

Access and Benefit Sharing in Ethiopia: The practices and Challenges

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Introduction

- Prior to CBD, Genetic resources and associated community knowledge was considered a “Common Heritage of Mankind.”
- However, diverse products such as new plant varieties, pharmaceutical products, insecticides, etc. that were developed from those resources became private property and subject to intellectual property rights.

Introduction

- *CBD* recognizes the **sovereign rights of States** over their natural resources,
- and the authority to determine access to genetic resources rests with the **national governments and is subject to national legislation.**
- Success full access and benefit sharing depends on clear understanding of the measures in place.
- Ethiopia has developed transparent legal frame work for ABS.

Introduction

The laws Divide access permit into :

- Non-commercial access
- and access for commercial purposes

Non commercial access

- Most of the non-commercial access requests have come from post graduate students pursuing their MSc , PhD studies and post doctoral researches,
- Researchers working in Agricultural Research Organizations.
- So far 109,000 samples were delivered to different applicants

ABS practice in Ethiopia

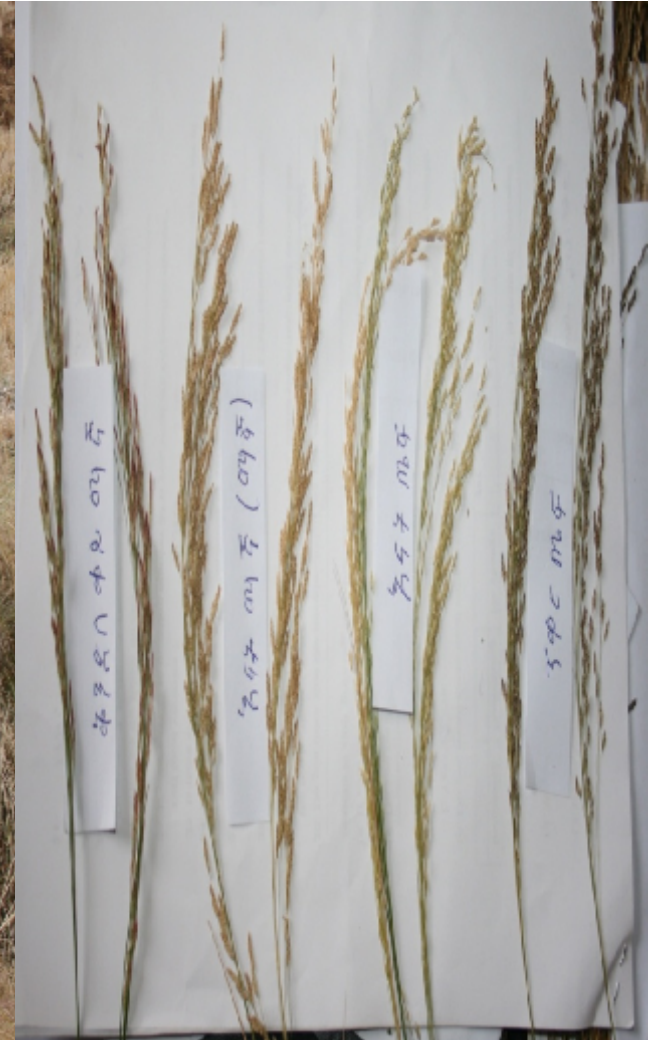
Access for Commercial purposes:

- Ethiopia had six agreements on Access for Commercial purposes (access and benefit sharing). Agreement on:
- Teff (*Eragrostis tef*)
- Vernonia (*Vernonia galamensis*)

ABS practice in Ethiopia

- Aloe species
- *Withania somnifera*,
- *Osyris species* and
- *Dichrostachys cinera*:-

1. Agreement on Teff (Eragrostis tef)



Agreement on Teff (Eragrotis tef)..

- ABS agreement on teff was signed on 05 April 2005 between Ethiopia and Dutch Company for a duration of 10 years.
- Although legal processes for accessing teff was concluded more or less successfully,
- the benefit sharing component has never been implemented as in the agreement.

2. *V. galamensis*

- ABS agreement for *V. galamensis* was signed between Ethiopia and Vernique Biotech Ltd on 3 July 2006.
- Benefit sharing agreement was both in monetary and nonmonetary forms



V. galamensis

- Termination notice of agreement was written by Vernique Biotech on 22 June 2009
- The company said it had been unable to create any saleable products using Vernonia oil, incurred losses in excess of 420,000 pounds, no trading income.

ABS Agreement on Aloe Species:-

- On 3 December 2009 access to Aloe genetic resources was signed between Ethiopia(IBC)and the G Seven trade and Industry PLC Company.
- The Provider (IBC) agreed that the company could access and use three species of Aloe for extracting naturally existing oils in order to replace the batching oil which the company has been importing from abroad.



- The benefits agreed upon were non-monetary:
 - involvement of staff in the research carried and sharing of the result of research,
 - training of community

ABS Agreement on *Withania somnifera*, *Osyris species* and *Dichrostachys cinera*:-

Recently, 6 July 2012 DOCOMO Plc has signed access and benefit sharing agreement with Ethiopia (IBC):

Dichrostachys cinera



Osyris species



Withania somnifera,



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ABS agreement on *Withania somnifera*, *Osyris species* and *Dichrostachys cinera*:-

- The purpose is to process various herbal, cosmetics and medicinal products from these genetic resources.
- The company agreed to share both monetary and non-monetary benefits that arise out of the utilization of the genetic resources.

Challenges associated with implementation of ABS agreements in Ethiopia

- In General the challenges can be summarized as:
- **1/Limited capacity and lack of effective enforcement**
- **2/Lack of compliance**
- **3/ information gap and lack of follow up mechanisms for ABS agreement**

Some Measures taken

Some measures taken to Facilitate access to genetic resources and ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits resulting from their use:-

- Genetic Resources Transfer and Regulation Directorate is established for ABS implementation.
- Guidelines, code of conducts, booklets, brochures developed for users of Genetic resources
- awareness raising and capacity building of stakeholders is conducted,
- researches related to ABS, such as on Bioprospecting, bio-piracy and traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources are taking place

Ratification of Nagoya Protocol

- One of the remarkable developments in the international and National legal frame work in relation to ABS is adoption of the Nagoya Protocol on 29 October 2010.
- Ethiopia has Ratified the Protocol on June 2012 (CBD press release 20 Nov 2012)
- This provides a strong basis for greater legal certainty and transparency for both providers and users of genetic resources.

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THANK YOU!