

# REGIONAL BIOTRADE PROJECT SOUTHEAST ASIA

## PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE TRADE OF NATIVE BIODIVERSITY

### WHO WE ARE

The regional BioTrade project is financed by the Swiss Government and implemented by HELVETAS, a Swiss and German based, [international Non-Government Organization](#). HELVETAS works in 33 countries and supports rural and urban communities in their efforts to develop for a better life. HELVETAS promotes fair and sustainable access to essential resources and advocates for social, economic, political, environmental and cultural rights of disadvantaged people.

HELVETAS has a [wide range of experiences in promoting sustainable agricultural value chains](#) and a long working history in Southeast Asia. In Vietnam we are known for our work in rural economic development, in Laos we have a strong reputation for our work in organic agriculture and marketing and in Myanmar for our support in dry land agriculture and strengthening rural communities.

<https://laos.helvetas.org/en/> / [www.helvetas.org.vn/](http://www.helvetas.org.vn/) / [www.helvetas.org/myanmar](http://www.helvetas.org/myanmar)

### WHAT WE DO

The Regional BioTrade Project Southeast Asia [promotes sustainable trade of natural ingredients in Vietnam, Laos and Myanmar](#) to conserve biodiversity and develop livelihoods of rural populations.

Natural ingredients are processed products from plants, animals and microorganism collected or cultivated in the [wild or domesticated and produced in an ecological way](#), without the use of any petrochemicals. Natural ingredients are used in many ways in the pharmaceutical, cosmetic or food industries.

With a growing annual demand of 10-15% worldwide, natural ingredients represent a [huge business potential](#) - particularly on [international high-end markets](#), where customers are willing to pay a premium for sustainably produced and fairly traded goods.

This project aims at building sustainable business models by changing trade of raw materials and natural ingredients to preserve its resource base for future generations and to [increase capabilities and competitiveness of local producers, processors and exporters](#).

The project is focusing on [native plants](#) that can be [processed locally](#) to obtain natural ingredients with high value and export potential. This will increase value addition within Myanmar, Vietnam or Laos and generate jobs and incomes.

Companies following the BioTrade business model [build stronger partnerships within producers and secure safe and reliable raw material supply](#) to access new markets that offer higher prices for BioTrade products.

### HOW WE DO IT

We aim at [changing the way the natural ingredient sector works](#) in Laos, Myanmar and Vietnam. We start with identifying and selecting potential natural ingredient products. We then identify and assess producers and companies involved in trade and processing of selected natural ingredients and explore their interest in upgrading their operations towards BioTrade principles and standards.

The project teams will [analyse supply, processing and trade operations](#) for short falls and explore solutions and innovative ideas that bring positive change. [Together with producers, companies and traders](#), the project teams [will work out feasible measures](#), and facilitate access to know how needed to operate sustainable value chains effectively and efficiently.

PROJECT PERIOD: 2016 - 2020

#### What is BioTrade?

BioTrade refers to the collection, production, transformation, and commercialisation of goods and services derived from native biodiversity under the criteria of environmental, social and economic sustainability.

BioTrade was initiated by United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), to support the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

It follows 7 principles:

- Conservation of biodiversity
- Sustainable use of biodiversity
- Fair and equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of biodiversity
- Socio-economic sustainability (productive, financial and market management)
- Compliance with national and international regulations
- Respect for the rights of the actors involved in BioTrade activities
- Clarity about land tenure, use and access to natural resources and knowledge

[www.BioTrade.org](http://www.BioTrade.org)



HELVETAS

VIETNAM  
LAOS  
MYANMAR



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Economic Affairs,  
Education and Research EAER  
State Secretariat for Economic Affairs SECO