

International Standard for Sustainable Wild Collection of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (ISSC-MAP)

Minutes of the 2nd Expert Workshop on the Isle of Vilm

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STEERING GROUP
for the development of an
International Standard
for the Sustainable Wild Collection
of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants



TRAFFIC
the wildlife trade monitoring network

IUCN
The World Conservation Union



MEDICINAL
PLANT
SPECIALIST
GROUP

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Introduction/Background

An estimated 40,000 to 50,000 plant species are used in traditional and modern medicine systems throughout the world. While some medicinal and aromatic plant (MAP) species, in particular those with high volumes in demand from national and international markets, are currently sourced from cultivation, the majority of MAP species used in medicine is still – and will most likely be over the long term – provided by collection from the wild.

A considerable portion of the world's MAP species and populations are threatened due to over-harvesting, land conversion and habitat loss. Approaches to sustainable MAP wild collection that engage local, regional, and international collection enterprises and markets are urgently needed to provide specific guidance for industry, collectors, and other stakeholders on sustainable sourcing practices.

The German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) has provided start-up funding for the development of an *International Standard for Sustainable Wild Collection of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (ISSC-MAP)*. The project is implemented by the Medicinal Plant Specialist Group (MPSG) through IUCN-Canada, and by WWF and TRAFFIC. This standard will bridge the gap between existing broad conservation guidelines, and management plans developed for specific local conditions.

Stakeholders involved in wild collection of MAP require clear principles, criteria, indicators and verifiers that will enable them to assess and monitor the sustainability of wild resources and collection practices. ISSC-MAP addresses social and economic factors, but focuses on ecological aspects that are often neglected: resource assessments and sustainable yields.

An international advisory group has been established bringing together the medicinal plant / herbal products industry, small-scale collection enterprises, non-government organizations, conservation and certification organizations and others. The 1st expert workshop on the Isle of Vilm, Germany, in December 2004, provided a discussion forum for the members of the advisory group on process related issues, the first draft of the standard and the testing phase of the draft standard in field projects.

The second draft of the ISSC-MAP was circulated for discussion with the Advisory Group in April 2005. Field consultations of this version were conducted at five sites during the second half of 2005 to complement the theoretical discussion and test the relevance and practicability of the ISSC-MAP. Their results were presented and discussed at the 2nd expert workshop on the Isle of Vilm, conclusions drawn for the third draft, and strategies for the future implementation examined.

The present document summarises the results of the 2nd expert workshop.

1. Overview

1.1 Objectives of the workshop

The main objectives of the 2nd expert workshop on the development of an ‘International Standard for Sustainable Wild Collection of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (ISSC-MAP)’ were to discuss:

- the general results of the field consultation
- crucial points raised during field consultations and/or during the 2nd consultation round of the draft standard in May 2005
- resulting consequences for the revision and further development of the draft ISSC-MAP

1.2 Participants

The participants in the 2nd expert workshop were specialists involved in the field tests as well as members of the interdisciplinary Advisory Group (list of participants, see Annex 3.2):

- Certifiers
- Companies and business associations
- Donors
- Governmental authorities
- Intergovernmental organizations (IGOs)
- Non-government organisations (NGOs)
- Practitioners
- Scientists
- UN organisations

1.3 Expectations of participants

The following expectations concerning the workshop and the ISSC-MAP process were expressed and sorted according to general working areas at the beginning of the meeting:

Table 1: Expected outcomes of the workshop

Strategies/ models	Process	Promotion/ buy-in	Approach	Structure
Agree on strategies and models for implementation			Understand issues influencing the applicability of ISSC-MAP	
Strategy to include private sector and developing country views and needs			Multi-functionality of standard	How structure can help implementation
Strategic targets for implementation	Governance: Who must be involved?		Broadening concept of standard/rename?	Simplification of standard
Link market to standard 1:Implementation 2:Users of standard	Strong support from participants for process and implementation	Clarify target audience(s) Goal to customize text of standards according to level of trade		
(Drafting the way to) A practical standard to use in different kinds of projects	Assessment of risks and feasibilities of ISSC-MAP and identification of further research needs	Main points for presentations on the ISSC-MAP in 2006	Develop a standard that works widely (instead of only in wealthy, low diversity countries where all trains run on time)	User-friendly graphic presentation and design
Better ideas of potential implementation strategies	Clarity on the role of and way forward of ISSC-MAP	To see if consolidation is possible		
Develop protocols for resource harvesters' knowledge on wise use				
Contribution to value chain management				

2. Results

2.1 Lessons learnt from field consultations

Results of five field consultations from different geographical regions, representing different socio-economic backgrounds, were presented. These were:

1. Company *Anđelić d.o.o.*, Bosnia-Herzegovina
2. Non-profit *Iracambi Medicinal Plants* project (IMP), now *Medicina da Mata*, Brazil
3. State-owned area of *Wanglang* National Nature Reserve & *Baima* State Forest, China
4. Community-based agro-artesanal producers' association (*AAPPSME*), Ecuador
5. Non-profit *Sustainably Harvested Devil's Claw* (SHDC) project, Namibia

Presentations included:

- a general description of the field project or region
- details of the used consultation methods
- experiences (barriers, benefits, etc.) in relation to the potential implementation of ISSC-MAP
- potential implementation scenarios
- final conclusions

In the run-up to the workshop participants were provided with a compilation consisting of

- a) all five projects' features, evaluation results, and lessons learnt.
- b) main comments received in the 2nd consultation round on ISSC-MAP during May 2005 (complete document provided in Annex 3.6)

Crucial points from this compilation and from the field project presentations were discussed with a focus on scenarios for the future implementation of the ISSC-MAP drawing upon lessons learned from the field consultations.

Barriers – Solutions – Benefits – Scenarios

2.1.1 Implementation barriers

Figure 1 summarizes identified implementation barriers with respect to the spheres 'People & Politics' (social dimension), 'Plant' (environment) and 'Product' (economy):

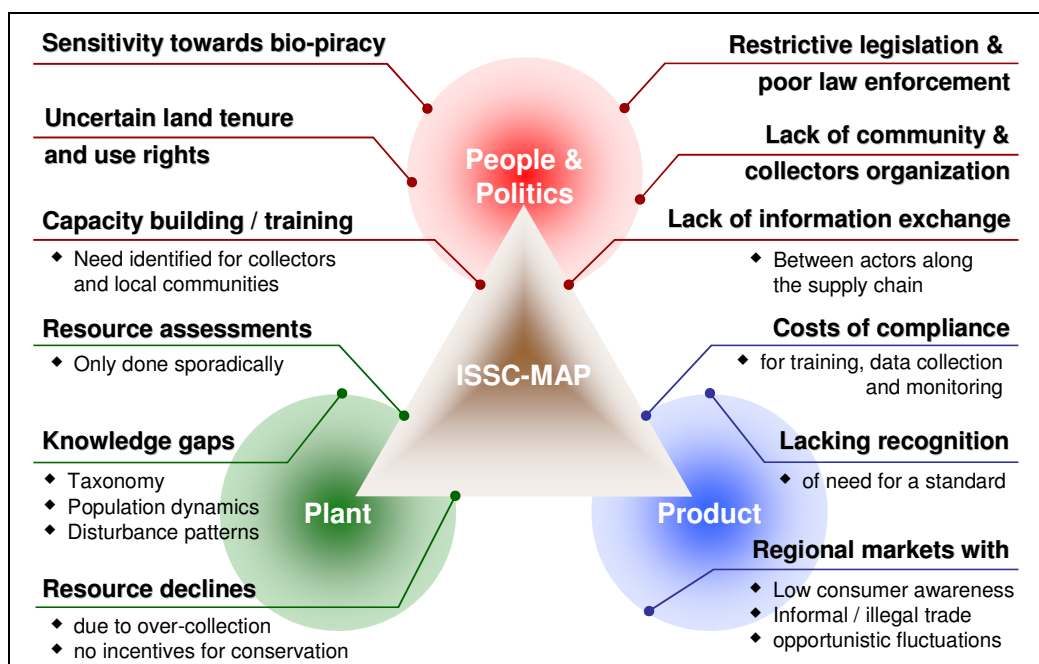


Figure 1: Barriers to implementing ISSC-MAP identified by field consultations and workshop discussions

2.1.2 Implementation solutions

Solutions were derived from identified limitations of draft 2 of the ISSC-MAP with respect to the process of development, the general approach, the structure and format, requirements for implementation, and general gaps:

Table 2: Implementation solutions

Process – Development & Implementation	General approach	Structure and format	Requirements for implementation	Ways to fill gaps
Governance system needs to create buy-in from different stakeholders of the initiative	Localization: – need for an international and local dimension /adaptation – Focus on adaptation of local knowledge and harvest practices to commercial market	Simpler, less technical language (easy to translate)	Need to be clear about what standard is for, design for purpose	Analyse market uptake/demand for sustainable wild collection
Field testing essential to process	Minimum requirements with maximum functions	Structure divided into thematic areas	Need a support system for collectors (incentives/benefits)	Analyse costs and benefits
Learn lessons from FSC with respect to small scale producers and developing countries	Consider standard as guidance document or as standard for development of management plan	Regrouping components, esp. principle 5: include 4-8	Production risks need to be taken into account (contamination, infection)	Standard needs to be sensitive to economic/market factors, e.g. opportunistic fluctuations
Find industry champions – socially responsible business	Explore alternatives to certification	Return to division into economic, ecological, social. Reflect this in graphic structure	Appropriate local mechanisms to deal with implementation w/o external assistance	Strengthen attention to secondary impacts, e.g. collectors hunting
“Audit” and “Assessment” through relaxed story telling	Do not mix auditing with technical assistance	Book marking system to increase user friendliness (colours!)	Clear which indicators must be fulfilled (minimum requirements)	Analyse relation between ISSC-MAP requirements and legislation on country level
Increase community role and include local knowledge	Define and focus on target users	Arithmetic definition of adherence to standard	Clarity on whether verifiers are optional or compulsory depending on particular project	Take large scale external factors into account, e.g. climate change
	Provide more guidance	Rephrase the standard to questions	Guide of what factors are important to consider	
	Incorporate an adaptive management approach	Condense to the most relevant components	Avoid competition with existing standards (e.g. organic) and duplication of costs	
	Address use by different levels of supply chain			

2.1.3 Implementation benefits

In Figure 2 potential benefits that an implemented ISSC-MAP could provide are grouped according to the three spheres ‘People & Politics’, ‘Plant’ and ‘Product’:

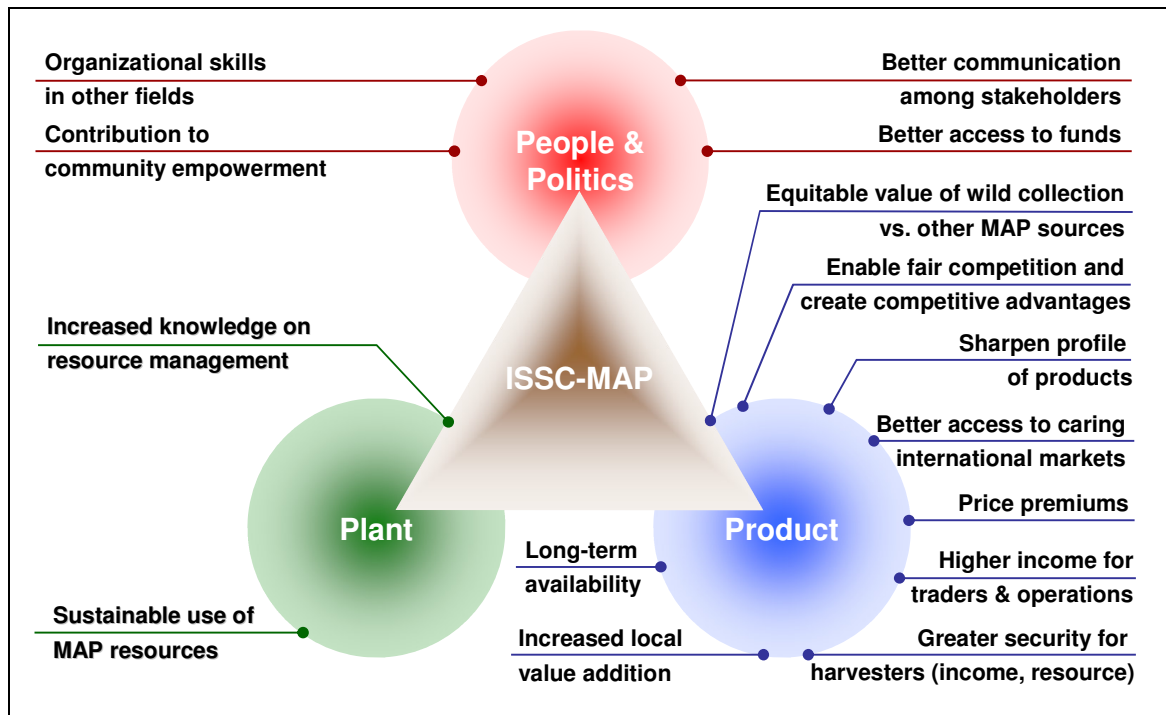


Figure 2: Potential benefits of an implemented ISSC-MAP identified by field consultations and workshop discussions

2.1.4 Implementation scenarios

A wide range of implementation scenarios was identified in the field consultations and discussions:

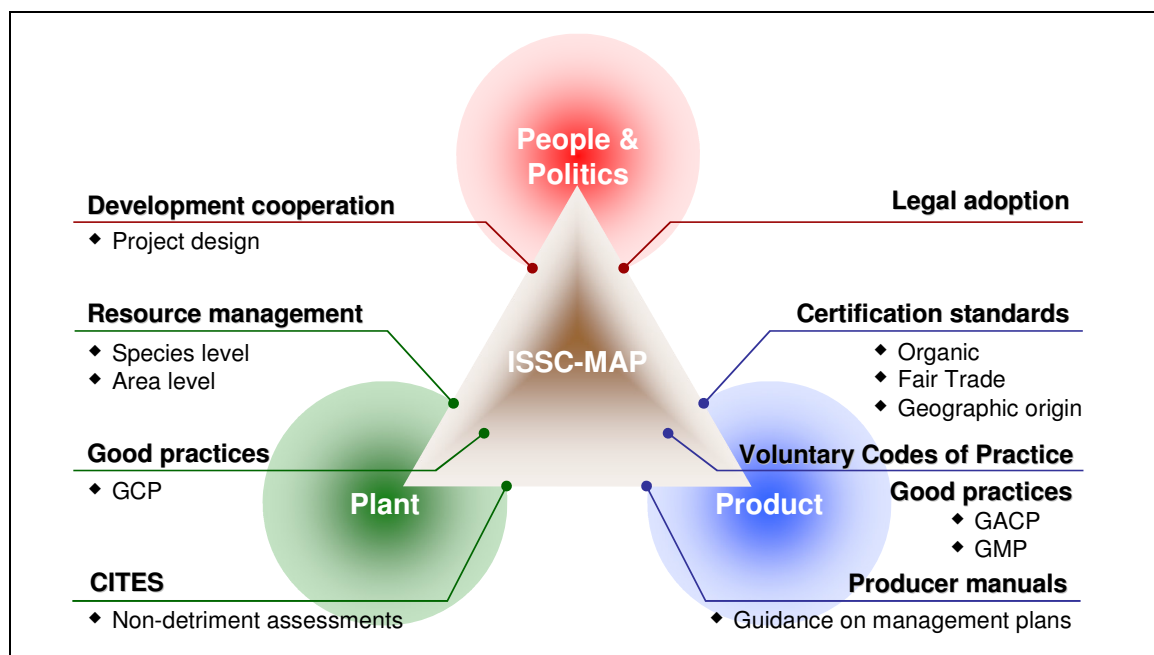


Figure 3: Implementation scenarios for ISSC-MAP identified by field consultations and workshop discussions

2.2 Working groups: Discussion of the ISSC-MAP document (Draft 2, April 2005)

Several working group options were presented and discussed, principally

- (a) each working group providing advice on identified key issues (e.g. governance, document structure, etc.) that should be addressed in order to facilitate the future implementation of ISSC-MAP, or
- (b) each working group discussing and revising a section of the draft 2 standard, based on the field experiences, workshop discussions, and additional comments received from the broader advisory group.

The group selected option (b) and split into four working groups, each of which worked on one of the four sections of the standard. Each working group was asked to consider, where relevant, three different approaches to resource management identified in the field consultations and workshop discussions (area management, species management, and plant collection) and to review each standard component in terms of its feasibility with respect to these resource management approaches. While the working groups found it difficult and time-consuming to consider these approaches in a consistent manner, the results contributed to a summary of relationships between resource management approaches, target users, and relevant instruments and mechanisms for implementing the ISSC-MAP that may be applied to the further revision of the standard:

Table 3: Resource management levels and related instruments and target users

Resource management	Target users	Instrument	Mechanism
Area management	Government authorities	Regulation	Legal
Species management	Traders	Verification	Market
	Resource managers		
[Plant] Collection	Collectors	Capacity building	Guidance

The working groups were instructed to limit their review to the level of criteria, indicators, and verifiers, i.e. not to consider any changes to the mission and objectives of the standard nor to the level of principles.

Most of the working groups agreed to significantly reduce the overall number of indicators (altogether from 66 to 48), either by merging overlapping components or deleting those considered redundant or irrelevant to the focus of the standard. It was further recommended to specify both requirements for resource assessments as well as for the management plan in an annex, enabling the relevant principles (4 and 5) to be considerably reduced in size and complexity. Finally, it was proposed to revise the standard to better integrate an adaptive management approach and include landscape management aspects with respect to collection practices, although specific revisions were not proposed by the working groups.

Annex 3.4 shows the adapted standard requirements with all recommendations of the working groups realized. A summary of the working groups' outcomes together with a standard version showing the actual changes to the wording (modifications, insertions, deletions) is made available in Annex 3.5.

2.3 Final general discussion

The participants identified a number of main issues to be addressed in the final general discussion:

- Mandate beyond the workshop
- Minimum requirements for the ISSC-MAP
- Overall structure of ISSC-MAP and balance of components
- Implementation scenarios
 - Possible and potential partnerships
 - Consultation and consolidation with other processes
- Multifunctional approach

Mandate beyond the workshop

The question was raised how the recommendations of the working groups were to be taken into account for the revision of the current draft of ISSC-MAP. It was agreed by the group to

- (a) have an editorial group that decides on the required changes for the coming 3rd draft;
- (b) look at the coming draft still as ‘working draft’ or ‘provisional standard’ to be open to further adaptation;
- (c) seek participation of a wider range of important stakeholders in the process of further adaptation

Minimum requirements

In the discussion it became clear that participants had a range of different understandings of the idea/term ‘minimum requirements’. It was proposed to develop a definition of minimum requirements that will allow conclusions whether and in what context they would be helpful or needed.

Minimum requirements were seen to be dependent on the user / target audience and on the chosen implementation mechanism. Two options to apply the idea of minimum requirements to the standard were addressed:

- (a) a checklist identifying the absolutely essential criteria/indicators/verifiers for the standard to be meaningful to sustainable wild collection of MAPs, but keeping some of the other components that are more situation-specific, or
- (b) a reduced standard, including only the absolute relevant-to-every-situation set of components.

Overall structure of the ISSC-MAP document and balance of components

Overall structure and balance between components resulting from the revisions proposed by the working groups were seen to be problematic since some sections had been greatly reduced in comparison to others, especially those sections regarded by most participants as the central components of the standard: resource assessment, management plan, and collection practices. Several participants proposed and it was agreed to mandate the Editorial Group to consider the question of balance in the revised draft standard.

Further views on this issue were

- (a) to simplify and shorten the standard by references to other working documents, such as “standard operating procedures”;
- (b) not to give the management plan the highest priority in order not to lose sight of the actual hot issues, such as maintenance of livelihoods and protection of endangered species.

Implementation scenarios

The discussion concentrated at first on potential user groups and how to classify them, revisiting the list of user groups elaborated by members of the advisory group during the 1st Vilm workshop in December 2004. A simple differentiation was proposed by discriminating primary and secondary users of the standard:

Table 4: Primary and secondary users of ISSC-MAP

Primary users	Primary / Secondary users	Secondary users
Actively managing the resource and implementing the standard		Asking for implementation or providing input / service to achieve implementation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harvesters • Resource or area managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extraction companies • Importers / Exporters in the country of origin • Wholesale distribution companies / Distributors of ingredients • Governments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NGOs • Research institutions

In the further discussion concrete projects and organisations/institutions serving as opportunities for ISSC-MAP implementation were identified:

- Boswelia (Africa , middle East)
- China:
 - Eu Yan Sang International (PTY) Ltd.
 - Modernization of Traditional Chinese Medicine
- EU Regulation – Soil Association initiative to raise organic standards regarding sustainability criteria
- FRLHT – Field conservation
- IMO projects with certified organic wild collection (about 40)
- MdaM, Iracambi, Brazil – ongoing project
- National Institute of Medical Herbalists (NIMH), UK
- PFD
- UNCTAD Biotrade – Harmonization with work programme
- USAID
 - Bosnia-Herzegovina (companies)
 - Morocco

Potential partners (It was remarked not to look only at those stakeholders that we assume or know are ‘willing’ partners, and also to particularly look at the main source countries: India and China):

- AHPA (America Herbal Products Association, USA)
- CBI (Dutch Centre for the Promotion of Imports from Developing Countries)
- DFID (Department for International Development, UK)
- Gtz (Gesellschaft für technische Zusammenarbeit, Germany)
- ICARDA (International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas)
- India
- OXFAM / NOVIB
- SIPPO (Swiss Import Promotion Programme, Switzerland)
- UNCTAD Biotrade
- WWF China

Consultation and consolidation with other processes:

- Address EU companies

- Address US companies
- Address Organic partners, UK
- Contact key persons involved in Golden seal / Black cohosh collection (harvesting season fall 2006, US)
- Discuss key issues during IFOAM conference on Organic Wild Collection and related side event on implementation of ISSC-MAP (May 2006, Bosnia-Herzegovina)

Multifunctional approach

Danna Leaman presented an example of a multifunctional document from Canada, which constitutes basically a user manual working as a decision key: The user would have to answer a set of questions – identify who you are, what situation applies to you, what is the context in which you would want to use it (e.g. organic certification, collection within a protected area, etc.) – and is thereby guided to those provisions that are really relevant to his situation.

2.4 Proposed timeline for the further ISSC-MAP development process

2.4.1 Standard document

- | | |
|--|------------|
| ▪ Workshop minutes (with draft documents) | JAN 06 |
| ▪ Comment minutes from workshop participants | JAN 06 |
| ▪ Editorial Group to meet & make changes | FEB 06 |
| ▪ Send out working draft to Advisory Group | FEB 06 |
| ▪ Comments from Advisory Group | MAR 06 |
| ▪ Distribution of Working Draft / Provisional Standard | MAR/APR 06 |
| ▪ Implementation and adaptive revision | >>>> |

2.4.2 Implementation strategy

A strategy for potential implementation scenarios of the ISSC-MAP will be distributed for discussion within the first four months of 2006. Opportunities to link the ISSC-MAP to a number of existing relevant standards and processes (e.g. organic and other product/production quality certification standards, industry codes of ethical practice, resource use/access permit systems, CITES non-detriment findings) and their feasibility for ISSC-MAP will be analysed. ISSC-MAP implementation models shall be discussed and planned with the relevant partners.

A workshop on potential implementation strategies for the ISSC-MAP will take place in Teslic, BiH from 05-06 May 2006. Potential implementation strategies will be analysed concerning their applicability in the MAP sector of South-Eastern Europe, which is an important MAP source region, especially for Western European countries. This meeting is a side event to the 1st IFOAM Conference on Organic Wild Production, scheduled for 03-04 May at the same location. (For further information see http://www.ifoam.org/events/ifoam_conferences/program.html).