technology transfer

Please include information if the Partnership/Initiative provides for training, informational support, institutional strengthening and/or other capacity building measures:

Although SANProTA does not itself directly engage in capacity-building activities with rural communities, it does provide substantial support and assistance to its members, including the following:

- a) Training and capacity-building in the production, processing and marketing of natural products. This is achieved through regular exchanges amongst members, the facilitation of direct interaction between its members and international buyers in the natural products sector, and the provision of direct technical assistance to members on specific issues.

- b) Informational support, through the dissemination of technical and market information to its members relating to natural products. Using the mechanism of an internet-based information portal, available exclusively to members, SANProTA is able to bring up to date information on market opportunities, production and processing technologies, trade regulations and research and development findings pertaining to natural products.

Please also provide here a brief description of expected arrangements for technology transfer (if applicable).

- SANProTA is currently developing a pro-active research and development strategy, which will subsequently guide its activities in the field of natural product research and development. Through its research programme, it identifies natural product processing technologies suitable for use by its clientele. These technologies are then transferred through the mechanism of exchange visits, on-the-job training and internet-based information services.

Links of Partnership/Initiative with on-going sustainable development activities at the international and/or regional level (if any)

Please provide a brief description:

- In addition to being linked directly to a number of national level biodiversity conservation, poverty alleviation and trade promotion initiatives, SANProTA is also linked internationally to the UNCTAD BIOTRADE programme, and through this to a range of important partners, including the International Trade Centre, the Centre for the Promotion of Imports into Europe (CBI), and the Swiss Import Promotion organization (SIPPO).
- Links are also being established with the SADC Community Exchange and Training Programme (CETP), promoted by the Global Mechanism (GM) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and IFAD. Members of the RIOD NGO network implementing the CETP have contacted SanProta to investigate ways and means for collaboration and exchange. RIOD network would, for example, provide the members of SanProta with relevant knowledge and technical experience obtained under its small-scale capacity enhancing projects for poor rural communities living in fragile ecosystems, including knowledge in establishing contacts with overseas fair trade associations. Similarly, members of the RIOD NGO network would obtain membership in SanProta to benefit from the Association's services and expertise.

Monitoring Arrangements

Please describe expected arrangements for monitoring of progress in the implementation of Partnerships/Initiative after it will be launched at the WSSD:

(e.g. frequency/modalities of preparation of progress reports; electronic updates, news-letters, etc)

- SANProTA is subject to an annual review, facilitated by its financiers.
- Biennial financial and narrative progress reports are submitted to its members, partners and donors.
- SANProTA produces quarterly newsletters, in addition to providing regular electronic updates, and, through its regularly updated web-site, internet-based reports for the exclusive use of its members.

Other relevant information:

Web-site (if available): www.sanprota.com
www.ifad.org

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ⁱ List includes all NGOs associated and members of the SANPRoTA network (see: www.sanprota.com)