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Bio-products Co-operative Presentation Val d'or, Quebec 2014

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Bioproducts co-operative

Presentation outline

- Overview and description
- Purpose and objectives
- Activities
- Governance structure
- Expected impact
- Potential partners
- Project financing
- Schedule of implementation



Bioproducts co-operative

Overview and description

- Background:
 - Great interest from outside Eeyou Itschee in non-timber forest products (NTFPs) such as mushrooms and quality marine products
 - NTFPs is a growing sector in the economy
 - An opportunity for the Cree Nation to organize collectively to protect and harvest that resource

Bioproducts co-operative

Overview and description

- The Bioproducts co-operative would be:
 - The only NTFPs project which is 100% Cree
 - A regional social enterprise benefiting to all
 - Governed by its member owners
- Mission: Running a business to provide work for its members and producers, in the sector of bioproducts, while grouping individuals or entities with a joint economic, social or cultural interest in the current object.

Bioproducts co-operative

Overview and description

- Stimulate the local economic activity in Cree communities (job and revenue creation for men and women)
- Discover, recognize and showcase the potential of local NTPFs and local skills through transmission of scientific and traditional cultural knowledge
- Ensure sustainable harvesting of the resource as well as contribute to improving food security and health

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Activities

- Two main components:
 - Production and marketing: including coordinating the harvesting, processing and sales (collective and private ventures) of products;
 - Capacity building: development of human resources and training in gathering, resource management, processing and marketing.

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Activities

- Production and marketing:
 - Processing plant and product development units
 - Develop markets with wholesalers, distributors and consumers

Bioproducts co-operative

Activities

- Capacity building:
 - Training and technical support offered to members of the co-operative
 - This will make the co-operative a *learning organization* with trained, skilled staff



Bioproducts co-operative

Governance structure

- A solidarity co-operative with three membership categories, all contributing social capital and represented on the Board of Directors:
 - Producer members: harvesters
 - Worker members: processors, managers and marketers
 - Support members: individuals and organizations with an interest in the co-operative's business

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Potential partners

- Potential technical and financial partners, such as:
 - CISA and Biopterre, etc.
 - Cree entities: CHRD, CRA, Band Council, EEG, etc.
 - Provincial entities: Emploi-Quebec, MDEIE, MAPAQ, MRNF, Financière agricole du Québec
 - Federal entities: Economic Development Canada, Agriculture and Agrifood Canada, Agricultural Financing Canada, AANDC
 - Social economy financing: Investissement Québec – Impliq Financing, Réseau d'Investissement Social du Québec, Fiducie du Chantier de l'Économie Sociale, Desjardins

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Expected impact

- Identification of profitable niches for business development
- Rediscovery of traditional knowledge and skills
- Contribute to food security and healthy communities

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Project financing

- A team of 3,5 full-time professionals fulfilling the functions of Executive Director, Administrative Assistant, Marketing Manager and Production and Harvesting Manager are necessary for a successful start-up of the co-operative.
- Estimates about 300k a year to be raised for start-up and staffing needs
- More precision through a business plan

Bioproducts co-operative

Schedule of implementation

- Already secured formal support from the Chisasibi band council, Eeyou Economic Group, all the EDOs as well as the CRA Economic and Sustainable Development Department
- Summary sheet with BoD and share capital structure, with highlights from other Bioproducts co-operatives in Québec has been done
- Next steps in Year 1/2013: Start-up and set-up
 - Develop the business plan for the co-operative
 - Secure financing
 - Incorporate the co-operative
 - Engage in a members' drive
 - Identify available resources and collection sites
 - Develop facilities and equipment at business site
 - Plan harvesting

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Schedule of implementation

- Year 2/2014: Organisation of supply and marketing, training:
 - Development of specifications for harvesting and culture
 - Organise supply management (transport, handling, storage, packaging)
 - Develop an advertising and marketing plan
 - Develop and deliver a training program
 - Implement marketing plan
- Year 3/2015: Development of processing and value-added products:
 - Research and development
 - Expand products and markets
 - Develop processing and packaging
 - Expand membership to all Cree communities



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