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Industry driven standards are the key to developing the African traditional medicines industry

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The SABS is driven by the belief that with adequate resources and structural support, traditional knowledge holders can be “commercialisers” of their own traditional knowledge. This empowerment creates a greater incentive for the traditional knowledge holders to be at the forefront of any efforts to preserve and conserve the natural resources that support the traditional knowledge.

The mechanism that is proposed for this is the development of industry standards by traditional knowledge holders and for the industry which has been identified, African Traditional Medicine (ATM) to be supported in efforts to define itself and the industry in order to be participants and drivers in strategies aimed at commercialising ATM through the development of local production of traditional medicine as espoused in the SADC and AU Pharmaceutical strategies.

The paper is based on the experiences of the SABS. The paper discusses the route to commercialisation that is proposed by the SABS for African Traditional Medicines

Biography

Amanda Gcabashe is a Traditional African Medicine Practitioner. She completed her Traditional Initiation and Training in 2000 after completing a Bachelor of Commerce degree in 1998. Since 2011, she has been advising the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) on the African Traditional Medicine sector and the developmental needs of the sector. She is the Chairperson of the South African mirror committee to ISO/TC249 Traditional Chinese Medicine, Chairperson of the SABS/TC1097 African Traditional Medicine and the ARSO/THC013 African Traditional Medicine. She has presented at various national and international conferences on the subject of African Traditional Medicine.

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