



# **STATUS REPORT ON THE BÌNH THUẬN DRAGON FRUIT GI IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

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**EU-MUTRAP's experts:**

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# Summary

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## Acknowledgements

The preparation of the present **Status Report regarding the Implementation Plan of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit Geographical Indication (GI)** has been possible thanks to the efficient organization and committed involvement on the following stakeholders:

- The National Office of Intellectual Property of Vietnam (NOIP)
- The Provincial People’s Committee (PPC) of Bình Thuận province
- The Department of Science and Technology of Bình Thuận province (DOST)
- The Bình Thuận Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD)
- The Bình Thuận Department of Industry and Commerce
- The Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association
- The “Fruits and Greens Company”, plantation and processing center visited during the field visit to the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI area.
- The Vietnam Bureau of Accreditation (BoA)

Thank you all for your committed cooperation providing us with the needed data, as well as for participating on the Policy Networking Session held in the Bình Thuận province and exchanging views with us during the visits to the production and commercialization companies. Your valuable input made possible the preparation of the present Status Report on the Implementation Plan for the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.

Our gratitude also to the EU-MUTRAP project’s team that efficiently organized and supervised the field visit to the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI area as well as the implementation of the entire assignment: Thank you for your efficient support, key part for the success of our assignment.

## I. Overall background

Since 1996 Viet Nam has developed the protection of GIs, counting at present with an increasing number of Vietnamese GIs registered by the competent authority, the National Office of Intellectual Property of Viet Nam (NOIP), the agency under the Ministry of Science and Technology, assuming the functions of exercising the State management and providing services in the field of Intellectual Property.

However, the GI route is a relatively new issue and still in the process of consolidation in Viet Nam. For this reason and since 2014, NOIP has been requesting yearly support from the European Trade Policy and Investment Support (EU-MUTRAP) project<sup>1</sup>. This support has been mainly focused on assisting 4 Vietnamese localities to take the necessary steps for the consolidation and further development of their GIs. The products selected by NOIP to be supported by the EU-MUTRAP project are Lạng Sơn star aniseed GI, Buôn Ma Thuật coffee GI, Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI and Hoà Lộc mango GI.

The implementation of this support by the EU-MUTRAP project has been provided through the Activity EU-16, which consisted in assignments of international and local GI experts in 2014 and 2015 so far, with the following actions and outcomes:

- In 2014, the EU-MUTRAP project organized 2 workshops in different parts of the country (Lạng Sơn province and Dak Lak province) on the GIs registration conditions and procedures in the EU, providing *ad hoc* advice to local stakeholders regarding the documents needed to apply for the registration of each GI in the EU. As a result of this assignment, EU-MUTRAP GI experts assessed serious weaknesses in terms of GI management by GI holders as well as by territorial administrative agencies in charge of supporting the development of these products. Hence, they recommended further assistance to tackle these challenges.
- In 2015, the EU-MUTRAP project continued supporting the development of the 4 selected Vietnamese GIs, seeking to create organizational and institutional capacities to ensure that the multi-year process of developing GIs moves forward and evolves in an appropriate manner. To this end, the EU-MUTRAP project organized 4 workshops in the localities of the 4 GI products, providing technical and legal guidance to local stakeholders for improving their GI management, as well as for setting up traceability and control systems, in order to promote the development of their respective GIs. EU-MUTRAP GI experts gathered the necessary data and met with relevant stakeholders (producers, local authorities and

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<sup>1</sup> The European Trade Policy and Investment Support Project (EU-MUTRAP) is an EU-funded project that is executed by the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam (MOIT) in partnership with the European Commission. Succeeding to the three previous MUTRAP projects, the overall objective of EU-MUTRAP IV is to further Vietnam's integration into the global, regional (ASEAN) and sub-regional trading systems, and to enhance the EU-Vietnam trade and investment relations, as well as to maximize the benefits from the country's economic development for an inclusive growth and poverty reduction. The purpose of the Project is to support the Ministry of Industry and Trade (MOIT) in facilitating sustainable international trade and investment through improved capacity for policy making, policy consultation, and the negotiation and implementation of related commitments, particularly vis-à-vis the European Union (EU). For further information, you may consult the project's website: [www.mutrap.org.vn](http://www.mutrap.org.vn)



representatives of the GI associations) in order to identify the weaknesses of the overall GI management as well as the challenges ahead to ensure their sustainability and further development. As a result, they prepared an assessment and implementation plan for the 4 selected Vietnamese GIs (one per GI), through which defining a road map to foster their consolidation and further development. The Implementation Plans were translated into Vietnamese and sent to all 4 localities between April and May 2016, for their implementation by all involved parties (producers / processors / traders, GI Association, local authorities and NOIP).

The assignment in 2016 constitutes the follow up on the previous work, intended to assess the progress made by local stakeholders on the Implementation Plans received by localities, as well as to continue guiding local stakeholders on the consolidation and further development of the 4 selected GIs.

## II. Status Report

### A. Purpose and Methodology

The present document is the **Status Report regarding the Implementation Plan for the development of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.**

Such document constitutes the outcome in 2016 of the Activity EU-16 within the framework of the EU-MUTRAP Project, which overall objective is to support NOIP in improving the capacity of GIs owners to manage and promote 4 selected GIs, the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI among them.

The **purpose** of this Status Report is assessing the progress made by involved stakeholders as regards to the improvement of the GI management (the traceability system and control plan) as well as the sustainability and further development of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, following the Implementation Plan prepared by EU-MUTRAP GI experts and provided to local stakeholders in May 2016.

The **main outcome of this report** will be **providing a selected number of priorities to be implemented by all related stakeholders within the framework of a provided timetable**, seeking to make tangible progress on the management as well as on the consolidation and development of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI. Please note that the selected priorities are not the only actions to be implemented for the consolidation and development of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI. On the contrary, with these priorities, EU-MUTRAP GI experts seek to provide a clear orientation to all involved stakeholders on the actions to be implemented first, which shall be followed by other to be defined after these first have been completed.

In order to elaborate the present Status Report, international and local GI experts of the EU-MUTRAP Project have used the following **methodology** and undertaken the following **actions**:

#### 1) Planning:

- Prepare a **work plan of the assignment**, including the draft agenda for the Policy Networking Session in Bình Thuận and the timetable for implementing the overall assignment.
- Gather and analyze the background report provided by government authorities (NOIP and Bình Thuận DOST)
- Hold **preparatory meetings** and dealing with **organizational arrangements** in Hanoi prior to the visit to the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI area in the Bình Thuận province.
- Prepare a **check list** to be completed by all involved stakeholders on the status of performance of the Implementation Plan that was delivered to local stakeholders in May 2016.
- Hold a **meeting with representatives of the Bureau of Accreditation (BoA)** to discuss the progress made by localities on the accreditation of qualified bodies to control and certify the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI as well as to brainstorm on the steps to take for having a

competent entity to control and certify the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI before being placed in the market.

## 2) Implementation:

- Travel to the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI area in the Bình Thuận province.
- Hold a **Policy Networking Session** on 13 December 2016 with local authorities (different departments of the Bình Thuận PPC), representatives of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, producers and traders/exporters, to discuss the level of progress on the execution of the Implementation Plan provided to them in May 2016, as well as to provide them with guidance for solving the challenges to reach tangible results for the consolidation and further development of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI. You may find the delivered **presentations by the International GI Expert**:
  - **Management by the GI Association as ANNEX I**
  - **Sustainable development of the GI: Labelling & Promotion as ANNEX II**
  - **GI Protection: The use of the GI right as ANNEX III.**
- Hold **meetings with one company**, in charge of producing, packaging, trading and exporting Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI on the afternoon of 13 December 2016, to discuss the status, level of progress and involvement of this company on the GI and its use.

## 3) Assessment and drafting:

- As a result of the working meetings in the Bình Thuận province, **assessing the progress made by involved stakeholders** on the GI management (the traceability system and control plan) as well as the sustainability and further development of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.
- **Identifying the weaknesses and challenges** that involved stakeholders face for fulfilling the recommendations set on the Implementation Plans provided by EU-MUTRAP GI experts in May 2016.
- **Identifying the priorities to move forward** making progress on the GI management (traceability system and control plan) as well as on the consolidation and development of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.
- Prepare a **first draft of the Status Report**, to be completed with further data to be provided by relevant stakeholders.

## 4) Reviewing and completing:

- Working with the relevant stakeholders on the **data gathering of the check list**, in order to assess the level of progress on the performance of the Implementation Plan, to evaluate the current status of the GI as well as to propose the priorities to be implemented by all related stakeholders in the short term. You may find the **Check List on the Status of the Implementing Planning of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI completed by the local GI expert as ANNEX IV.**
- As a result of the previous actions, **reviewing and finalizing the Status Report** regarding the Implementation Plan for the development of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.

## B. Findings

Thanks to the work undertaken by the EU-MUTRAP local and international GI experts in collaboration with local authorities and related stakeholders before, during and after the field visit to the GI area, it has been possible to **assess the progress made by involved stakeholders on the GI management as well as on the sustainability and further development of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI**, following the Implementation Plan prepared by EU-MUTRAP GI experts and provided to local stakeholders in May 2016. Such assessment analyses the **progress made regarding:**

- The GI product
- The awareness and interest in the GI by involved stakeholders
- The management of the GI by the GI association
- The traceability system and control plan of the GI
- The labelling and promotion actions undertaken by involved stakeholders
- The marketing of the GI product by GI stakeholders
- The protection of the GI product
- The impact of the GI for producers, consumers and the local community

The **main findings** regarding the current situation of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI can be summarized as follows:

### B.1. The GI product

Based on the gathered information, together with the discussions with stakeholders during the Policy Networking Session and the visit to the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI production area, **it seems that the product has consolidated its high quality, especially in response to the requirements from buyers claiming the participation on certification certain schemes. However, the awareness of GI stakeholders about the product specifications and their implementation still remains a pending issue that needs to be tackled.**

- All stakeholders are aware and agree on the high quality of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit, recognizing a high reputation at regional and national levels.
- The quality of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI seems to be guaranteed especially by the companies that participate on certifications schemes such as VietGAP and Global GAP, in response to the demand of buyers.
- The product specifications of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI seem to be integrated into the productions practices of producers and traders, but they are not totally aware of the relation between such practices and the GI, as no guidelines have been prepared or training has been provided by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association to implement the product specifications on the ground.
- GI stakeholders have only received some general training on GIs, where including how to implement the product specifications from DOST and DARD, but it has proved to be insufficient for them to gain a proper understanding on the purpose and importance to implement the product specifications on the ground.



## B.2. Awareness and interest in the GI by involved stakeholders

Based on the gathered information, together with the discussions with stakeholders during the Policy Networking Session and the visit to the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI production area, **the awareness about the GI concept, its implications and potential benefits have considerably improved, thanks to the strong commitment of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association together with the related local authorities (especially DOST and DARD).**

- All involved parties (producers, Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association and local authorities) seem aware of the Implementation Plan sent by EU-MUTRAP GI expert on May 2016, having undertaken many of the proposed actions during the past months.
- The high interest by local authorities on the GI was clearly assessed by their commitment on the organization and implementation of the Policy Networking Session in Bình Thuận on 13 December 2016.
- According to the provided information, the Bình Thuận PPC and DOST have regularly organized activities (conferences, workshops, seminars and networking sessions) to disseminate information, guidance and instruction to further raise the GI awareness and improve the GI management capacity of organizations and individuals involved on the production and trading of the GI product, as well as personnel in charge of the GI management at local departments, agencies and association.
- Some actions through the media, such as articles on newspapers, radio reportages, live policy networking sessions on radio and television, and other news, have been undertaken to raise awareness about the GI concept, its implication and benefits for GI stakeholders as well as for the general public.
- According to the provided information and in comparison with the information gathered in November 2015, there has been a slight increase on the number of stakeholders within the GI, with a total of 85 organizations and individuals authorized to use the GI by December 2016.
- However, the number of stakeholders granted with the GI certificate still remains very limited, compared to the total number of households, cooperatives, farmers' associations, collectors, traders and exporters involved on the production and commercialization of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit in the GI area.
- Producers seem to have a good understanding of the GI concept and system, following the regulations to guarantee the product's quality in compliance with the product specifications.
- Such understanding has been fostered though the dissemination of information, training courses, meetings for learning experience, etc. provided to producers by local authorities (Bình Thuận DOST).
- However, some producers remain skeptical about joining the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, having doubts about the purpose of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, its functions and services that can provide to producers, as so far the association does not provide any particular services other than undertaking tasks of control. They hold high expectations on what the association could provide.
- The Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association has remained strongly committed to work for strengthening and developing the GI.
- There is a close cooperation between the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association and the related local authorities (DOST and related agencies), which is a positive sign of

endorsement and support of local authorities to the GI management by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.

- Local authorities (especially DOST and DARD) are highly interested and committed to contribute to the development of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, but have not created a multidisciplinary team of officials from involved agencies to follow up together on the development of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI and support the work by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association. It seems that there was a multi-disciplinary team in the past but did not work effectively. So at present there are provisions fostering the cooperation between local agencies concerning the control of the GI.
- The Department of Quality Management of Forest, Agriculture and Fisheries products under the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) is strongly involved in the process, having the responsibility to undertake the external control of the GI.
- Local authorities claim some official guidelines or provisions from NOIP for implementing the GI management and control of GIs, to be applied to the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.

### **B.3. Management of the GI**

Based on the gathered information, together with the discussions with stakeholders during the Policy Networking Session and the visit to the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI production area, **significant improvements on the management of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit GI have been assessed, thanks to the strengthening of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association and the endorsement and support by local authorities. However, there are still important challenges as regards to the consolidation of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, the number of members, its role and services to be provided to all relevant stakeholders therein and the support by local authorities.**

- Through the Decision n<sup>o</sup> 76/2015/QĐ-UBND, the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association has been authorized by the PPC of Bình Thuận to manage the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, comprising the granting, renewing, reissuing, extending revoking the validity of the GI certificate for organizations and individuals.
- The Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association has slightly increased its number of members, including at present a total of 192 (72 more than during the last term) comprising individual farmers, cooperatives, farmers' associations, collectors, traders and exporters.
- The number of members of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association is still low and may be even lower than the calculated amount so far, as some companies have recently changed to another business and the association lacks of human resources to update the register of members.
- In addition, some producers remain skeptical about joining the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, because they hold high expectations on what the association should provide but do not think that it provides any useful service to them other than undertaking control tasks.
- The number of organizations and individuals granted with the right to use the GI remains very limited, comprising only 85 in total.
- The register of all GI stakeholders within the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, with all necessary data on producers (individual or members of farmers groups, cooperatives or other structures), plantations, production, packaging and labelling, traders, etc., has not been properly set up yet by Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association due to its lack of human

resources, and only those involved in certification schemes like VietGAP and Global GAP have some sort of registration system in place.

- The Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association has strengthened its structure, with the election of a new Executive Board and Control Board, composed by 11 people (9 at present) and 1 full time worker managing the daily work of the association.
- The missions of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association are quite complete, but not all can be fully and properly implemented, due to the lack understanding on its role as well as the insufficient financial and skilled human resources.
- The Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association should in theory be financed by yearly fees paid by all members, but in practice the association is financed by the voluntary fees collected from large companies, members of the executive board.
- The Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association has continued researching means of financial support for its activities but so far, financial resources remain insufficient. Other means of financial support, such as increasing the number of members or looking for partnerships with traders and exporters have not been explored yet.
- The Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association also receives assistance through actions in support to the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI directly undertaken by local authorities.
- However, there is still a lack of awareness among producers and the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association on the GI concept and its benefits, which prevents the association to provide useful GI related services and increase the number of members.
- While the GI management basis for the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association has been set up through the Decision n<sup>o</sup> 76/2015/QĐ-UBND, the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association has not been able to prepare guidelines on production practices as well as guidelines on the implementation of the GI product specifications by stakeholders, because of limited resources to do so. The Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association is asking for support from local authorities to prepare these guidelines and provide training to stakeholders for the implementation of the GI product specifications.
- Some awareness raising actions on the GI concept and its implications, as well as training actions on the implementation of the GI product specifications for stakeholders have been implemented by the Bình Thuận DOST and DARD, with the support of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, but they have proved to be so far insufficient.
- Furthermore, officials from the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association have been sent to other provinces for training and learning experiences with the support of the Bình Thuận DOST.
- However, the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association fails to play the leading role for implementing awareness raising actions on the GI concept and its benefits, as well as trainings for producers and traders on the respect of the GI product specifications and the use of the GI. In fact, local authorities (especially Bình Thuận DOST and DARD) are strongly committed to support the GI management tasks of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association but sometimes assume responsibilities that should fall into the functions of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association itself.
- According to local authorities, NOIP should issue some clear regulations on GI management.

#### **B.4. Traceability system and control plan of the GI**

Based on the gathered information, together with the discussions with stakeholders during the Policy Networking Session and the visit to the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI production area, **the traceability system remains a challenge for the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, because without a proper register of GI stakeholders it is not possible to trace the GI product back to the plantation. The control of the GI seems to be partially implemented but there are some serious challenges concerning the separation between the internal and external control to avoid conflicts of interest, the preparation and implementation of the internal control plan by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, the preparation and implementation of an external control plan by the Department of Quality Management of Forest, Agriculture and Fishery products under DARD, as well as its accreditation by the BoA as independent and impartial external control body.**

- Up to present, it is not possible to have clear information on the exact number of hectares and stakeholders involved on the production of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, and only those involved in certification schemes like VietGAP and Global GAP have some sort of registration system in place.
- As previously mentioned, the register of all GI stakeholders within the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, with all necessary data on producers (individual or members of farmers groups, cooperatives or other structures), plantations, production, packaging and labelling, traders, etc., which is necessary to set up the traceability system of the GI, has not been properly set up yet by Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association due to its lack of human resources.
- The Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association issued the Decision n<sup>o</sup> 8/QĐ.HHTLBT on the issuance and management of stamps and label for the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, which regulated the conditions, specification and methods to use the stamp with the view to facilitate the traceability, but the traceability system has not been totally implemented yet. In some cases, certain companies use the traceability system of certification schemes under which they operate.
- Interviewed stakeholders assess that the auto-control on the production process, harvest, packaging, transport, preservation, etc. is undertaken by cooperatives, cooperatives groups and production teams monthly or quarterly.
- According to the provided information, capacity building on auto-control for GI stakeholders have been undertaken with the support of DOST and DARD, and DARD has issued what is called “producer’s diary” for GI users to note all of their activities during production. However, no guidelines have been set up yet by the the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association on the production practices that producers must follow on the elaboration of the GI product in respect of the product specifications.
- The Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association is responsible for the internal control of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.
- The Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association inspects the stamping and monitors the production activities, the GI use by its members. However, it has not prepared and implemented an internal control plan yet.
- The Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association has received capacity building on traceability and internal control with the support of local authorities (Bình Thuận DOST and DARD), but it seems there are still challenges in terms of understanding the difference between auto-control, internal control and external control, and the importance to separate each control to ensure the credibility of the GI system for the Bình Thuận dragon fruit.

- The Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association lacks of human resources with well understanding and experience on the GI control system, therefore it does not provide the necessary support for producers on GI management and development, through training, guidance on the implementation of the GI product specifications, guidance on auto-control, etc.
- The responsibility on GI external control has been transferred from DOST to the Department of Quality Management of Forest, Agriculture and Fishery products under DARD, which annually undertakes inspection on the GI management and use and product's quality.
- The Department of Quality Management of Forest, Agriculture and Fishery products under DARD has received capacity building on external control but still needs to build the necessary skills to set up and implement an external control plan for the GI.
- The Bình Thuận Provincial People's Committee issued a Decision n<sup>o</sup> 1650/QĐ-UBND on GI external control, but so far DARD has not prepared and implemented a specific external control plan, based on which the assigned agency must control the production process, the traceability, the GI management by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, and certify the GI production before being placed in the market.
- Up to present, the GI production is not yearly certified by the Department of Quality Management of Forest, Agriculture and Fishery products under DARD as external control body.
- In addition, the Department of Quality Management of Forest, Agriculture and Fishery products under DARD must have the technical capacity complying with international regulations (ISO/IEC 17065:2012) by receiving the accreditation by the BoA or, at least, shall proof its independence and impartiality, having the qualified personnel to control and certify the yearly production of the GI before being placed in the market.
- The conflict of interests between the internal control and the external control remains a challenge, because the DOST and DARD support the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association when undertaking the internal control and the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association sometimes acts as an external control body participating in doing external supervision. This creates confusion between the internal control, which must be undertaken only by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, and the external control, which must be undertaken only by Department of Quality Management of Forest, Agriculture and Fishery products under DARD, as an independent and impartial body.
- As the external control is not in place yet, there is no certification and supervision that all the production of Bình Thuận dragon fruit placed in the market is dully certified as a GI.
- According to DOST, NOIP should issue some clear regulations on GI management and control.

## **B.5. Labelling and promotion actions**

Based on the gathered information, together with the discussions with stakeholders during the Policy Networking Session and the visit to the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI production area, **the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit has a high reputation at local and national level, but such reputation does not apply also to the GI. Labelling remains an issue because companies print their own stamps with no homogeneity and responding to the request of buyers. As regards to promotion, some actions consisting in conferences, exhibitions, fairs at national level**

**have been undertaken, but they are still insufficient to raise awareness about the benefits to commercialize and buy the GI.**

- The Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association has adopted decisions on stamp and label issuance, as well as on management and use of “Bình Thuận” GI for dragon fruit, with the support of DOST and DARD.
- However, the implementation seems to be irregular, as companies inside the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association print their own stamps and label on their own with no control. Likewise, some cooperatives outside the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association took their own initiative to use the GI stamp with no control on its use. Therefore, the logo is not always homogeneous for all packaging of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.
- The Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association has been supported by local authorities (especially DOST and DARD) on several actions for promoting the GI labelling. In particular, the successful Scheme to “Develop the model of stamping Bình Thuận GI on the dragon fruit” has allowed for the support of 6 companies to apply 40 million GI stamps on the product before being circulated in domestic and international markets.
- This initiative has resulted on the establishment of one enterprise specialized in stamp printing that works with the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association for printing the stamps and distribute to producers who meet the demands to use the GI label on their products, as well as the awareness raising on the importance to use the GI logo among companies commercializing the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.
- According to the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, most Bình Thuận dragon fruit exporting companies are using the GI logo on their packaging and banners and signs at meetings.
- However, a main weakness is also detected because it is not possible to ensure that the labelled products are effectively Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, as long as the external control and certification of the yearly GI production is not in place.
- Another concern is that only a few large exporting companies deal directly with retailers. Most companies do not have the capacity to export directly and they must do so through brokers, that may change the labelling and packaging of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.
- In addition, producers still fully depend on the traders when selling GI product, depending on their requests to identify or not the Bình Thuận dragon fruit as a GI.
- In light of the labelling seen during the field visits, the packaging by all companies includes the Bình Thuận dragon fruit logo which includes the name “Bình Thuận dragon fruit”, but it does not include the mention of being a “Protected Geographical Indication” or a “PGI”. The Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association should explore adding the mention “Protected Geographical Indication” or “PGI” to the logo and labelling practices.
- There is no regulation or guidelines on labelling processed products when using the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI as an ingredient, for dried dragon fruit, dragon fruit juice, dragon fruit wine, etc.
- As regards to promotion, dissemination sessions to producers on GIs so that they can apply and quality for using the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI have been undertaken in the framework of the regular activities of DOST.
- Also, awareness raising actions for buyers, consumers and general public, including workshops, round tables, TV reports, radio shows, articles on newspapers, etc. have been undertaken to explain the GI concept and its benefits for them in the framework of the regular activities of DOST and NOIP, but it is still limited.

- NOIP is working on the preparation of a national GI logo for registered Vietnamese GIs. According to NOIP, the national GI logo in preparation will be a useful tool to improve the image and awareness on GIs, as well as to enforce their protection. Likewise, including the mention “Protected Geographical Indication” or “PGI” on the packaging of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI needs to be considered.
- By now, NOIP has not defined or prepared a National GI Promotion Strategy to support the promotion of Vietnamese GIs at national and international levels, but it is foreseen to include a GI Promotion Strategy in the framework of the National IP Strategy in preparation at present.

## **B.6. Marketing of the GI product**

Based on the gathered information, together with the discussions with stakeholders during the Policy Networking Session and the visit to the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI production area, **the commercialization of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI remains very weak and unstable.**

- Local authorities and EU-MUTRAP project have implemented activities and programs to support the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association in trading and marketing the GI, to develop cooperative forms for the sustainable development of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit, to expand the consumption market for Bình Thuận dragon fruit in the EU, to develop the value chain for the dragon fruit from production to consumption, in order to raise the farmer’s income, and to raise awareness of clean production and GAP with the view to meet EU requirements.
- The Bình Thuận DOIT has also provided support to Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, enterprises and trading exporting cooperatives to participate in conferences and fairs to encourage the supply-demand connecting as well as the export promotion.
- Furthermore, the initiative for promoting the GI labelling implemented by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association with the support of local authorities (especially DOST and DARD) has also contributed to foster the commercialization of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI in the domestic and international markets.
- However, producers still fully depend on the traders when selling GI product. There is still no differentiation between GI and non-GI products in terms of price.
- There are no official trading and marketing channels for the GI product, therefore the added value of the GI product compared to the non-GI products has not been created.
- Therefore, advocacy and visibility actions for buyers and consumers at national and international level on the official channels to obtain the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI have not been undertaken either.
- The research and preparation of a marketing strategy for the marketing and commercialization of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI in the domestic market or towards target markets has not been carried out. Each enterprise/cooperative has its own market strategy, causing difficulties in the GI management and development in general level, both domestically and internationally.
- The Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association plans to prepare and implement a general market strategy for the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI in the domestic market and abroad.

## **B.7. Protection of the GI product**

Based on the gathered information, together with the discussions with stakeholders during the Policy Networking Session and the visit to the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI production area, **the protection of the GI product and its enforcement at national and international remains a pending issue.** The main challenge is that **as long as the GI is not properly controlled and certified, it will not be possible to ensure the enforcement of the protection, since it will be as difficult to identify the real product that respects the product specifications or the fake product.** Furthermore, **there is a general lack of knowledge about the possible types of infringements as well as the limited funds results on a lack of enforcement of the GI protection at national level.** In the international scenario, **the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI has been registered as a trademark in other countries but there is no strategy to follow up on such registration and its respect on those or other markets.**

- Even if DOST regularly reviews the provisions regarding the procedure granting the certificate to use the GI, the purpose of the GI certificate as a guarantee of protection remains unclear, as it is granted once but there is no follow up on the respect of the product specifications or any control on its use by the company that received the certificate.
- Stakeholders consider that there should be amendments to the Law on Intellectual Property in order to legally protect those granted with the right to use the GI. According to NOIP, the law is under review at present.
- There is a general lack of knowledge about the GI protection and enforcement, confusing protection and enforcement of the GI with the use of the GI right, and considering that the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI does not face cases of infringements.
- Most stakeholders do not have a clear understanding about the different cases of infringements that may occur against a GI. In fact, infringements are the use of the GI name or logo by third parties not part of the GI, but also the use of the GI name and logo by those within the GI that do not respect the product specifications. Including awareness raising actions within the GI protection strategy seems important to allow for a better understanding of the infringements possible.
- There are no specific guidelines for stakeholders on the risks of being abused or actions to be undertaken when infringements against GIs occur. There are guidelines only for general IP rights.
- There are some local establishments carrying out abuses against the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI but no sanctions have been worked out so far to handle such infringements.
- The enforcement of the GI has not been implemented as the commercialization of the product still faces several challenges, due to the lack of legal basis regarding the GI control, the lack of human resources for its implementation. As long as the control of the GI product is not implemented, the compliance of the GI with the product specifications and related provisions is very difficult to ensure, hence it will be very difficult to fight against infringements, from stakeholders that may not respect the elaboration process of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI or from third parties that use the name “Bình Thuận dragon fruit” for dragon fruit that is not the real Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.
- With the support of the Bình Thuận DOST, the “Bình Thuận dragon fruit” has been registered as a trademark in 12 countries and territories, following the recommendation of NOIP to register as a trademark and not as a GI for being a shorter process. According to stakeholders, some countries did not approve the protection and shall be presented again.



- However, the protection enforcement faces difficulties due to the lack of funds for market surveillance, at national level as well as at international level, as even after being protected in other countries, it is still important to supervise the market to denounce infringements when detected.
- NOIP tries to accompany the companies and groups raising awareness about the role of the GI but it is also necessary the coordination between DOST, Market Surveillance, Market Police, etc. to provide a warning to the infringers. If the infringements persist, there are other measures available, such as imposing fines and disposing fake products causing confusion among consumers. Furthermore, NOIP is working with an international organization in order to develop a mechanism within a National IP Strategy in preparation that will comprise GIs.
- Even if the legislation foresees general actions against infringements, NOIP has not yet provided localities with a concrete methodology for the actions that can be taken against infringements as well as the sanctions to apply to those infringements. This methodology would be very useful for stakeholders and could be one of the results of the National GI Protection Strategy to be included in the National IP Strategy in preparation.
- According to NOIP, the national GI logo in preparation will be a useful tool to improve the image and awareness on GIs, as well as to enforce their protection. Likewise, including the mention “Protected Geographical Indication” or “PGI” on the packaging of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit needs to be considered.
- Awareness raising actions on GI protection enforcement and implementation of the GI rights for the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association and its members, traders and exporters, as well as for the local authorities have been implemented by the Bình Thuận DOST with the support of NOIP, but only regarding the GI in general and not the GI protection and its enforcement.
- The analysis regarding the need to register the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI logo (especially in the EU) has been undertaken in the framework of the National Program on Development of IP Asset (Program 68). The result of this program has been that Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI logo should be registered (and has been registered in practice) in 14 countries, namely: USA, UAE, England, France, German, Holland, Japan, Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan-China, Hong Kong - China, Thailand.
- The supervision of the protection of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI at national level is undertaken on regular basis by DOST, DARD and related local authorities, even if no measures seem to be taken against abuses.
- On the contrary, the supervision of the protection of Vietnamese GIs at national and international level in the framework of a GI Protection Strategy has not been set up yet. It is possible that this strategy may be included in the National GI Strategy in preparation.

## **B.8. Impact of the GI**

Based on the gathered information, together with the discussions with stakeholders during the Policy Networking Session and the visit to the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI production area, **the impact of the GI has not been appreciated so far**. This may be due to several reasons:

- The general lack of knowledge or insufficient understanding about the GI, its impacts and benefits by most related stakeholders.

- The skepticism of producers on the benefits of being part of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, due to the weaknesses regarding the services that the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association should provide to members.
- The lack of a strong / on the ground-based GI management by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, still undeveloped and weak in terms of resources and capacities.
- The lack of a traceability system and a clear control plan, comprising auto-control, internal control and external control to certify the GI product before being placed in the market.
- The insufficient awareness raising towards all stakeholders directly or indirectly involved and affected by the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI on the efforts to be made for achieving tangible results in the future.

The aforementioned deficiencies make very difficult to develop market strategies, awareness raising or promotion actions to foster the benefits of the GI for producers, consumers and the local community.

## C. Conclusions

In light of the documentation analysis, the information provided and the meetings with all related stakeholders during the field visit to the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI area, EU-MUTRAP IV GI international and local experts reached the following **conclusions**:

- There has been an **awareness and interest in the implementation plan by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association and local authorities**, having implemented a good number of the proposed actions.
- It seems that the **Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI has consolidated its high quality**, especially in response to the requirements from buyers claiming the participation on certification certain schemes.
- However, the **awareness of GI stakeholders about the product specifications and their implementation** still remains a pending issue that needs to be tackled.
- The **Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association has made significant progress on its development and responsibilities** delegated from DOST, while **still faces some challenges of financial and human resources as well as of autonomy on their management**.
- The **involvement of many stakeholders** (especially skeptical GI producers) within the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association **remains a challenge**.
- The **close cooperation and support of local authorities to the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association in support of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI** constitutes a positive sign for ensuring the future development of both, the GI and its association.
- The **traceability system is not in place and remains a challenge for the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association**, because without a proper register of GI stakeholders it is not possible to trace the GI product back to the plantation.
- The **control of the GI seems to be partially implemented** but there are some serious challenges concerning the separation between the internal and external control to avoid conflicts of interest, as well as other key aspects as regards the three levels of control (auto-control, internal control and external control).
- The **auto-control is undertaken by stakeholders themselves**, but the lack of guidelines for producers to implement the product specifications on their plantations prevents from ensuring that such control is effective.

- The **internal control system** by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association **has made some progress through the work with related companies**, but still needs guidelines and methodology (internal control plan) to be set up for all involved producers and traders.
- The **external control has been assigned to the Department of Quality Management of Forest, Agriculture and Fishery products under DARD, but it is still undeveloped**: proper methodologies (an external control plan) as well as its accreditation by the BoA to ensure its independence and impartiality remain a pending issue to tackle.
- **Local authorities remain unaware of the importance to ensure independence and impartiality by the controlling body** to guarantee credibility of the entire GI system in place for their product and to avoid conflict of interests.
- So far and as long as the control system is not properly developed, **the GI product is not certified before being placed in the market**, putting at risk the credibility of the entire GI.
- The **use of the GI logo on the labelling seems to be improving**, with some initiatives supported by local authorities to endorse and foster the use of the logo by involved companies.
- However, **the amount of companies using the GI logo** compared to the total involved on the production and commercialization of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI **remains low** and there is some **lack of homogeneity and lack of reference to the GI on the labelling and packaging**, due to the lack of concrete guidelines for members by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.
- There is a **lack of clear knowledge about the risk of infringements** or, in some cases, if the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI even faces any infringements at present or how they should act against them.

The overall field visit to Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI area was very interesting and stakeholders were very committed and cooperative. They provided experts with a good overview of the current situation, their achievements and challenges, as well as allowed for very useful exchanges between participating stakeholders to improve their GIs. Furthermore, the use of practical examples proved to be very useful and appreciated by participants, as they could profit these examples to apply to their own case, as regards to GI management, Labelling and Promotion and GI Protection.

However, several aspects need to be tackled to make tangible progress in the near future, being crucial to maintain a regular follow up on their actions as well as to provide them with short term “tasks” on the priorities that they need to address in the next months.

### III. Recommended implementing priorities

The Implementation Plan prepared by EU-MUTRAP GI experts and provided to local stakeholders in May 2016 responded to the request of the Vietnamese Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to create the capacity of selected GI associations (Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI among them) to carry out all the relevant steps to establish and maintain their geographical indications (GIs) locally, including, among the others, the identification of an adequate plan to manage all the relevant steps to be completed before, during and after receiving the protection as a GI.

Such implementation plan included a wide range of actions to be implemented by all involved stakeholders in order to improve the GI management (the traceability system and control plan) as well as to foster the sustainability and further development of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI. However, after six months of its delivery and through the present status report, it has been assessed that **stakeholders need to be provided with a selected number of priorities to be implemented within the framework of a provided timetable, seeking to make tangible progress on the management as well as on the consolidation and development of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.**

Therefore, EU-MUTRAP GI experts propose herewith the **recommended implementing priorities to be undertaken in the coming 6 months**, from March to August 2017, which will seek to solve the first challenges that the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI faces to consolidate as a GI and make progress on its development in the future.

It is important to note that the following selected priorities are not the only actions to be implemented for the consolidation and development of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, hence they will not bring immediate tangible results. On the contrary, **with these priorities EU-MUTRAP GI experts seek to provide a clear orientation to all involved stakeholders on the actions to be implemented first, which shall be followed by others actions to be defined after these first have been completed.**

The **recommended implementing priorities** are the following:

#### **BY THE BÌNH THUẬN DRAGON FRUIT ASSOCIATION:**

##### **1) Improving the management of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI:**

The **objective** of this priority is strengthening the structure of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, in order to enforce some aspects that difficult the development of the GI.

Regardless other actions to be implemented at a later stage, this priority **includes** assessing the number of stakeholders currently involved in the GI, identify, approach and welcome other stakeholders in the GI area to join the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, set up an efficient database of GI stakeholders within the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI area that will serve to develop the traceability system for the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, and improve the capacities and resources of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association for a better management of the GI.

In order to implement this priority, some of the **following steps** as well as others to be identified are advised for their implementation by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association:

**A. Involving all stakeholders in the consolidation and development of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI**, through participatory actions led by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association:

- **Organize an agenda of meetings with all stakeholders of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI**, members of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association as well as potential members involved on the GI (including households, cooperatives, farmers' associations, collectors, traders, ...), to explain the GI right and the importance to work together on its consolidation and development. Several meetings shall be organized to reach all interested stakeholders.
- **Undertake the planned meetings with identified stakeholders of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI**, members of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association as well as potential members involved on the GI. Further to explaining the GI concept, its benefits and implications, as well as the importance to work together for its defence and promotion, other issues to be discussed at these meetings may be:
  - The role and functions of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association to provide useful services to all members.
  - The membership fees and yearly fees that all members may be ready to pay to receive the services, representation and defence by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.
  - New voluntary stakeholders ready to collaborate on the work of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, especially to set up the GI database of the GI area.
  - Calendar for volunteers to gather the information to build up the database.
  - Budget to build up the database (payment to volunteers gathering the data), which shall be covered with the fees from members if at all possible.
  - Other means to look for other financial support for the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.
  - Other aspects that may arise.

The results of these meetings must be gathered by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, achieving as results: an increase on the number of members, an agreement on the fees for the association and a system to collect them, a pool of volunteers to gather the information to set up the database, a timeframe for gathering the information, a budget to build up the database, a list of possible options to gather additional financial resources for the association.

**B. Setting up the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI's database:** The database of members within the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI shall include plantations, production, hectares, etc. In order to build the updated database, it is recommended to:

- **Elaborate the methodology to build up the GI database**, which may include among other contents:
  - Defining the contents of the database that will serve to set up the traceability system (plantations, name of producers, households, cooperatives, farmers' associations, collectors, traders,... hectares, production, etc.)

- Defining the format of the database (electronic or manual, data introduction and update, etc.)
- Preparing templates to gather the data with contents of data to collect, especially to set up the database from different areas, etc.)
- **Provide training for trainers to the identified volunteers**, which may include among other contents:
  - Preparing a training sessions for identified volunteers, where explaining the GI concept, the purpose of the database, the methodology to gather the data, the area that shall be covered, the budget to gather the data, etc.
  - Providing templates and clarify questions
- **Prepare and implement a planning to gather the information to build up the GI database**, which may include among other contents:
  - With the pool of voluntary stakeholders and the prepared calendar to gather the information for the GI database, setting up a planning for data collection, based on the proposed implementing period.
  - Assigning volunteers to the task of collecting the data and monitor the process.
  - Following up on the data gathering.
- **Set up the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI's database**, by:
  - Collecting the information provided by volunteers.
  - Inserting on the database
  - Setting up the database.
  - Launching the methodology for regular update as soon as it is complete.

The resulting database for the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI will not only serve to properly represent, inform, involve and assist the members of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, but also as basis to set up a traceability system for the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.

### **C. Improving the capacities of the working personnel at the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association:**

- **Set up a training plan:** With the support of the relevant local authorities, set up and implement a plan of regular training for improving the capacities of the officials working in the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, including:
  - The GI concept, its requirements and benefits
  - The GI management and quality control
  - The services to provide to members of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.
  - The division of responsibilities for each department or individual within the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.

### **2) Strengthening the auto-control of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI by involved stakeholders:**

The **objective** of this priority is ensuring a proper auto-control of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI by all stakeholders involved in the elaboration process, in order to ensure a proper control of the GI at all stages.

Regardless other actions to be implemented at a later stage, this priority **includes** preparing a tool for facilitating the understanding of households, cooperatives, farmers' associations, collectors, traders, ... on the production practices they must respect based on the product specifications and other related provisions on the elaboration of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.

In order to implement this priority, some of the **following steps** as well as others to be identified are advised for their implementation by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association:

**A. Ensuring an efficient auto-control system by involved stakeholders**, including the following actions among others possible:

- **Prepare a tool for facilitating the understanding of producers and processors on the production practices they must respect based on the product specifications** and other related provisions on the elaboration of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, which shall explain clearly how producers, collectors, traders, etc. shall verify that they are respecting the rules of the product specifications, while becoming a friendly and accessible instrument to all GI stakeholders for its implementation on their plantations and processing companies. For preparing such tool, it is advisable to:
  - Organize and implement an agenda of meetings with all members of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, once new members have joined and the database setting has been launched, to collect all relevant information on the elaboration process of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.
  - Based on the collected information, prepare some guidelines on the production practices that all stakeholders must implement on their plantations and trading centres.
  - Based on these guidelines, prepare a tool, easy to understand by all stakeholders, explaining clearly how producers, collectors and traders shall verify that they are respecting the rules of the product specifications, while becoming a friendly and accessible instrument to all GI stakeholders for its implementation on their plantations and trading companies.
  - Once the tool is drafted, organize meetings with all members to validate its content.
- **Provide the tool to stakeholders so that they may implement an efficient auto-control system:**
  - Once the tool is validated, find the necessary resources for its editing in a friendly format, printing and disseminating among stakeholders, to have it accessible on their plantations and companies.
  - Edit the tool, with the supporting resources.
  - Once the tool is edited, print as many copies and formats (flyer, poster, etc.) as members shall have them on their plantations, processing centres or companies.
  - Organize a planning to disseminate and explain the content of the tool and the importance to comply with it on their daily work elaborating the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.
  - Implement the planning, disseminating the tool to all stakeholders within the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.

Thanks to the provided tool, producers and processors may undertake auto-controls on their plantations and trading centres, gaining the ability to ensure themselves and prove to others that they produce the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI in conformity with the product specifications.

### 3) Setting up the traceability system and the internal control plan of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI:

The **objective** of this priority is consolidating the traceability system and internal control plan of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, once the database of the GI is updated and the auto-control is in process of implementation by stakeholders.

This priority **implies** working in close cooperation with the members of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association to define a traceability system, adapted to the specificities of all members and compatible with their certification schemes some are involved in, as well as setting up and internal control plan, to supervise the respect of the product specifications by all members.

In order to implement this priority, some of the **following steps** as well as others to be identified are advised for their implementation by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association:

#### A. Setting up a traceability system for the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, comprising the following actions among others possible:

- **Define the methodology for the traceability system:**
  - Contact all members and gather their information regarding the traceability they apply on their businesses, to ensure that the product originates from the delimited GI area.
  - Define a methodology for a common traceability system: This methodology can start from the auto-controls implemented by producers and packaging and commercializing structures; it can also profit the traceability used for certification schemes that some members may apply, as possible synergies may be profited to reduce costs.
  - With such information, propose common traceability markers at different stages of the production process that shall be agreed for their use by all members.
- **Agree and launch the traceability system:**
  - Organize meeting with members to discuss and agree on a common traceability system, to ensure the origin of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI from the start of the production process through to the final product.
  - Put the traceability system in place and correct if necessary.

#### B. Setting up an internal control plan for the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, which may be implemented delegating some of the controls to local producer groups as long as the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association supervises and reports its full implementation. Please note that the internal control must be totally separated from the external control to be undertaken by the designated local authorities. In order to do so, some of the following steps as well as others to be identified are advised:

- **Define the parameters of the internal control plan:**



- The control plan specifies how the rules defined for the elaboration of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI are to be checked (in the product specifications as well as in other adopted provisions, such as the guidelines on the production practices defined for the auto-control).
- The Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association must define: the critical points to be controlled for each rule, the method used to control (visual, document analysis, etc.), the moment of control, the frequency of controls and the coverage (all producers, sampling), the sanctions depending on the seriousness of the non-compliance (economic, such as fines or prohibition to use the GI name, or social, such as the exclusion from the group).
- **Prepare and launch the internal control plan:**
  - Draft an internal control plan, to be discussed and agreed by all members of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.
  - In case the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association needs orientation for setting up the control plan, it may explore the possible collaboration of a control and certification body, which can assist on the elaboration of the control plan and training of agents within the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association for its implementation. For further information on control and certification bodies that could be contacted for this purpose, you may find the **list of competent control and certification bodies accredited by the BoA in ANNEX V**.
  - In case there are limited human resources to implement the internal control, it is always advisable to profit the synergies within the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, having some voluntary members to rotate for implementing the internal control.

Once the three recommended priorities have been implemented by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association and in light of the results, corrections shall be proposed and further actions defined to make progress as regards to labelling, marketing, promotion and protection of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.

## **BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES (LED BY BÌNH THUẬN DOST):**

### **1) Setting up an effective GI Multi-Disciplinary Team of local officials for the support and further development of the GI.**

The **objective** of this priority is setting up a Multi-Disciplinary team of officials from all local agencies directly or indirectly involved in the GI, to jointly define and coordinate the implementation of all actions to be undertaken at local and national level to support the sustainability of and to develop, promote and protect the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, as well as other GIs that may arise in the future in the Bình Thuận province.

The **tasks** of such team may be the following:

- Design the methodology to programme, prepare, implement and follow up on all actions to support and develop the GIs from the Bình Thuận province.

- Define the role of each relevant local agency, setting up a coordinated division of competences for the development, promotion and protection of GIs from the Bình Thuận province.
- Set up an awareness-raising programme for official from local authorities, with regular updates on the GI scheme and its progress.
- Prepare a road map of actions to be implemented at regional level for the development, promotion and protection of GIs from the Bình Thuận province.
- Based on the road map of actions, define annual work plans, taking into account the views of stakeholders and the competences of each local agency, to ensure implementation of the annual priorities identified in a coordinated manner by all parties involved.
- Coordinate the proposed actions with the relevant national authorities (NOIP and others if necessary)
- Define the skills, duties and resources needed to implement the actions proposed in the annual work plans.
- Identify, contact and recruit the skilled technical personnel, local officials or external experts required to implement the activities proposed in the annual work plans.
- Allocate the required resources and manage the administrative arrangements necessary for the implementation of the activities proposed in the annual work plans.
- Supervise, coordinate and implement the actions set out in the annual work plans.
- Report regularly on the results to the relevant government ministries and agencies (NOIP and others if necessary).
- Follow up on outcomes, identifying the additional activities to be implemented in subsequent annual work plans.

In order to implement this priority, some of the **following steps** as well as others to be identified are advised for their implementation by local authorities (led by Bình Thuận DOST):

**A. Involving all agencies directly or indirectly involved in the establishment and development of GIs in the Bình Thuận province**

- **Identify the local agencies that need to be involved:** Based on its contacts with different departments under the Provincial People’s Committee, the Bình Thuận DOST shall set up a list of all relevant departments and agencies (Agriculture, Trade, Tourism and those that are directly or indirectly involved/interested in the development of GIs).

**B. Setting up the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team**

- **Organize a meeting of all related local agencies** to agree on the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team structure, roles and duties, skills and the resources required to set it up.

At that meeting, it is advisable to agree on:

- Structure, functions and resources: what each agency can do, what resources they can allocate, what are the actions that they must undertake as a priority, what may be the support to request from NOIP, what may be the support to the GI association, etc.
- In terms of actions: how to provide awareness raising of the GI concept, how to support the GI association, Agriculture,... it terms of quality maintenance and improvement the department of agriculture, in terms of promotion the department of tourism and trade, in terms of market strategy and contacts with private national and international partners department of trade and DOST.

- Set up a deadline for the appointment of the officials who will make up the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team.
- **Set up the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team**, appointing the proposed members and defining the next steps (training, calendar of meetings, tasks, etc.).
- Provide training to the team members on the GI concept, the GI scheme, its potential benefits and the current challenges in Vietnam.
- Organize and hold the first meeting of the new GI Multi-Disciplinary Team of officials to launch its activities, discussing the road map of actions to be implemented (in terms of awareness raising, quality maintenance and improvement, support the GI association on the development and market strategy for the GI, promotion actions, etc.). Based on the road map of actions, further documents shall be prepared (annual work plan, calendar, follow up meetings, etc.).

Some **additional recommendations** regarding the form and roles of the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team:

- The GI Multi-Disciplinary Team should take the form of a horizontal group of local officials with sufficient skills to implement the specific tasks they are given.
- The team may be made up of lead persons appointed from within each local agency or new officials from outside the agency hired to be part of the team.
- The main role of these officials will be to carry out the tasks assigned to the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team and to channel the actions to be taken by the agencies they represent, when required.
- Each agency involved should ensure that the designated trained officials can undertake their duties within the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team and that their duties and workload are always covered by/transferred to other suitably skilled officials, if they change/transfer jobs.
- In order to ensure the long-term sustainability and efficiency of this team, it should receive both initial as well as regular training on the GI scheme and updates on its progress at national and international levels, with the support of NOIP.

## 2) Continuing the support to the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association:

The **objective** of this priority is ensuring the improvement and further development on the management of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.

This priority **implies** working in close cooperation with the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, providing capacity building and financial support on the several actions to be implemented in the coming months.

In order to implement this priority, some of the **following steps** as well as others to be identified are advised for their implementation by the Bình Thuận DOST:

### A. Brainstorming with the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association on the needs to improve and develop the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.

- **Meeting between local authorities and the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association:**  
Organize a meeting, gathering the members of the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team and the representatives of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.  
During such meeting, **discuss the training support and financial resources** that they need to implement the recommended priorities in this report. Among others, it would be needed for:
  - Financial support for preparing the database of members of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.
  - Financial support for editing and printing the tool on auto-control for stakeholders.
  - Technical assistance for training for officials working in the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.
  - Technical assistance for providing training for trainers to the identified voluntaries, so that they can gather the information for the database of members of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.
  - Financial support for hiring a control and certification body to assist on the preparation of the internal control plan.

#### **B. Setting up an action plan for the support of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association**

- Once the needs have been discussed, **assess and decide on the means that shall be provided to support the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association** and prepare a plan for its provision and supervision of its use.  
It is advisable that the provided financial support is partial, in order to ensure also a commitment by the members of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association. As regards to the training, it is advisable to ensure that contents are accessible but complete, in order to ensure that trained professionals may afterwards disseminate their knowledge to others.
- **Set up an action plan**, including all actions that shall be supported by local authorities, including technical and financial means that each agency within the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team will provide to endorse and support the activities by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.

#### **3) Setting up the external control plan of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI:**

The **objective** of this priority is completing the guarantee system of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, allowing for the control and certification of the GI production before being placed in the market.

This priority **includes** improving the capacities of the Department of Quality Management of Forest, Agriculture and Fishery products under DARD, as well as setting up the external control plan to certify the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI. It will imply working in close cooperation with the designated entity that shall undertake the external control of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, with the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, as well as with an external control and certification body accredited by the BoA (advisable).

In order to implement this priority, some of the **following steps** as well as others to be identified are advised for their implementation by the Bình Thuận DOST:

**A. Ensuring the necessary capacities to undertake the external control and certification of the GI:**

- As already explained, the Department of Quality Management of Forest, Agriculture and Fishery products under DARD **shall ensure that it has the technical capacity complying with international regulations (ISO/IEC 17065: 2012)**, by receiving the accreditation by the BoA or, at least, by proving its independence and impartiality, having the qualified personnel to control and certify the yearly production of the GI before being placed in the market. In any case, the designated entity shall have the resources and appropriate expertise to fulfil such task.
- In order to do so, it is advisable to **organize trainings with the BoA** to receive the accreditation or at least to ensure independence and impartiality of the entity as well as the capacities of its personnel. Hiring an external control body to train the designated entity and support on the elaboration of the external control plan may be extremely useful.
- If DOST or the PPC decides that the designated entity must receive the accreditation by the BoA, the entity shall **contact the BoA and start the accreditation process** (around 5/6 months minimum).

**B. Setting up and implement an external control plan for the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI:**

- **Set up the external control plan for the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI (the designated control and certification body):**

In parallel to the accreditation process (if in process) and to avoid delays, the Department of Quality Management of Forest, Agriculture and Fishery products shall **start setting up the external control plan**, including the following elements to control:

- The evaluation of production conditions and quality system, including the elaboration process, the management by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association and its members.
- The traceability, including the correct application and intervention in case of a system failure by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.
- The quality of the final product, including labelling, aspect, taste, etc. through visual controls and laboratory analysis.

Hence, the external control plan specifies how the rules defined for the elaboration of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI are to be checked (in the product specifications as well as in other adopted provisions), how the management by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association is undertaken, if the traceability of the product is ensured and if the final product complies with the rules for the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI (product specifications and other provisions).

- The Department of Quality Management of Forest, Agriculture and Fishery products shall **work in cooperation with the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association** to define: the critical points to be controlled for each rule, the method used to control (visual, document analysis, etc.), the moment of control, the frequency of controls and the coverage (all producers, sampling), the sanctions depending on the seriousness of the non-compliance (economic, such as fines or prohibition to use the GI name, or social, such as the exclusion from the group).

- The Department of Quality Management of Forest, Agriculture and Fishery shall **draft the external control plan**, to be discussed and agreed by the Bình Thuận DOST. The external control plan shall include a certification of conformity or non-conformity of the yearly GI production before the GI is placed in the market.
- **Implement the external control plan for the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI (the designated control and certification body together with related local authorities)**, including:
  - The implementation of the external control plan.
  - The detection and correction of deviations if needed.
  - The certification of the yearly production of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit as a GI before being placed in the market.

In case the Department of Quality Management of Forest, Agriculture and Fishery products needs orientation for setting up the control plan, it may explore the possible collaboration of a control and certification body, which can assist on the elaboration of the external control plan and training of agents within the department for its implementation. For further information on control and certification bodies that could be contacted for this purpose, you may find the **list of competent control and certification bodies accredited by the BoA** in **ANNEX V**.

Once the three recommended priorities have been implemented by the local authorities (led by Bình Thuận DOST) and in light of the results, corrections shall be proposed and further actions defined to make progress as regards to promotion, market surveillance and protection of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.

## IV. Timetable for implementing priorities

### BÌNH THUẬN DRAGON FRUIT ASSOCIATION:

#### 1) Improving the management of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI:

STEPS	ACTIONS	CONTENT	IMPLEMENTING PERIOD	EXPECTED RESULTS
A. Involving all stakeholders in the consolidation and development of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, through participatory actions led by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association	Organize an agenda of meetings with all stakeholders of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, members of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association as well as potential members involved on the GI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify all stakeholders involved in the elaboration of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI (producers, collectors, companies, etc.) and prepare a list</li> <li>- Prepare the calendar of meetings</li> <li>- Prepare and send the invitations for meetings to stakeholders</li> <li>- Follow up on confirmations</li> </ul>	1 March – 10 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- List of stakeholders to invite to meetings.</li> <li>- Calendar of meetings depending on the area.</li> <li>- Invitation for meetings.</li> <li>- List of confirmed participating stakeholders.</li> </ul>
	Undertake the planned meetings with identified stakeholders of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, members of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association as well as potential members involved on the GI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Explain the GI concept, its benefits and implication.</li> <li>- Explain the importance to work together for the consolidation and development of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.</li> <li>- Discuss the role and functions of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association to provide useful services to all members</li> <li>- Discuss the membership fees and yearly fees that all members must pay to the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association: open to contributions.</li> <li>- Request new voluntary stakeholders ready to collaborate on the work of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, especially to set up the GI database of the GI area.</li> <li>- Agree on a calendar for volunteers to gather the information to build up the database.</li> <li>- Discuss on the budget to build up the database (payment to volunteers gathering the data), which shall be covered with the fees from members if at all possible.</li> <li>- Discuss on possible means of financial support for the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.</li> <li>- Other aspects that may arise.</li> <li>- Invite to join the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association</li> </ul>	10 March – 31 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clear understanding of the GI concept, its implications and benefits as well as the importance to work together for consolidating, defending and promoting the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.</li> <li>- Agreement on the role and functions of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.</li> <li>- Agreement on the membership fees and yearly fees of the Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.</li> <li>- Pool of voluntary stakeholders to help the Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, especially to gather the information for the GI database.</li> <li>- Calendar to gather the information for the GI database.</li> <li>- Budget to set up the GI database.</li> <li>- List of possible options to gather additional financial resources for the Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.</li> <li>- List of members, including new members, of the Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.</li> </ul>

<b>B. Setting up the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI's database</b>	<b>Elaborate the methodology to build up the GI database</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Define the contents of the database that will serve to set up the traceability system (plantations, name of producers, households, cooperatives, farmers' associations, collectors, traders,... hectares, production, etc.)</li> <li>- Define the format of the database (electronic or manual, data introduction and update, etc.)</li> <li>- Prepare templates to gather the data with contents of data to collect, especially to set up the database from different areas, etc.)</li> </ul>	15 March – 31 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Methodology to build up the database of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.</li> <li>- Format of the GI database.</li> <li>- Templates for data collection.</li> </ul>
	<b>Provide training for trainers to the identified voluntary stakeholders</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prepare a training sessions for identified volunteers, where explaining the GI concept, the purpose of the database, the methodology to gather the data, the area that shall be covered, the budget to gather the data, etc.</li> <li>- Provide templates and clarify questions</li> </ul>	25 March – 15 April 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trained pool of volunteers to gather the information for the GI database.</li> </ul>
	<b>Prepare and implement a planning to gather the information to build up the GI database</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- With the pool of voluntary stakeholders and the prepared calendar to gather the information for the GI database, set up a planning for data collection, based on the proposed implementing period.</li> <li>- Assign volunteers to the task of collecting the data and monitor the process.</li> <li>- Follow up on the data gathering.</li> </ul>	15 April– 31 May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Planning for volunteers to collect the data</li> </ul>
	<b>Set up the database for the the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Collect the information provided by volunteers.</li> <li>- Insert on the database</li> <li>- Set up the database.</li> <li>- Launch the methodology for regular update as soon as it is complete.</li> </ul>	15 April – 31 May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Database of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI</li> </ul>
<b>C. Improving the capacities of the working personnel at the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit</b>	<b>Set up a training plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- With the support of the relevant local authorities, set up and implement a plan of regular training for improving the capacities of the officials working in the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.</li> <li>- Include on the training the following: the GI concept, its requirements and benefits; the GI management and quality control; the services to provide to members of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association; the division of responsibilities for each department or individual within the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, among other aspects to be identified.</li> </ul>	1 April – 31 August 2017 (yearly plan to be continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A yearly plan for regular training of the officials within the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.</li> <li>- Improved capacities of the association to manage and develop the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.</li> </ul>

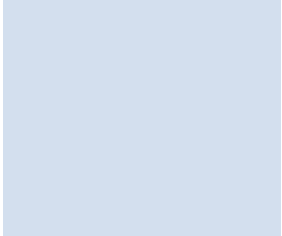


## 2) Strengthening the auto-control of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI by involved stakeholders:

STEPS	ACTIONS	CONTENT	IMPLEMENTING PERIOD	EXPECTED RESULTS
A. Ensuring an efficient auto-control system by involved stakeholders, including the following actions among others possible	Prepare a tool for facilitating the understanding of producers and processors on the production practices they must respect based on the product specifications and other related provisions on the elaboration of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organize and implement an agenda of meetings with all members of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, once new members have joined and the database setting has been launched, to collect all relevant information on the elaboration process of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.</li> <li>- Based on the collected information, prepare some guidelines on the production practices that all stakeholders must implement on their plantations and trading centres.</li> <li>- Based on these guidelines, prepare a tool, easy to understand by all stakeholders, explaining clearly how producers, collectors and traders shall verify that they are respecting the rules of the product specifications, while becoming a friendly and accessible instrument to all GI stakeholders for its implementation on their plantations and trading companies.</li> <li>- Once the tool is drafted, organize meetings with all members to validate its content.</li> </ul>	1 April – 30 April 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Guidelines on the production practices for the elaboration of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.</li> <li>- Friendly tool explaining clearly how producers, collectors and traders shall verify that they are respecting the rules of the product specifications of the GI.</li> <li>- Approval of the proposed tool.</li> </ul>
	Provide the tool to stakeholders so that they may implement an efficient auto-control system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Once the tool is validated, find the necessary resources for its editing in a friendly format, printing and disseminating among stakeholders, to have it accessible on their plantations and companies.</li> <li>- Edit the tool, with the supporting resources.</li> <li>- Once the tool is edited, print as many copies and formats (flyer, poster, etc.) as members shall have them on their plantations, processing centres or companies.</li> <li>- Organize a planning to disseminate and explain the content of the tool and the importance to comply with it on their daily work elaborating the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.</li> <li>- Implement the planning, disseminating the tool to all stakeholders within the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.</li> </ul>	1 May – 31 May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Edited tool for GI stakeholders.</li> <li>- Awareness raising among stakeholders on the importance to respect the production practices on the elaboration of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI.</li> <li>- Coordinated auto-controls of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI on all plantations, processing centres, trading companies, etc.</li> </ul>

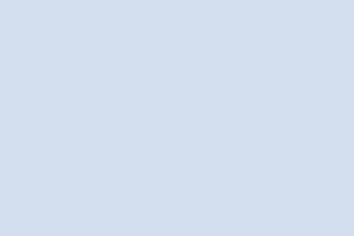
### 3) Setting up the traceability system and the internal control plan of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI:

STEPS	ACTIONS	CONTENT	IMPLEMENTING PERIOD	EXPECTED RESULTS
A. Setting up a traceability system for the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, comprising the following actions among others possible	Define the methodology for the traceability system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contact all members and gather their information regarding the traceability they apply on their businesses.</li> <li>- Define a methodology for a common traceability system: This methodology can start from the auto-controls implemented by producers and packaging and commercializing structures; it can also profit the traceability used for certification schemes that some members may apply, as possible synergies may be profited to reduce costs.</li> <li>- Propose common traceability markers at different stages of the production process that shall be agreed for their use by all members.</li> </ul>	1 June – 15 June 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Methodology for a common traceability system for the GI.</li> <li>- Traceability markers and tracing codes</li> </ul>
	Agree and launch the traceability system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organize meetings with members to discuss and agree on a common traceability system, to ensure the origin of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI from the start of the production process through to the final product.</li> <li>- Put the traceability system in place and correct if necessary.</li> </ul>	15 June – 31 July 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Coordinated traceability system in place for the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, agreed by all members of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.</li> </ul>
B. Setting up an internal control plan for the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI	Define the parameters of the internal control plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The control plan specifies how the rules defined for the elaboration of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI are to be checked (in the product specifications as well as in other adopted provisions, such as the guidelines on the production practices defined for the auto-control).</li> <li>- The Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association must define: the critical points to be controlled for each rule, the method used to control (visual, document analysis, etc.), the moment of control, the frequency of controls and the coverage (all producers, sampling), the sanctions depending on the seriousness of the non-compliance (economic, such as fines or prohibition to use the GI name, or social, such as the exclusion from the group).</li> </ul>	1 July – 31 July 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Guidelines for the implementation of the internal control plan</li> </ul>
	Prepare and launch the internal control plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draft an internal control plan, to be discussed and agreed by all members of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.</li> <li>- In case the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association needs orientation for setting up the control plan, it may explore the possible collaboration of a control and certification body, which</li> </ul>	15 July – 31 August 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trained agents within the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association to implement the internal control plan.</li> <li>- Internal control plan in place for the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI, agreed by all members of the Bình</li> </ul>



can assist on the elaboration of the control plan and training of agents within the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association for its implementation.

- In case there are limited human resources to implement the internal control, it is always advisable to profit the synergies within the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, having some voluntary members to rotate for implementing the internal control.



Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.

## LOCAL AUTHORITIES (LED BY BÌNH THUẬN DOST):

### 1) Setting up an effective GI Multi-Disciplinary Team of local officials for the support and further development of the GI.

STEPS	ACTIONS	CONTENT	IMPLEMENTING PERIOD	EXPECTED RESULTS
<b>A. Involving all agencies directly or indirectly involved in the establishment and development of GIs in the Bình Thuận province</b>	<b>Identify the local agencies to be involved</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identify the local agencies that need to be involved, setting up a list of all relevant departments and agencies (Agriculture, Trade, Tourism and those that are directly or indirectly involved/interested in the development of GIs).</li> <li>- Undertake first contacts to ensure the involvement of agencies and the identification of the official to be part of the future GI Multi-Disciplinary Team.</li> <li>- Prepare the meeting.</li> <li>- Prepare, send and follow up on the invitations for meetings to agencies, ensuring the participation of the identified official/s from each agency.</li> </ul>	1 March – 10 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- List of local agencies to be part of the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team</li> <li>- Invitation for the meeting.</li> <li>- List of confirmed participating officials.</li> </ul>
<b>B. Setting up the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team</b>	<b>Organize a meeting of all related local agencies to discuss and agree on the main aspects of the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team to set it up</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Design the methodology to programme, prepare, implement and follow up on all actions to support and develop the GIs from the Bình Thuận province.</li> <li>- Define the role of each relevant local agency.</li> <li>- Organize the meeting with all related local agencies to agree on the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team structure, roles and duties, skills and the resources required to set it up (what each agency can do, what resources they can allocate, what are the actions that they must undertake as a priority, what may be the support to request from NOIP, what may be the support to the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, etc.)</li> <li>- Set up a deadline for the appointment of the officials who will make up the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team.</li> </ul>	10 March – 31 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Methodology of the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team</li> <li>- List of officials from each agency proposed to be part of the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team</li> </ul>
	<b>Set up the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organize and hold the first meeting of the new GI Multi-Disciplinary Team to launch its activities, comprising the following:</li> <li>- Confirm the appointment of the proposed members and defining the next steps (training, calendar of meetings, tasks, etc.).</li> </ul>	20 March – 31 March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- GI Multi-Disciplinary Team in place</li> <li>- Trained officials integrating the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team</li> <li>- Programme of awareness raising and update on the GI scheme.</li> <li>- Work Plan for 2017/2018, including the road map</li> </ul>

- Provide training to the team members on the GI concept, the GI scheme, its potential benefits and the current challenges in Vietnam, setting up an awareness-raising programme, with regular updates on the GI scheme and its progress.
- Prepare a road map of actions for the development, promotion and protection of GIs from the Binh Thuận province.
- Define annual work plans.
- Coordinate the proposed actions with the relevant national authorities.
- Define the skills, duties and resources needed to implement the actions proposed in the annual work plans, identifying and recruiting the skilled technical personnel, local officials or external experts required to implement the activities proposed in the annual work plans.
- Allocate the required resources and manage the administrative arrangements necessary for the implementation of the activities.
- Supervise, coordinate and implement the actions set out in the annual work plans.
- Report regularly on the results to the relevant government ministries and agencies.
- Follow up on outcomes, identifying the additional activities to be implemented in subsequent annual work plans.

- of actions for the development, promotion and protection of GIs from the Binh Thuận province.
- Pool of technical experts to support on the implementation of the activities.
- Clear resources from all agencies to ensure the implementation of the yearly work plans.

## 2) Continuing the support to the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association:

STEPS	ACTIONS	CONTENT	IMPLEMENTING PERIOD	EXPECTED RESULTS
A. Brainstorming with the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association on the needs to improve and develop the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI	Meeting between local authorities and the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Organize a meeting, gathering the members of the GI Multi-Disciplinary Team and the representatives of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, discussing the training support and financial resources that they need to implement the recommended priorities in this report.</li> <li>- Among others, it would be needed for:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Financial support for preparing the database of members of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.</li> <li>- Financial support for editing and printing the tool on auto-control for stakeholders.</li> <li>- Technical assistance for training for officials working in the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.</li> <li>- Technical assistance for providing training for trainers to the identified voluntaries, so that they can gather the information for the database of members of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.</li> <li>- Financial support for hiring a control and certification body to assist on the preparation of the internal control plan.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	1 April – 15 April 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Useful exchange on the needs of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association, in terms of training support and financial resources needed to implement the recommended priorities in this report.</li> </ul>
	Assess the support to the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Once the needs have been discussed, assess and decide on the means that shall be provided to support the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.</li> </ul>	15 April – 31 May 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agreement on the actions and resources to be supported by the GI Multi-Disciplinary team.</li> </ul>
B. Setting up an action plan for the support of the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association	Set up an action plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prepare a draft plan for its provision and supervision of its use, including all actions that shall be supported by local authorities, including technical and financial means that each agency within the GI Muti-Disciplinary Team will provide to endorse and support the activities by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.</li> <li>- Discuss approve and implement the agreed action plan by the GI Muti-Disciplinary Team.</li> </ul>	1 June – 31 August 2017 (yearly plan to be continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agreed action plan in place to endorse and support the activities by the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association.</li> </ul>

### 3) Setting up an external control of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI:

STEPS	ACTIONS	CONTENT	IMPLEMENTING PERIOD	EXPECTED RESULTS
A. Ensuring the necessary capacities to undertake the external control and certification of the GI	Ensure that the Department of Quality Management of Forest, Agriculture and Fishery products under DARD has the needed technical capacities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure that it has the technical capacity complying with international regulations (ISO/IEC 17065:2012).</li> <li>- If the designated entity is not an accredited body by the BoA, organize trainings with the BoA to receive the accreditation or to ensure independence and impartiality of the entity.</li> <li>- If DOST or the PPC decides that the designated entity must receive the accreditation by the BoA, contact the BoA and start the process to do so.</li> </ul>	1 May – 31 August 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Accreditation by the BoA as a control and certification body.</li> <li>- Technical capacity complying with international regulations (ISO/IEC 17065:2012), for controlling and certifying GIs.</li> </ul>
B. Setting up and implement an external control plan for the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI	Set up the external control plan for the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI (the designated control and certification body)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Work in cooperation with the Bình Thuận Dragon Fruit Association to define: the critical points to be controlled for each rule, the method used to control (visual, document analysis, etc.), the moment of control, the frequency of controls and the coverage (all producers, sampling), the sanctions depending on the seriousness of the non-compliance (economic, such as fines or prohibition to use the GI name, or social, such as the exclusion from the group).</li> <li>- Draft the external control plan, to be discussed and agreed by the Bình Thuận DOST.</li> <li>- Include a certification of conformity or non-conformity of the yearly GI production before the GI is placed in the market.</li> <li>- Explore the possible collaboration of a control and certification body, which can assist on the elaboration of the control plan and training of agents within the designated entity for its implementation.</li> </ul>	1 July – 15 July 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Guidelines for the implementation of the external control plan.</li> </ul>
	Implement the external control plan for the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI (the designated control and certification body together with related local authorities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implement the external control plan.</li> <li>- Detect and correct deviations if needed.</li> <li>- Ensure the certification of the yearly production of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit as a GI before being placed in the market.</li> </ul>	15 July – 31 August 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- External control plan in place</li> <li>- Certification of the yearly production in place.</li> </ul>



## V. Annexes

**ANNEX I – Presentation delivered in localities by the International GI expert on “Management by the GI Association”**

**ANNEX II – Presentation delivered in localities by the International GI expert on “Sustainable development of the GI: Labelling & Promotion”**

**ANNEX III – Presentation delivered in localities by the International GI expert on “GI Protection: The use of the GI right”**

**ANNEX IV – Check List on the Status of the Implementing Planning of the Bình Thuận dragon fruit GI completed by the local GI expert.**

**ANNEX V – List of competent control and certification bodies accredited by the BoA.**