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THE UNION FOR ETHICAL BIOTRADE ADDRESSES MEMBER REFERENCE IN BIOPIRACY CLAIM

A recent briefing paper by a non-governmental organization, African Centre for Biosafety, lists several instances of suspected biopiracy. One of the cases mentioned involves Serdex, a division of Bayer Santé Familiale and a member of the Union for Ethical BioTrade.

The claim against Serdex is based on a patent application for certain uses of a Madagascan plant extract. The paper notes its findings are based on a "short research study" and that further investigation is needed to determine whether biopiracy has conclusively occurred. The Union for Ethical BioTrade was not contacted during the preparation of the paper or in advance of its release.

As a member of the Union for Ethical BioTrade, Serdex has committed to establishing all the systems needed in its own operations, as well as those of its suppliers, to implement the Ethical BioTrade Principles and Criteria as defined in the [Ethical BioTrade Verification Framework](#). The Ethical BioTrade Verification Framework necessitates compliance with the rules and principles of the Convention on Biological Diversity, in addition to a wide range of other social and environmental requirements.

As is the case with all members of the Union for Ethical BioTrade, Serdex complies with the minimum requirements of the Ethical BioTrade Verification Framework, which includes maintaining natural habitats and taking measures to respect human rights and other issues related to the use of biodiversity and traditional knowledge. An independent third party audit conducted by SGS Qualifor South Africa prior to Serdex becoming a member, showed the company already meets these minimum requirements as well as an important number of other criteria of the Ethical BioTrade Verification Framework.

As part of its membership obligations, Serdex has made a strong commitment to achieve full compliance with the Ethical BioTrade Verification Framework over the next five years. In order to advance its progressive implementation of this framework, Serdex has developed a work plan, which includes measures on access and benefit sharing and traditional knowledge. Like all of the members of the Union for Ethical BioTrade, Serdex will present annual reports on its progress, which will be periodically assessed by independent auditors. Through providing technical advice, including on issues related to intellectual property rights, the Union for Ethical BioTrade is supporting Serdex in the fulfillment of its work plan.

Summaries of both the Serdex work plan and audit report, as well as those of all Union for Ethical BioTrade members, are publicly available. Please [click here](#) if you wish to obtain copies of these reports.

In line with [ISEAL](#) requirements, to which the Union is a full member, the Union for Ethical BioTrade has an appeal mechanism that can be used to question decisions on verification or membership. Any person that deems a member of the Union for Ethical BioTrade is in breach of its commitments to the Union may file a formal complaint. The appeal procedures are likewise [available to the public](#).

More information on the Union for Ethical BioTrade's work on access and benefit sharing is available on our website.

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The Union for Ethical BioTrade is a non-profit association that promotes the 'Sourcing with Respect' of ingredients that come from native biodiversity. Members commit to gradually ensuring that their sourcing practices promote the conservation of biodiversity, respect traditional knowledge, and assure the equitable sharing of benefits all along the supply chain.