



Millennium Account Supports Indigenous Natural Product Initiatives through PhytoTrade Africa

The Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) and the Ministry of Agriculture, under its Indigenous Natural Products Innovation Fund (INP), recently awarded a grant of N\$2 387 500 million to PhytoTrade Africa for the Optimal Oil Processing Technology and Competitiveness project. PhytoTrade was also given another grant of N\$2 424 469 for a project on marula fruit chemistry to further develop innovative commercial opportunities.

Dave Cole of the MCA in Namibia said "the primary aim of the INP fund is to ensure continued growth in the natural products sector". He went on to explain that this would be done through investing in new product applications and processing innovations for indigenous natural products in Namibia.

Head of Research at PhytoTrade Africa, Cyril Lombard, said "it's a great development for our members and partners in Namibia. With the grant we will be implementing a whole range of marula fruit commercialisation activities – from fruit collection, processing, chemical evaluation, and training through to business planning."

Dr Marianna Smith, head of certification and quality assurance at PhytoTrade said "The supply of improved quality and cost effective indigenous ingredients for local, regional and international markets to the cosmetic and food industry will assist PhytoTrade Africa to meet their objective of alleviating poverty in rural areas. Quality and traceability of ingredients are non-negotiable cornerstones of building confidence with markets".

John Cheesmond, CEO of PhytoTrade said "We are delighted to receive this support from the MCA. PhytoTrade is committed to poverty alleviation through trade and use of appropriate technologies which enable environmental sustainability. PhytoTrade has been supported by leading funders such as IFAD, Comic Relief, Ford Foundation, Hivos, and the IFC. We are delighted to add MCA to this illustrious list and very pleased that this will allow us to increase our chemistry and technology understanding."

For more information contact: lucy@phytotradeafrica.com