

NOVOZYMES

Novozymes is the world leader in bio-innovation - the industrial use of biological processes. Novozymes' products enhance everything from removing trans-fats in food, to advancing biofuels to power the world tomorrow. The company, based in Denmark, has 4600 employees working in research, production and sales all over the world. Novozymes strong market presence is ever emerging. In 2006 the sales were about USD 1.2 billion. For 2010 the company aims at nearly doubling the sales. Novozymes holds currently more than 5000 patents.

Novozymes has been recognised on several occasions for its efforts in corporate responsibility: It sets high standards on its financial, environmental and social responsibility as an integrated part of its business strategies. The company maintains an open dialogue with its stakeholders and complies with international reporting standards. Among others Novozymes attempts to implement the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity on a company level. Novozymes strives to comply with the CBD's principles of sustainable use and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of genetic resources.

In line with the Convention on Biological Diversity Novozymes has signed an agreement with the Kenya Wildlife Service on characterising enzymes from specific biological niches in Kenyan protected areas and providing benefits for the provider of the genetic resource. The timely unlimited agreement gives Novozymes the right to make commercial use of Kenya's microbial diversity in return for financial compensation, and local institutional capacity-building.

Based on the agreement, Novozymes and Kenya Wildlife Service has started the project whereby KWS collects samples from which they and NZ jointly isolate enzyme producing fungi from dung from beetles and wild herbivorous animals such as zebras and antelopes. Currently there is no focus on a specific application of the enzymes as the initial isolation phase has only started last year. But the isolated enzymes may be used for improving the maximum utilisation of raw material e.g. enhancing the conversion process of large volume chemicals like biofuel (ethanol).

If Novozymes commercialises products, developed on the basis of microbial strains isolated as part of the collaborative project, Kenya Wildlife Service will receive a milestone payment and a running royalty from sales. The exact figures are part of the confidential agreement. Similar terms are being used for a Novozyme product, which is based on specific biochemical strains, previously isolated in Kenya. This product was already in the company's possession, before the agreement was signed.

For local capacity building Novozymes will train Kenyan students in Denmark in taxonomy, isolation, identification and characterisation of micro-organisms. In addition the Danish company funds the establishment of a Kenyan laboratory facility for enzyme screening. This will increase the local scientific and technological capability for further nationally owned bioprospecting.

The agreement is in line with the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and other Kenyan development plans. It is based on the principles of sustainable conservation, access and benefit sharing and helps Kenya Wildlife Service to optimise the utilization and conservation of wildlife resources. The case is not based on traditional knowledge. Hence communities are not directly involved in the project and the distribution of the benefits and the contribution to poverty reduction is under the discretion of Kenya Wildlife Service.