



African Union–European Union Workshop “Creating Value through Geographical Labeling and Indications: The Power of Origin”

10–11 November, 2011
Imperial Royale

Opening Remarks by
Hon. Amelia Kyambadde
Minister of Trade, Industry and
Cooperatives

- ▶ I am privileged to have been invited to officiate at the opening of this workshop. Let me use this opportunity to thank the African Union, European Union and Trade.Com for having chosen Uganda as a venue for this important workshop.
 - ▶ On behalf of the Government of Uganda, I would like to welcome you all to Uganda, especially, those who are here for the first time, and request that you take time off your busy schedule to visit some of the great tourist attractions that Uganda has to offer.
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- ▶ The theme of this Workshop is “*Creating value through Geographical labeling and Indications; the Power of Origin*” This is a very important topic and provides us with an opportunity to explore alternative ways of adding value our products especially agricultural export products.
- ▶ For quite along time, we have depended heavily on export of commodities such as coffee, cotton, tobacco, whose prices keep on fluctuating, yet the same commodities can fetch higher prices because of their unique characteristics, however this information is known to very few people, we therefore, need to identify those unique products or varieties of agricultural products, which can be promoted as distinctive products and exported at premium prices

- ▶ Let me sight one example of Uganda's major export product, coffee. This product is produced in the central, western and eastern region. These regions have different soils, temperatures and rainfall, and therefore the flavors of the coffee produced are different.
 - ▶ There is one company that has succeeded in branding coffee from Bundibugyo, in the western region and it is now being sold under the "Good African Coffee" brand
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Coffee beans



Dry Coffee



Roasted coffee



Cup of Coffee



- ▶ Other products that have shown potential are handcrafts such as backcloth products, basket ware due to the designs and materials, shea butter due to its oil content and vanilla due to its vanillin content


Vanilla pod and extract



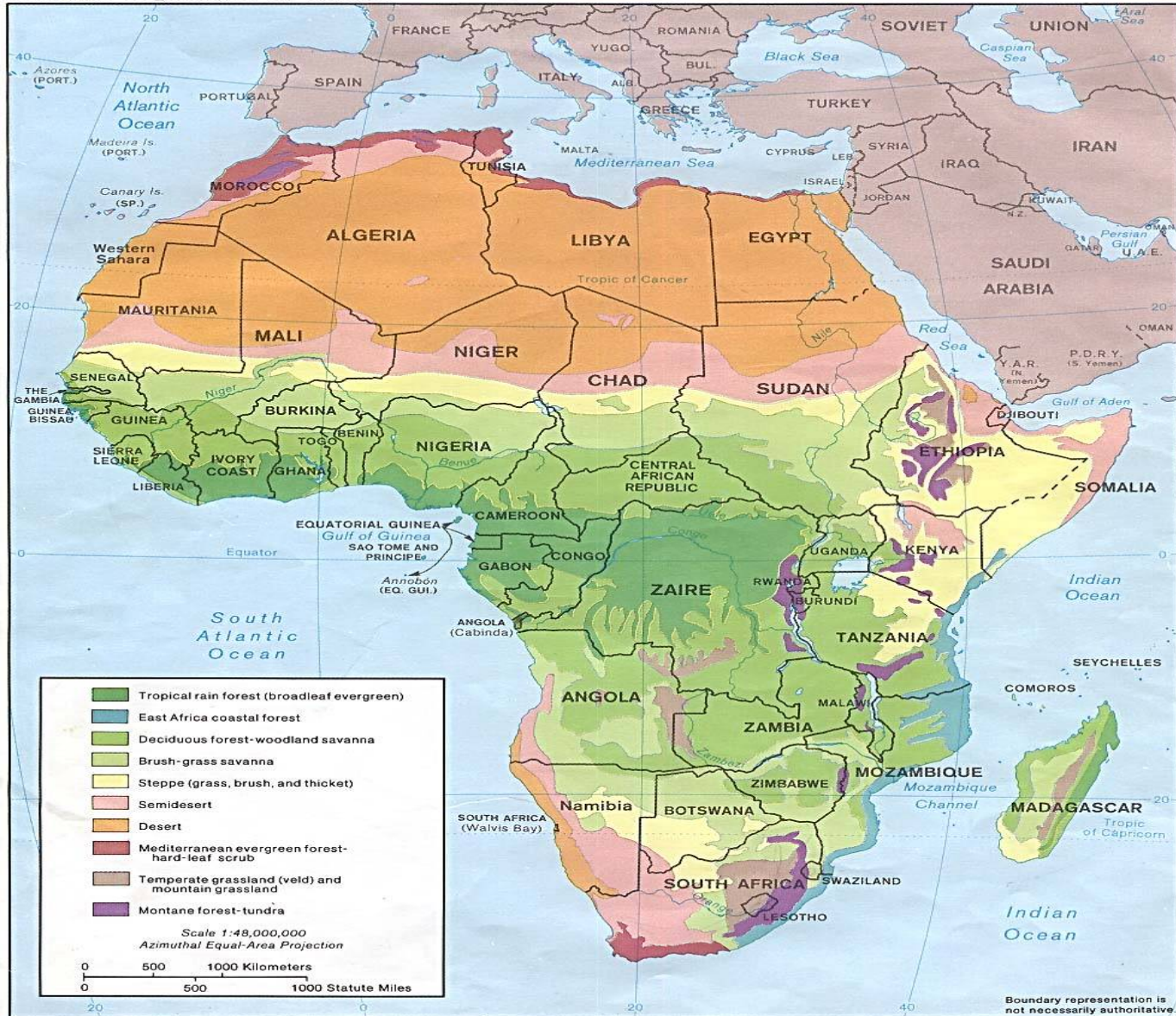



Shea butter nuts





- ▶ The African continent is endowed with diverse natural resources, agricultural products, culture and traditions which can qualify as Geographical Indications.
 - ▶ The map below shows the different vegetation ranging from mountainous forests to deserts and tropical forests. This shows the potential of different products that can be grown and processed from Africa. However, African countries still face the following challenges:
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Natural Vegetation in Africa



- (i) The concept of Geographical Indications is quite new;
 - (ii) Few countries have established laws and regulations on Geographical indications, such as Kenya, Ghana;
 - (iii) Weak enforcement of intellectual property laws;
 - (iv) Intellectual Property is not clearly understood by both policy makers and the private sector and law enforcement agencies;
 - (v) Difficulties in identifying, registering products that qualify to be GIs;
 - (vi) Inadequate marketing strategies in export markets for identified GI products.
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- ▶ Statistically the Global sales from Geographical Indications amounts to US 50 billion with majority originating from OECD countries. The share of GIs from developing Countries, especially, African countries is still low.
 - ▶ This workshop should come up with recommendations on how to increase Africa's exports of Geographical Indications products in the world.
 - ▶ At the national level Geographical Indications will require the establishment of collective marks, code of conduct for producers and certification schemes among others.
 - ▶ In this regard, African Governments and producers require technical assistance and capacity building from developed countries such as EU which has along history of using Geographical indications in promoting their products.
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- ▶ Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, the Government of Uganda has undertaken several strategies and programmes to support innovation and intellectual property rights in the country.
 - ▶ The Government continues to review and update some of the old laws and also develop new legislations where none existed. Uganda has developed a draft Geographical Indications bill, and it will soon be presented to the Parliament.
 - ▶ This will be done as soon as consultations with key stakeholders have been done.
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- ▶ There is a need also to sensitize not only the policy makers but also the law makers so that they can understand these concepts as they debate the different bills that are presented to them.
 - ▶ Finally, I would like to urge all of you to use these two days fruitfully so that by the end of Friday, you will have come up with concrete recommendations for future guidance on how African countries can create value through Geographical Indications.
 - ▶ Once again, I wish you all fruitful deliberations and I would now like to declare this workshop officially opened.
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FOR GOD AND MY COUNTRY

