

Statement on Marula workshop

The potential of Marula and other indigenous plants to generate jobs and economic growth was highlighted at a regional workshop in Windhoek on 4 & 5 November 2019. More than 50 delegates from the southern African biotrade sector gathered to consult on a future potential sector development plan for Marula.

Participants from Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe included representatives of harvesters and primary producers, the development sector, government and its implementing agencies, and people involved in manufacture or trade in Marula products. The workshop was opened by Teofilus Nghitila, the Executive Director of Namibia's Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET). He said Marula had great ecological, economic and social significance in southern Africa, contributing to employment creation and income generation for rural households. Nghitila spoke of opportunities and challenges in the Marula sector, including development of value chains and regulatory frameworks to stimulate economic growth, and the need to ensure sustainability of the Marula resource.

Workshop delegates discussed the need for a coordinated and collaborative approach for the creation of a successful economic sector. They agreed that an emerging Marula sector must take account of ABS regulations, conservation and sustainable use, and indigenous knowledge. It needs to be aligned with national and local priorities and initiatives, and requires coordination and consultation with stakeholders. Reliable supply, quality standards and market access were identified by delegates as priority elements for a future sector development plan.

A full report on the workshop with recommendations and next steps is available [here](#).

The regional Marula workshop was hosted by the Namibian Ministry of Environment and Tourism. It was organised by the SECO-funded ABS Compliant Biotrade in South(ern) Africa (ABioSA) project with the South African Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF) as a main partner; and the GIZ-funded Biodiversity Management and Climate Change (BMCC) project.