ALCP | Alliances Caucasus 2

REGIONAL MARKET ALLIANCES IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS

ALLIANCES CAUCASUS 2

WILD BOTANICALS

MARKET RESEARCH, NOVEMBER 2022

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VISION AND MEANS OF CHANGE

Georgia has unique natural resources characterized by diverse climatic zones and a wide range of soils, landscapes, and habitats. A wide range of ecosystems contributes to the high level of biodiversity in the country. Georgia is famous for its biodiversity and numerous wild botanicals (plants) are valued for their medicinal and herbal properties. The picking of wild botanicals, grown naturally in the mountains, forests and agricultural areas has been a traditional activity for rural inhabitants in most regions of Georgia and remains so today. Collected wild botanicals are used for private purposes or for commercial use in different sectors particularly food, pharmaceuticals, and cosmetics. There is an increasing tendency for export of wild botanical to EU countries. There is no exact data depicting market growth in the sector, however this research observed the increasing interest of foreign buyers concerning herbal raw materials. This growing demand is potentially an opportunity for local enterprises and rural producers to enter the market however doing this sustainably and equitably presents several challenges. These include preserving the environmental integrity of picking sites and species, improving natural resource use by reducing wastage, and improving the efficiency of processing and storage and ensuring equitable knowledge transfer to pickers. The Wild Botanicals market system is divided into three parts (Figure 1):

Core market: describes the basic function of supply and demand between rural producers picking and supplying wild botanicals to collectors for processor/export companies including pilot support to improved efficiency in collecting, processing and storage.
Supporting functions: deals with inputs necessary for picking, collection and partial processing of wild botanicals, including information relevant to rural producers regarding natural resources use and climate change and picker guidelines for sustainable picking practices
Rules: picker rights of access to sustainable natural resources and accountability of sustainable sourcing by exporters.

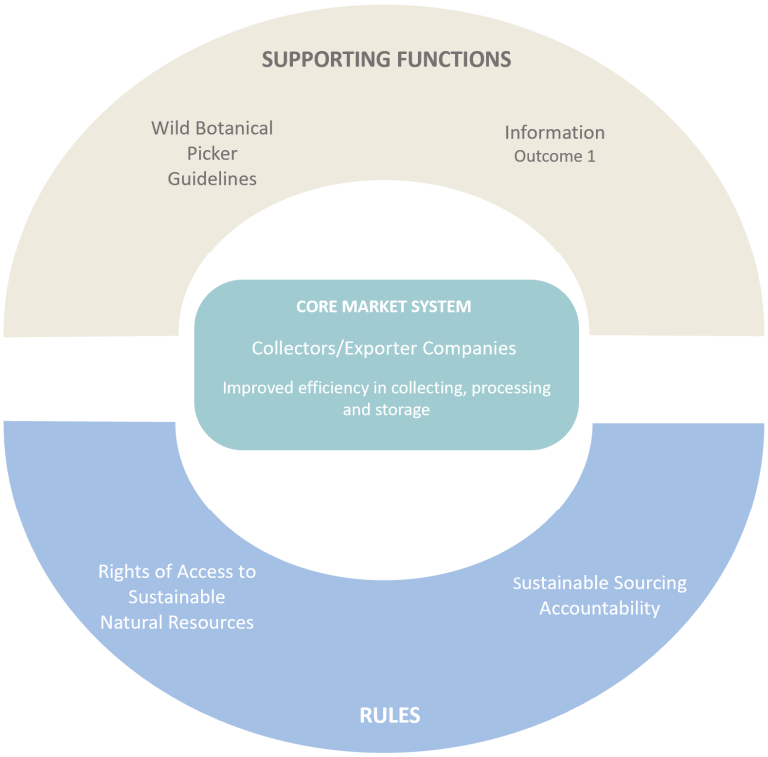

Figure 1 Wild Botanicals Market System and Intervention Entry Points

METHODOLOGY

This market research is based on a desk review of current statistics and sources related to wild botanicals in Georgia and in-depth interviews with thirty-one market actors (see Annex 1 Key Informant Table) including collectors/processors/exporters of wild botanicals, VET colleges, a representatives of the Forest Management Agency and Destination Management Organization (DMO) in Samtskhe-Javakheti and twenty-two gender disaggregated focus groups (twelve female and ten male) conducted in the target regions (Samtskhe-Javakheti, Adjara, Guria, Racha, Kakheti and Mtskheta-Mtianeti).

CROSS CUTTING THEMES

Climate change adaptation will be considered in the collection and processing of wild botanicals. *Gender equality, diversity and social inclusion* will also be of a vital importance in relation to pickers and related to transparency and equitability related to sustainable use of and access to wild botanicals.

CLIMATE CHANGE

The *ALCP2 Wild Botanicals FG survey 2022* revealed that climate change including unpredicatable weather patterns, extremes (too dry, too wet), rapid changes in seasons, timing of seasons, frost in early spring, increased drought in summer and lack of rain present new challenges and threats to the rural population with regard to the generation of income from the picking and sale of wild botanicals. FG participants have noticed that due to these changes the volume and quality of wild botanicals have significantly reduced, as both quantity and quality highly depends on the climate. This reduction and deterioration in the quality of wild botanicals has reflected in decreased revenue for rural producers. Examples of the negative impacts of climate changes include:

- Both quantity and quality of Flatleaved Ragwort (Senecio platyphyllus) depends on the climate. The plant favours humid conditions. Last year due to the lack of snow in Guria and this year in Khulo, the quantity of the plant was 60% less and the stem's size was short.
- Frequent rainfall in Khulo during the collection period hampered the collection process and caused soil erosion and decreased the quantity of wild plants. The quantity of wild plants decreased by 40% this year.
- Snow in March this year in Kakheti, drastically reduced the quality and quantity of wild apples and mushrooms.
- Due to longer droughts in summer, the quality of rose hips haves declined in Samtskhe-Javakheti.
- 100% of the focus group participants named climate changes as a reason for declines in wild mushroom numbers.

Lack of information about useful practices to cope with the negative impacts of climate change is an obstacle for rural producers.

GENDER EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND SOCIAL INCLUSION (GEDSI) IN WILD BOTANICALS

Gender equality, diversity and social inclusion (GEDSI) is another cross-cutting theme of vital importance in the ALCP2. Alliances has worked in the most ethnically diverse areas of Georgia since its establishment, effectively incorporating ethnicity and gender equality within the programming. Additionally, ALCP2 will be in line with Mercy Corps' Gender Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) Strategy which is a long-term vision of advancing gender equality, diversity and social inclusion.

The picking of wild botanicals, grown naturally in the mountains, forests and agricultural areas remains a traditional activity for rural inhabitants in most regions of Georgia. It mostly happens in summer

coinciding with the livestock transhumance period when rural producers traditionally take cattle to the summer pastures. These rural producers, mostly women involved in dairy production, are engaged in picking wild botanicals for example in Ajara and Guria mountain pastures, where the many wild botanicals are widespread. In villages or in nearby village forests, rural women, men, the elderly and often youth pick wild botanicals. It is a labour-intensive process which usually involves all family members.

Men are responsible for transportation, finding a buyer, negotiating on price, and sale, while women are more involved in picking, drying if needed and making records. A relatively small number of youth and elderly people are also involved either in the picking or in the sale of wild botanicals. Ethnic Armenians in villages of Akhaltsikhe, Samtskhe-Javakheti, the Ossetian population in Dusheti, Mtskheta-Mtianeti and Azeri population in Gombori (Kakheti) are also actively involved in the picking and selling of wild botanicals. Ensuring their equitable inclusion in this market is crucial, particularly in light of the informality of the market related to pickers and new legislation potentially limiting picking and threatening this source of additional income. Table 1 below shows the roles and responsibilities of men, women, youth and elderly. Table 2 shows access to resources and agency over them.

Table 1 Gender Division of Roles and Responsibilities in Wild Botanicals

List of Activities	Women	Men	Both	Youth	Elderly
Picking of Wild Botanicals	x		x	x	x
Drying	x		x		
Making records	x		x		
Selling Wild Botanicals		x	x	x	x
Finding buyers		x	x		
Negotiation on price		x	x		

Table 2 Gender Division of Access and Agency (Decision Making Ability) in Wild Botanicals

Roles & Responsibilities	Access			Agency	
	Women	Men		Women	Men
Information and TV programmes	x	x		x	x
Knowledge and skills in Wild Botanicals	x	x		x	x
Finances/bank loans/grants	x	x		x	x
Income from selling Wild Botanicals	x	x		x	x

SUMMARY MARKET ANALYSIS

The following tables and figures contain the summary market analysis; relevance of the sector to the target group, its pro poor potential, the intervention potential, and key constraints in the three parts of the market system.

CORE PROGRAMME TARGET GROUP & PRO POOR POTENTIAL

In Georgia 72% of rural inhabitants are designated as employed in agriculture, of whom up to 90% are small-scale farmers operating on a minimal inputs system. In ALCP2 target regions these farmers have up to ten cows, up to two hundred sheep and thirty bee colonies/hives[1], own small parcels of land up to 1.25 ha and have variable access to common pasture. Georgia is famous for its biodiversity and numerous wild plants are valued for their medicinal and herbal properties. The picking of wild botanicals, growing naturally in the mountains, forests and agricultural areas remains a traditional activity for rural inhabitants in most regions of Georgia generating income for rural producers especially for those living in remote areas. In some regions, collection of wild botanicals is the main source of income whereas in others it represents an additional source of income. Collected raw wild botanicals are used for private purposes or for commercial use in different sectors especially food, pharmaceuticals, and cosmetics. Based on the *ALCP2 Wild Botanicals Focus Group Survey* data, on average 1,250 GEL is obtained from the sale of one type of plant by each rural household a year. Most rural households pick and sell more than one plant. Selling of flat-leaved ragwort and wild garlic were named as being the most profitable, with on average each household earning 7,500 - 10,000 GEL a year.

The rural people who pick wild botanicals are the most vulnerable to unsustainable picking practices, unsustainable demand from a growing market and new regulations which may bar their access to a traditional natural resource. The accountability of other stakeholders in the value chain who are ultimately responsible for the orders which filter mostly remotely to these pickers through collectors is where the focus of interventions focussing on ethical sourcing, equitable employment and improved sustainability should be. The participation of these pickers will be improved through knowledge and simplified guidelines which help them curate the natural resources they know best for their own advantage. Table 3 below summarizes the relevance, pro-poor potential, and impact potential to the target group of rural producers of the wild botanicals sector and the areas of intervention.

Table 3 Relevance & Pro Poor Potential and Intervention Impact Potential

RELEVANCE	PRO POOR POTENTIAL	INTERVENTION POTENTIAL
Wild Botanicals		
High: A large proportion of rural producers supplement their HH income. Widespread across Georgia. High demand for wild botanicals from European countries, Canada and Russia. There are enough resources and high potential for the sustainable collection of wild botanicals to address at least partially the growing demand from import countries leading to an increased income to rural producers from picking and sales.	**High:** Rural inhabitants collect wild botanicals for additional income which significantly impacts on household financial security.	**High:** MSME's improve sustainable export of wild botanicals through increased processing efficiency, upgrading drying and storage facilities, improving quality and reducing wastage, in compliance with sustainable collection practices, which will lead to safeguarded aggregation and income for rural producers. Development of Guidelines on sustainable picking of wild botanicals in tandem with improved accountability of processors and collectors will improve picking practices and efficiency leading to long-term sustainable income for rural producers.

[1] This is a very generalized statement. Not all farmers own sheep or hives. Characteristics vary between regions. Some farmers have more some less. But it serves as a general benchmark.

Table 4 bellow illustrates systemic constraints to the supporting functions; core market and rules are offset by the drivers and pro poor opportunities in the current climate offering significant leverage to conduct successful interventions in the sector.

Table 4 Systemic constraints to the supporting functions; core market and rules

SYSTEMIC CONSTRAINTS SUPPORTING FUNCTIONS	PRO POOR OPPORTUNITIES AND DRIVERS
Lack of awareness of good picking practices, national laws/regulations and international guidelines related to picking of wild botanicals by pickers, collectors and exporters.	Tailored information and guidelines on sustainable use of natural resource wild botanicals and good picking practices will lead to increased knowledge and awareness, sustainable picking, increased engagement of rural producers in the value chain and safeguard and create the opportunity for additional income.
SYSTEMIC CONSTRAINTS CORE MARKET	**PRO POOR OPPORTUNITIES AND DRIVERS**
Lack of drying and storage facilities, equipment and transport. High transaction costs and wastage. Lower quality with less added value potential.	Improved processing efficiency will reduce wastage, increase profits and increase capacity.
SYSTEMIC CONSTRAINTS RULES	**PRO POOR OPPORTUNITIES AND DRIVERS**
Power asymmetry and lack of transparency in the value chain.	Sustainable picker rights of access to natural resources and accountability of sustainable sourcing by exporters will lead to improved transparency in the value chain, long-term sustainable access for rural producers and thus sustainable income.

PART 1: SUPPORTING FUNCTIONS IN WILD BOTANICALS

INFORMATION

Information will be one of the key supporting functions in wild botanicals sector. The *ALCP2 Wild Botanicals Focus Group Survey 2022* revealed that rural producers have some knowledge about wild botanicals, they know their common names, can identify them, know the picking periods, some rules of picking and their unique properties. They also know their culinary and medicinal uses and benefits. This knowledge was passed to down to them verbally from generation to generation or from processors through their collectors. However, they lack awareness of sustainable collection policies and procedures. Not many pickers know about regulations and restrictions on the collection of particular wild botanicals.

Most of them also lack knowledge on issues related to the protection of the environment and the conservation of plant species. They do not know if the plant to be collected is endangered or whether the area has a legal restriction or not. However, some processors do impart knowledge to pickers through trainings. In Kakheti, the rural producers who pick primrose for a bio certified processor exporting to Germany, went through trainings organized about the collection and they are informed in

advance where the primrose should be picked[2]. Pickers for GeoFlower who supply Martin Bauer in Germany are also trained where adhering to the FairWild [3]standard.

36% of rural producers[4] think that some plants are over picked. Common ragwort, rose hip, wild apples, nettle, Sea Buckthorns and mushrooms were named among the most frequently over picked plants by the focus group participants, they mentioned picking in large quantities and disregarding the rules of picking[5] as main reasons for decreases in their numbers. In some cases, climate changes and neglecting the rules of picking led not only to a decrease in their number, but to their disappearance [6].

Therefore, introduction of wild botanical picker guidelines and their dissemination among pickers/collectors is of utmost importance. It will enable the pickers to follow the principles of good picking practices meaning that the picking is conducted at a scale, rate and in a manner that does not undermine the long-term availability, viability and quality of species and populations and does not exceed the target species' ability to regenerate over the long term (See Table 5 below). It will help ensure that picking and collection is done with a focus on conservation essential to the long-term sustainability of natural resources in the ecosystems in which they occur helping safeguard the additional income derived from picking. Pickers' knowledge of their rights of access to natural resources will also be established under Outcome 3.

Targeted through Women's Rooms and rural hubs at women and ethnic minorities, who perform the key role in picking wild botanicals. Media outlets will be facilitated for wider information dissemination within in the sector under Outcome 1.

One specific path should be chosen to enter and exit the picking area and picking should be started from the bottom of the slope.
During harvesting, the soil should not be compacted, harvesting should not be done in rainy weather, nor when the soil is wet.
Picking of the leaves of bushes and trees should be done gradually – from the outer layers to the inside.
Picked plant materials should not touch the ground.
Plastic bags or containers should not be used as they contribute to heating and spoilage of picked wild botanicals.
Crushing and compressing the picked wild botanicals should be avoided as they soon turn brown and lose the main desirable characteristics.
Leafy and above-ground parts of the plant should be picked when they are young.
Flowers should be picked in the highest stage of flowering.
Fruits and seeds should be usually picked at full maturity.
Roots should be picked as the plant ages, when the above-ground parts are already dead.

Figure 2 Some of the Picking Rules of Wild Botanicals in accordance with the Sustainable Collection Principles

[2] Kakheti Bio Ltd, the enterprise who buys the collected primrose from farmers, has a bio-certificate and the collected primrose also has a bio-status. The bio-certificate is valid for a specific area of the Gombori range.
[3] a set of guidelines that ensures the continued use and long-term survival of wild plant species in their habitats. FairWild Standard protects plant species and local wildlife from the effects of over-harvesting, and makes sure local collectors enjoy fair working conditions
[4] The *ALCP2 Wild Botanicals Focus Group Survey 2022*
[5] Rules of picking include identifying the plant species that can be picked for commercial purposes, the percentage of the plant species that can be sustainably picked, knowing which part of the plant to be picked, the correct timing of picking, selecting proper areas for picking and applying for permits/license for picking whenever needed.
[6] Interviewed rural producers in Tsnisi village of Akhaltsikhe municipality noted that the collection of a large amount of snake ivy (vinca herbacea) for pharmaceutical companies years ago led to the disappearance of the population of this plant in their village and surrounding areas.

In the sector of wild botanicals, several international certification schemes have been developed over the years which help differentiate food products on the market according to sustainability criteria[7]. The collection of wild plants, growing naturally in natural areas, forests and agricultural areas can be certified as organic/bio products[8]. The bio/organic standard focuses on environmental sustainability exclusively and others such as the FairWild standard[9] also incorporates social aspects. These aspects prove the commitment of entrepreneurs or organizers of wild collection to sustainable collection, social responsibility, and Fair-Trade principles. Other standards existing on the European market include the Programme for the Endorsement Forest Certification scheme[10] and the Natura 2000[11]. The most widely applied sustainability standard is the organic or bio standard. See *Annex 2: Requirements of the EU Bio Standard for Wild Botanicals*. There are sixty-five bio certified companies[12] in Georgia, out of which six are wild botanical companies in Georgia. Three of the bio certified companies are located in Racha, one in Kakheti, one in Dusheti and one in Ajara[13]. The majority of them collect different wild botanicals. One of them collects only primrose (primula spp) and another only wild cone seed.

There were about ten more companies mainly wild botanicals collector/processor cooperatives from Mtskheta-Mtianeti region which had bio certificates, but their certification expired in 2018-2021 and was not renewed due to limited financial support. Only one company in Georgia, Geoflower Ltd[14] is FairWild certified.

According to Kakheti Bio LLC, there is a high demand for bio certified wild botanicals from Germany and the volume could be increased if more sites are bio certified[15]. However this would require considerable long-term investment as several years are required for a return on investment, as the bio-certification needs to be renewed every year[16].

Some of the export companies do not know much about Bio Certification, others do, but think that not being bio certified does not limit their access to export markets and does not therefore warrant the extra human and financial burdens of the bio-certification process[17], which must also factor in the additional risks posed by the increasing impacts of climate change. For example, weather unpredictability results in an inability to forecast harvest volumes of wild botanicals and control the quality for example drought reduces harvests and heavy rains cause potential harvests to rot. Companies prefer the bio-certification of private plots, where the management of harvest volume and quality is easier to manage but understand that the harvest might no longer have the status of wild botanicals. Some of the companies mention low demand for Bio products, especially those who sell their products in the domestic market

[7] EIP-AGRI Focus Group. MINI PAPER 5. 'Wild collection: recommendations to avoid over exploitation and to promote sustainable use of wild resources. Robert Księżopolski, Eva Moré, Gabriela Olsanska, Alexandra De Paoli, Willemijn de Jongh, Christoph Schunko, Janko Rode, Jesús Fernández Moya, Dimitrios Argyropoulos, funded by European Commission

[8] Following EC regulation 834/2007 and EC regulation 889/2008

[9] The FairWild Standard is a set of guidelines that ensures the continued use and long-term survival of wild plant species in their habitats. FairWild Standard protects plant species and local wildlife from the effects of over-harvesting, and makes sure local collectors enjoy fair working conditions.

[10] Common in the forestry sector and it has a line for certification of non-timber forest products and forest foods.

[11] Natura 2000 is a network of core breeding and resting sites for rare and threatened species, and some rare natural habitat types which are protected in their own right. It stretches across all 27 EU countries, both on land and at sea. The aim of the network is to ensure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats, listed under both the Birds Directive and the Habitats Directive.

[12] They are certified according to green Caucasus standard which is equivalent to EU and Swiss FOAG standards.

[13] Kakheti Bio Ltd (Kakheti), Geoflower Ltd (Racha), Jadvari Abies Ltd (Racha), Iberia Fruits Ltd (Dusheti), Evkapharm Ltd (Ajara), Shota Kopaliani (Racha).

[14] Exclusive partner of Martin Bauer Group.

[15] To be bio certified wild botanicals need to be picked from sites that have been bio certified and the processors factory certified.

[16] And is only issued by one company in Georgia, Caucascert Ltd.

[17] Including record keeping and monitoring at the rural producers' and at the processors/exporters' level as well as certification costs.

and also the highly competitive nature of the market with established bio producers mainly from Turkey and Spain.

Given the current market and aforementioned constraints, incentives are limited for the further expansion of the bio certification of wild botanicals in Georgia except where companies have a specific order with a definite market from buyers who are particularly sourcing bio species. In the case of Kakheti Bio LLC the sourcing company in Germany, Rose Office helped them to become bio certified include with financial support.

The ALCP2 will continue to monitor the situation with regards to bio certification in the wild botanicals market system as part of ongoing market analysis and any interventions in the core market.

PART 2: CORE MARKET

Georgia is mainly considered a provider of semi-finished wild botanicals to foreign producers and for some wild plant species international trade is the major driver. Semi-finished wild botanicals are sorted and dried by the collectors and processors.

Georgian rose hip, primrose, nettle, snow pea, green snowdrop and flat-leaved ragwort are distinguished by their unique properties and are therefore of special interest among European producers. Export countries include Germany, Netherlands, Canada, Ukraine, Latvia, Belarus and Russia. Within the domestic market the demand for wild botanicals comes mainly from food processors, restaurants, agri market wholesalers and retailers and pharmaceutical companies.

Figure 2 illustrates the Wild Botanicals Value Chain, which includes rural producers as *suppliers*, and cooperatives, individual entrepreneurs, physical persons and local medical practitioners as *collectors/intermediaries* and *processors/exporters*.

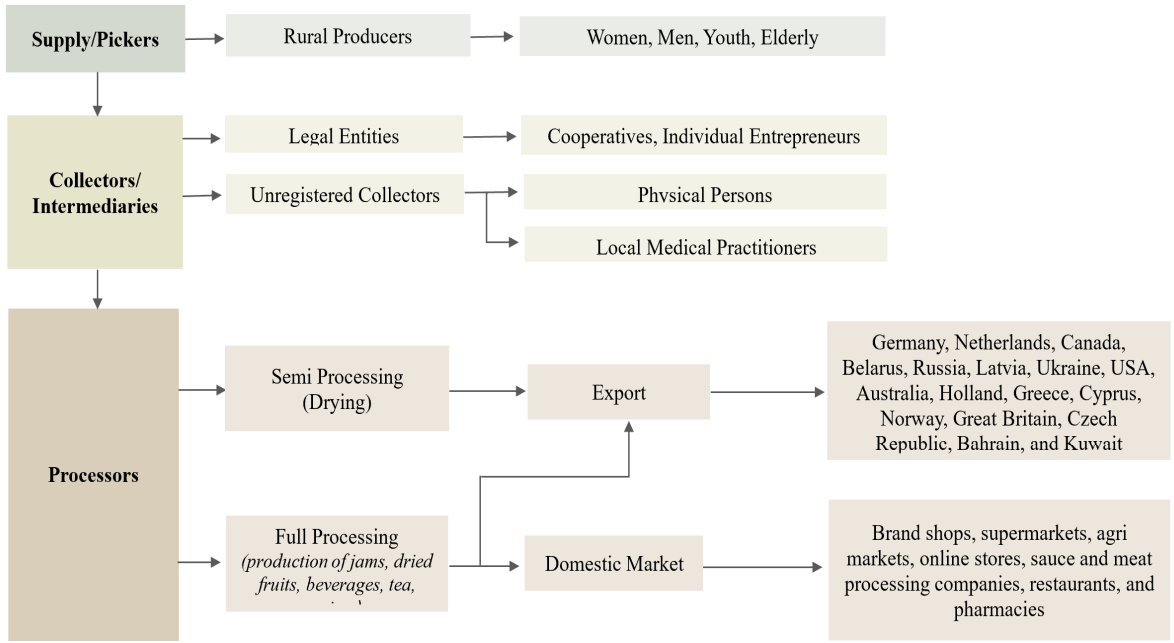

Figure 3 Wild Botanicals Value Chain

OVERVIEW OF WILD BOTANICALS COLLECTED IN GEORGIA

Georgia is famous for its biodiversity and numerous wild botanicals (plants) are valued for their medicinal and herbal properties. The ALCP2 market research and focus group surveys revealed that at least thirty-six wild botanicals[18] are picked by rural producers throughout Georgia and supplied to collectors/intermediaries and processors. For details about the plants see Annex 3, *A list of wild botanicals collected in Georgia identified through in-depth interviews* and Annex 4, *A list of wild botanicals collected in Georgia identified through focus group surveys*.

The wild botanicals collected in the largest volumes are common ragwort, wild apple, wild plum, cornelian cherry, walnuts, rose hip and sea buckthorn. Most of these wild botanicals are collected in one or more regions, however collection of wild botanicals is more common in Samtskhe-Javakheti, Ajara and Mtskheta Mtianeti, where rural producers have better access to markets through collectors and processors. Rural producers in Shuakhevi, Ajara are observing rising competition between pickers, the one who finds the plant spot first, is the one who picks it. Rural producers in all regions have positive attitudes towards the picking and sale of wild botanicals, believing that there is a future in it.

PICKERS AND THE PICKING OF WILD BOTANICALS

Pickers are mostly rural women who also keep cattle for dairy production. The picking of wild botanicals provides a significant source of additional income for rural households. The majority pickers tend to have established contacts with byers who are collectors fulfilling orders for processors. Some also pick for local sale.

The picking of wild botanicals starts in April and continues until November. However, it mostly happens in summer coinciding with the livestock transhumance period when farmers traditionally take cattle to the summer pastures for a whole season. Most wild botanicals grow in the mountains, forests, and agricultural areas near villages. Snow pea, elderberry, rose hip and sea buckthorn, are usually collected locally in the village, by roadsides or in nearby shrubs or forest. The picking of wild botanicals is a labour-intensive activity. Rural producers pick either *leaves* (in the case of mint, nettle, peas, evergreen azalea, blueberry), *flowers* (primrose, poppy, immortelle, dwarf Everlast), *fruits* (rose hip, wild apples, sea buckthorn, blueberries, danewort, cornelian cherry), *roots* (common ragwort, liquorice) or the *entire plant* (wild garlic and dandelion are examples). In the case of picking roots and the entire plant in particular, unless care is exercised damage to plants and plant populations is likely.

One third of rural producers surveyed think that they look after and protect the areas they pick in e.g. removing rubbish or preventing livestock from entering these areas. The remainder said that they just go and pick what they want without considering the area. About a third of focus group respondents consider themselves as following traditional rules of picking[19] which do not harm the population of the species. For example, rural producers in Shuakhevi think the more they pick Flatleaved Ragwort (Senecio platyphyllus) the more it grows, whilst emphasizing the importance of not uprooting the plant. Rural producers in Samtskhe-Javakheti do not collect roots or entire plants and try to protect and preserve the areas where these plants grow. They have become more careful due to bad experiences in the past where unsustainable picking practices have decimated populations.[20]. Other traditional rules include picking plants in clean places, picking them in the afternoon when the dew dries up and

[18] Although of course this may not be definitive.

[19] For example: They pick 60% of wild botanicals in specific area and leave up to 40% unpicked. Also, they do not pick rare species they know are in short supply.

[20] During the research, the respondents in Iveria village of Aspindza municipality recalled that rural inhabitants had been actively collecting wild snails for sale. The snails are looked for in the roots of the milk-vetch (Astragalus caucasicus) bushes which is a Georgian, endemic variety of plant growing on the mountain slopes. Collectors often strip the roots so that the plant withers. This practice led to the disappearance of both the unique plant population of the local flora and the Meskhuri variety of snails in their village.

collecting them in cloth sacks. If drying is needed, it happens in a room protected from sunlight. On average, drying takes up to ten days. However competition with other pickers for the same resource and the negative impacts of climate change of the quantity and quality of crops, as well as inaccurate knowledge based on informal transfer can lead to unsustainable harvesting.

However pickers sell most wild botanicals raw, except for Hawthorn flower and Caucasian Lilly which they sell only dried, as for Dwarf Everlast and mint they sell them both raw and dried.

COLLECTORS

Collectors are the intermediaries between picker and processor. Wild botanicals are collected from all over Georgia. Collectors pick up the wild botanicals picked on order from a collection point in the village or visit individual pickers houses. Collectors generally telephone to a lead picker, who is the nominal organiser of an informal group of pickers, with an order for a particular quantity of a certain plant in season. Other groups of pickers are slightly more formalized, having been trained by some of the companies and are called brigades. These are also contacted by the collectors representing the companies. Only small volumes of wild botanicals are purchased by consumers direct from the village and agri markets.

The collectors supply raw or semi-processed wild botanicals to processors. Some collectors have proper drying facilities, others do not. Often their drying facilities and equipment work poorly or do not work at all. They also have problems related to ventilation and storage. Collectors mainly partner with one processor but some of them supply more than one. Detailed information about them is given in *Annex 1 Key Informant Table*.

Wild botanical collectors are involved in collection, transportation and selling of wild botanicals. Most of them are unregistered physical persons, others operate under the status of cooperatives, individual entrepreneurs, or as informal agents of pharmaceutical companies.

In most cases (82%) the collectors call and instruct pickers which wild botanicals they want and how much and negotiate on price rather than farmers having to find the buyers after picking botanicals (18%). Most often (86%) intermediaries/collectors come to the village and collect them, instead of farmers having to deliver the products themselves (14%). According to the *ALCP2 Wild Botanicals Focus Group Survey 2022* the existence of collectors and processors in the value chain is important because it means receiving orders in advance and being paid in full for the entire amount collected as in the case of primroses, nettle, rose hip, flat-leaved ragwort as opposed to some other wild botanicals like wild garlic and walnuts, which are sold in small amounts in the streets in front of farmers' homes, at bus stops or in agri markets which take time. The price paid for wild botanicals ranges from 0.2 to 25 GEL per kg. Collectors/intermediaries pay more for dried wild botanicals, but selling raw wild botanicals is more common due to lack of drying facilities at the rural producers' level.

All the interviewed collectors have some knowledge to inspect the quality of the collected wild botanicals on the spot. However most of them lack knowledge about the principles of sustainable extraction of wild botanicals, others have received this information through various trainings and courses provided by processors. However, there are still cases where collectors do not follow the processors' instructions on the picking process which, in turn, poses a threat to sustainable collection and biodiversity.

Some collectors have their own transport others work with hired transport, which makes collection more expensive.

PROCESSORS/EXPORTERS

There are several wild botanicals processor companies in Georgia. Most of them are focused on export (See Table 6). These companies mostly do semi-processing, i.e. sorting, drying and packaging for export to up to twenty countries. Those which do full processing, i.e. production of jams, dried fruits, beverages, tea and spices either sell to domestic markets or for export. See *Figure 2: Wild Botanicals Value Chain.*

Table 6 A list of export companies and countries for wild botanicals

Name of Wild Botanical	Exporter/Intermediary	Export Country
Primrose	Kakheti Bio LLC[21]	Germany
Nettle	Geoflower Ltd	Germany
Wild apple	Geoflower Ltd	Germany
Sea buckthorn	Geoflower Ltd	Germany
Rose hip	Geoflower Ltd	Germany
Blueberry	Geoflower Ltd, Noma Ltd	Germany, Latvia, Russia, Ukraine
Burdock	Geoflower Ltd	Germany
Liquorice root	Geoflower Ltd	Germany
Dandelion roots	Geoflower Ltd	Germany
Dwarf Everlast	I.E. Shota Amaglobeli	Russia
Flat-leaved ragwort	I.E. Shota Amaglobeli	Russia, Ukraine, Latvia, Belarus
Elderberry	I.E. Shota Amaglobeli	Canada
Snow pea	I.E. Shota Amaglobeli	Ukraine
Green snowdrop	I.E. Mamuli Surmanidze	Netherlands
Everlasting flowers	Noma Ltd	Russia, Ukraine
Fruit juices	Georgian Nectar Ltd	USA, Australia, Greece, Cyprus, Norway, Great Britain, Czech Republic, Bahrain and Kuwait
Dry fruit and herbs	Iberia Fruits Ltd	Germany
Herbal Tea	Kona Cooperative	Netherlands, Latvia
Dried fruit and herbal tea	Okriba Ltd	Germany

Processor/exporters can be divided into small & medium scale and large-scale processors according to the factory capacity and annual production volume.

They tend not to have direct relationships with pickers relying on collectors to obtain the required amounts and types of wild botanicals required to fulfil orders from importers. Certified companies have more of a relationship as sustainable standards must be maintained throughout the value chain and pickers and collectors must be trained.

SMALL AND MEDIUM-SCALE PROCESSORS

Small and medium scale processors have a small production capacity. They purchase wild botanicals directly from rural producers or through collectors and produce fruit juices, jams, dried fruit, herbal teas, dried spices for national market mainly. Some of them have production and quality certificates. Lack of technological equipment and proper storage facilities are their main constraint. They sell products either through their brand shops, supermarkets, wholesale traders in agricultural markets, as well as online or supply to the food (meat and sauce) processing companies and restaurants.

[21] Exclusive partner of Rose Office, German company which imports wild botanicals collected and processed by Kakheti Bio LLC (shareholders of Rose office own shares in Kakheti Bio LLC).

LARGE SCALE PROCESSORS

Large scale processors mainly have high-capacity compliant production facilities, equipment, warehouses, production, and quality certificates mainly as a result of substantial funding from NGOs and government-funded programs[22]. However, some of them still do not have compliant production facilities and do semi-processing (drying) without equipment in the open air. Most of them are aware of the principles of sustainable extraction of wild botanicals and some provide this information to the collectors through various trainings and courses. However, the extent to which sustainable principles are systematically transmitted to collectors and pickers is unclear. Large processors can be grouped in two main categories: those who export semi processed wild botanicals and those who do full processing of wild botanicals and produce jams, beverages, dried fruit, spices, and tea.

Semi-processing entities: purchase wild botanicals through collectors and generally lack direct linkages and information about their pickers. They deal with importers in countries such as Germany and supply them with semi-processed (dried) wild botanicals mainly to order. They focus on international markets primarily because of higher profit margins and niche markets. Operations are based on and determined by the internal standards provided by exporter companies. The interviewed large-scale processors mostly said that they are interested in buying as much of key species as collectors could supply. The export countries include Germany, the Netherlands, Canada, Belarus, Russia, Latvia, Ukraine.

Full processing entities: export finished products made of wild botanicals like jams, dried fruit, tea and beverages. They purchase wild botanicals through collectors and often lack direct linkages and information about their pickers. Some of them even have their own plantations or source wild botanicals from other big plantation owners. They focus on both international and domestic markets. The domestic market includes shops, supermarkets, agri markets, online stores, sauce and meat processing companies, restaurants, and pharmacies. The export countries include Germany, Netherlands, Canada, Belarus, Russia, Latvia, Ukraine, USA, Australia, Greece, Cyprus, Norway, Great Britain, Czech Republic, Bahrain, and Kuwait.

PART 3: RULES

REGULATION

In May 2020, the parliament of Georgia adopted a new Forest Code of Georgia, which was put in force from January 1st, 2021. The code regulates commercial use of non-timber forest resources including wild botanicals. Later in May 2021, the Government of Georgia approved resolution No. 221 on Rules of Forest Use[23], which regulates the extraction of non-timber forest resources, woody plant products and secondary wood materials. The resolution defines the purpose, authorization and obligations of forest resource user and the National Forest Agency

The *ALCP2 Wild Botanicals Focus Group Survey 2022* revealed that farmers are not well informed about these regulations on the collection of wild botanicals, only 23% know that such rules and restrictions exist. They lack knowledge on all issues relevant to the protection of the environment and the conservation of plant species. They mostly do not know if the plants they collect and the areas they

[22] For example, USAID, ENPARD, Oxfam, Elkana, European organization ITC Ready to trade, Produce in Georgia, the European Neighbourhood Program for Rural and Agricultural Development, the European Union-funded project 'Support for the Development of Agricultural Cooperatives in Georgia' and Project 'Forest Fruits-Markets for Women' implemented by Rural Communities Development Agency (RCDA), USAID REAP project of United States Agency for International Development and Bridge-Innovation and Development with the support of the Big Lottery Fund (BLF).

[23] https://matsne.gov.ge/ka/document/view/5169447?publication=0

collect from have legal restrictions or not unless they have been trained by a company operating according to certified standards such as FairWild or Bio.[24].

Even though the enforcement of the new regulations is weak[25] at present, the rural people who pick wild botanicals are the most vulnerable to unsustainable picking practices, unsustainable demand from a growing market and new regulations which may bar their access to a traditional natural resource. The accountability of other stakeholders in the value chain who are ultimately responsible for the orders which filter mostly remotely to these pickers through collectors is where the focus of interventions focussing on ethical sourcing, equitable employment and improved sustainability should be. Under Outcome 3 the participation of these pickers will be improved through knowledge and simplified guidelines which help them curate the natural resources they know best for their own advantage. Accountability of processors and collectors for sustainable sourcing and picking could become a topic in the convening of conservation entities to develop a sustainable vision for rural inhabitants going forward, an activity planned under Outcome 3.

POSSIBLE SYNERGY WITH OTHER PROGRAMMES

Several projects of apparently national scope are working in the area of non-timber forest products. The programme is already in coordination with them to identify areas of mutual interest and benefit.

Caucasus Environmental NGO Network
ALCP2 sees the potential for cooperation with CENN for the development and dissemination of climate targeted content relevant to pickers, collectors and processors. CENN shared its Caucasus Environmental Knowledge Portal the information related to sustainable forestry, rural development and climate-smart agriculture, social entrepreneurship for green growth, the Georgia climate action programme, climate change, and DRR were relevant to value chains.

Forest Product Association[26]
Founded three years ago by CENN and the financial support of ADC, the *Forest Product Association* intends to unite processors and collectors of non-timber forest products on the Georgian market, including the large processors/export companies. At present, with the financial support of the Austrian Development Cooperation, the association is involved in making an inventory of five non-timber forest products in Guria through CENN. It plans to develop a trademark for processors sourcing wild botanicals for generating added value for export.

Enabling the implementation of Georgia's forest sector reform – ECO.Georgia/GIZ/MEPA
The ALCP2 has been in coordination with this project and will continue coordination to identify common or complementary areas of intervention. The project aims at introducing and disseminating resource-saving forest management methods and energy efficiency measures, and promoting capacity development and cooperation between the government, private sector and population.

[24] Kakheti Bio Ltd, the enterprise who buys the collected Primrose from farmers, has a bio-certificate and the collected Primrose also has a bio-status. The bio-certificate is valid for the specific area of Gombori range and pickers are trained.
[25] Except for three types of non-timber resources – green snowdrop and cyclamen bulbs[25] and fir cone, which is subject to licensing.
[26] Facebook page

ANNEX 1: KEY INFORMANT TABLE

#	Key Informant	Date	Organization/ Specialization	Location and Link to Project
Supporting functions: inputs, information, skills (VET) BDS consulting services				
KI 1	Roin Tateshvili	July 2022	Public vet college of Samtskhe - Javakheti State University	Akhaltsikhe and Akhalkalaki: operating since 2002. The college has qualification programmes which issue diplomas. Students are fully financed by the government. In Akhalkalaki, the university has a free dormitory for 200 students living in rural areas. The programmes include vocational qualification of forestry, vocational qualification of horticulture, undergraduate programs in ecology and agronomy, graduate programs in agrotechnology and in veterinary medicine. The students are mainly young people from rural communities both Ethnic Georgians and Ethnic Armenians.
KI 2	Bela Avalishvili	July 2022	Public Vet college Opizari	Akhaltsikhe: founded in 1977 Opizari has qualification programmes and training courses funded by the government. It has been facilitated by ALCP to integrate Jara teaching in beekeeping module. The module will be submitted for accreditation by the end of 2022. The college also implements short-term preparatory courses commissioned by private persons, governmental and non-governmental organizations. The college has 28 authorized professional educational programs, including veterinary medicine, forestry, agro-mechanization, hotel services, farming, operation of water supply systems and others. The college also has 13 authorized vocational training programs including medicinal plants growing, forestry, regional tour guiding and others. The material and technical base and equipment of the college are in accordance with modern standards. The college has training laboratories and infrastructure adapted for disabled people.
KI 3	Zurab Kuljanishvili	July 2022	Georgian Business Development Center Caucasia (GBDC Caucasia)	Akhaltsikhe: operating since 2015 GBDC in partnership with Fert, a French association for international cooperation for agricultural development and in cooperation with Samtskhe Javakheti Farmers Association Ertoba have training courses to farmers owning from 5 to 30 cows. The curriculum covers issues related to veterinary, artificial Insemination, livestock nutrition, milk hygiene, labor safety and business registration. The target beneficiaries are 125 members of the association and up to 400 non-member farmers. GBDC is currently implementing a training program for more than 300 farmers and dairy enterprises within the framework of the Land O' Lake program. The main topics of the training programs are veterinary, artificial insemination, milk hygiene and livestock nutrition. The organization also cooperates with College Opizari and provides practical trainings to its up to 50 students/year in the farms owned by association members, currently free of charge.
KI 4	Tamuna Kapanadze	July 2022	Akhaltsikhe Adult Education Center	Akhaltsikhe: founded in 2006, the center has been operating as an independent organization since 2016. It promotes the idea of "lifelong learning" and offers informal and formal educational services to the population for their professional and personal development, increasing employment opportunities, raising civic self-awareness, and developing the institution of volunteerism. The center also conducts on-site trainings. There are small workshops and a social cafe at the base of the center. Except for the

				state-accredited course (sewing work), all courses are paid. Co-financing is done within the framework of specific projects. Courses range from 1-3 months; language courses are held throughout the year.
KI 5	Nana Zubashvili	July 2022	NNLE Samkharo	Akhaltsikhe: NNLE Samkharo has been operating since 2001 in Samtskhe Javakheti, Adjara and Kvemo Kartli regions. The Union has various donors such as the Embassy of Japan, the United Nations, the Swiss Development Agency and others. Its main activities are related to agriculture and environmental issues. Within the framework of various projects, the Union hires experts and conducts trainings for farmers and entrepreneurs on potato growing, carrot growing, sericulture, wild botanicals, plant protection, cheese production, beekeeping, livestock nutrition, HACCP implementation, organic certification and other issues. Last year, a total of 718 people took their courses. About 20% of graduates are employed in various enterprises and educational institutions, including College Opizar, Elkana and FAO.
Collection and Processing				
KI 6	Geoflower LTD	May 2022	Collection, drying and selling of fruits and medical plants	Ambrolauri, Racha: Geoflower LTD was founded in 2007 and collects fruits and medical plants from: Racha, Adjara, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Lechkhumi and Zemo Imereti regions. Geoflower produces up to 30 different products and most of them are bio certified by Caucascert. More than 90% of their products are sold in Germany to one of the biggest buyers of botanical products worldwide Martin Bauer . Since 2010 Geoflower opened a collecting and processing factory in Ambrolauri, Racha region and covers Racha, Lechkhumi and Zemo Imereti areas for collection of fruits and medical plants. The factory works through collectors who have brigades to pick the raw material, as from the forest as well from farmers. The main collected botanicals from this region are Liquorice root, wild apple, rosehip and blackberry.
KI 7	I.E Rafael Darbinyan	June, 2022	Herbal tea producer	Khospio village, Akhalkalaki: operating since 2016. The entrepreneur seasonally collects up to 200 kg of 18 types of herbs in the alpine zone. Hires 8-10 people daily to collect herbs. Seasonally, he produces 80 kg of herbal tea which is currently sold locally in accordance with existing customer orders. Before the pandemic, he also sold tea along with other agricultural products through his own branded shop "Javakheti Eco" in Tbilisi which was closed during the pandemic. The annual turnover in 2021 was 24,000 Gel out of which 60% was net income.
KI 8	Jieli Ltd - Beka Vacharidze	July 2022	Mulberry processor	Jieli Ltd was established in 2020. The owner made a private investment and constructed a mulberry processing enterprise building on the area of 550 sq. m according to the NFA's recommendations. The entrepreneur is going to collect mulberry from the local population and produce 4 main products: Bakmazi (jam), fruit leather, mulberry distillate, and dried mulberry. The products will be sold throughout Georgia through the chain supermarkets and small shops. The owner is going to support developing mulberry nursery in the region as well.
KI 9	I.E. Nana Chanturia	July 2022	Collection and sale of medicinal plants, production of dried fruit	Chobiskhevi village, Borjomi Municipality: Nana Chanturia and her colleague Makvala Lomsadze together with 5 other local women have been collecting medicinal plants such as savory, rosemary, oregano, Mentha pulegium, lime flower, wild mint, saffron, hawthorn flower and others in the forest and

				high mountainous areas surrounding their village since 2019. They also collect raspberries, wild pear, apples, and barberry and make dried fruits and apple vinegar. They collect pine pollen and raw pinecones as well. They also make and sell jams from cones. The main buyer is Gela Chkoidze who runs a shop "Sunelis Sakhli" in Kareli, insert region. Some local resellers visit them on site as well, but they buy in smaller quantities and offer lower prices.
KI 10	NNLE Gerogian Textile House – Ekaterine Gvaramadze	July 2022	Production of carpets and rugs from wool dyed with wild plants	Aspindza: Since 2015, Eka collects greasy wool from the local population, washes it in the river, dries and processes it. She collects a variety of wild plants such as saffron crocus, mulberry leaf, stone moss, barberry leaf, broom seeds, poppy, oregano and others and produces natural dyes for wool. With dyed wool the enterprise makes a thread and sews carpets and rugs for sale. She also sews Georgian Traditional clothes, hats, scarves and other accessories from it. She hires local rural inhabitants to produce thread and sew carpets. She taught this activity to 36 local people. Among them 14 are persons with disabilities and the others are members of socially vulnerable families. Eka brings the material to them, teaches them, then she sells the finished products and gives them money. She also cooperates with 40 children of the Ninotsminda Orphanage, teaches them to sew, embroider and helps them sell handicrafts. She also works as a trainer in defectology, ethnography and child psychology for Junior 19chievement Georgia.
KI 11	Natur Medea Tao Ltd – Lia Merabishvili	July 2022	Collection and sale of wild fruit and medical plants	Akhaltsikhe: Since 1995 Lia Merabishvili has been collecting wild fruit and medical plants such as sea buckthorn, sweetbrier, mulberry, bilberry, currants, nettle, haw, motherwort, and straw flower from more than 500 rural inhabitants in SJ. Until 2000, she had a juice factory and processed cranberry, barberry, raspberry, blackberry, mulberry and other fruits. Juice was purchased by Kuna Georgika company which exported the products to Germany and Ukraine. Until 2020, she cooperated with the pharmaceutical company Neopharm and supplied them with sweetbrier, sea buckhorn, Wild Mint and celandine. It has been the last 2 years that she has stopped this activity, due to the lack of demand from large-scale buyers.
KI 12	Cooperative "Sharakhevi 1" – Lia Bodzashvili	July 2022	Collection and sales of wild botanicals	Sharakhevi village, Dusheti Municipality: established in 2014 the coop. has 15 members and 90 sq m. building where there is a drying unit, racks and a storage room. Collection and sales of wild botanicals is the main activity of the cooperative. It collects raw primrose, dogrose (Rosa canina) and crab apple from 250 rural households in 9 villages of Dusheti municipality and supplies crab apples raw and primrose and dogrose after drying to Kakheti Bio LLC and Bio-Product LLC. The cooperative had proposals from several doctors regarding the purchase of nettle and multi-veined plants, but they didn't negotiate about the price.
KI 13	Georgian Nectar Ltd-Zviad Davitaia	August 2022	Producer and exporter of wild and all-natural fruit juices.	Kareli: Georgian Nectar (GN), established in 2007, produces and exports juices made entirely from wild-sourced or locally grown harvests of local farmers in Shida Karti and Ajara Regions. The company holds the following certificates: (ISO 22000, BIO Organic, Halal, Kosher), and has partnerships with international distributors and wholesalers around the world. Wild Pomegranate juice is their most popular, they have a wide selection including blackberry, raspberry,

				cornelian cherry, strawberry, sour cherry, beetroot, barberry and blueberry juices. Today, the company exports to 9 countries worldwide, including USA, Australia, Greece, Cyprus, Norway, Great Britain, Czech Republic, Bahrain and Kuwait. The product is not sold in the Georgian market.
KI 14	Cooperative Kona -Natalia Partskhaladze	August 2022	Production of herbal tea	Lavriskhevi village, Tianeti. Established in 2015 Cooperative Kona has 5 members. The cooperative has an organized drip irrigation system for herbal tea nursery and a compliant tea processing factory. It grows lavender, rosemary, mountain savory, lemon savory and produces 12 types of tea, including 9 combinations, which were made with the help of Georgian and French physiotherapists. Cooperative "Kona" actively cooperates with other cooperatives to buy some herbs for example Caucasian evergreen azale which don't thrive in Kaspi. The dried product is placed in sacks and stored in the warehouse, after which various compositions are prepared, packed and sent to teahouses for sale.
KI 15	Iberia Fruits Ltd – Konstantine Kurtsidze	August 2022	Fruit processing	Bichnigauri village, Dusheti Municipality: established in 2016 with the support and financial assistance of the Agricultural Project Management Agency. In January 2017, the British company Lloyds Register Assurance Quality granted Iberia Fruit LLC the ISO 22000:2005 certificate within the framework of the cooperation between USAID/REAP and the Agency for the Management of Agriculture Projects. The production steps are based on the maintenance of ecosystem values, which are determined by the internal standards provided by their main client, the German company "Martin Bauer Group". Iberia Fruits Ltd. buys fruit from up to 120 local farmers. The company employs 14 people and annually produces 110-120 tons of different types of dry products, currently the products are sold mainly abroad.
KI 16	Cooperative Aragvelebo -. Natia Psuturi	August 2022	Collecting and drying wild botanicals for alpine herbal tea production	Barisakho village, Dusheti municipality: operating since 2014 unites 5 locals. The enterprise was co-financed within the European Neighbourhood for Rural and Agricultural Development (ENPARD) program. The main activity is collection of non-timber forest products, processing and production of herbal tea. The cooperative produces nine types of herbal tea from local, wild-growing plants. "Deka tea is a traditional product of Khevsureti, making tea from mountain herbs is a way of life for the locals, the idea of the cooperative members was to revive the tradition and start industrial production. Bilberry, green mint, blueberry, cranberry, etc. are harvested in full compliance with the rules and traditions. Collected plants are processed according to European standards, following strict norms of hygiene and tea making. The range of products has been expanded over the years and is available in several stores in Tbilisi. In 2019, the "Dekas Tea" was awarded the "Georgian Quality Mark" by the Marketing Council of the Ministry of Environment Protection and Agriculture. "Aragvelebo" herbal tea is also sold online at extra.ge.
KI 17	Cooperative Tianetis Nobati - Ilia Archemashvili	August 2022	Collection and processing of non-timber forest products, fruits, and medicinal herbs.	Tianeti: established in 2015 with the support of the European Union within the framework of the ENPARD project implemented by OXFAM, the cooperative built and equipped a processing plant with electric and solar dryers, cold storage and various equipment with full compliance and consideration of food safety requirements. Later, again with the help of the EU grant program, they built a greenhouse where

				plants are grown, which plays a big role in the operation of the enterprise and allows to earn additional income. Currently 13 local farmers including 7 women are united in the cooperative who collect and process non-timber forest products, fruits, and medicinal herbs. Among them are primrose, dogrose, crab apple, wild plum, black plums, apple, sea buckthorn which are processed, dried and packed according to the standards. The cooperative also makes jams, fruit leather, churchkhela, sauce and tea.
KI 18	I.E Gela Chkoidze - Brand Name Sunelis Sakhli	August 2022	Collection, processing, sale of wild botanicals	Zemo Kkvedureti village, Kareli Municipality: The entrepreneur started this business in 1998. In 2011, he opened a branded store "Sunelis Sakhli" in Gori town on the Tskhinvali highway. Since 2013, he started expanding his business and according to the recommendations of the NFA built an enterprise building on an area of 400 square meters in the village of Zemo Khvedureti, Kareli municipality. The building houses raw materials reception, grinding, mixing, packaging rooms and a storage. 8 people are employed full-time in the enterprise, 5 women and 3 men. The entrepreneur collects dried wild botanicals like savory, penny-royal, yellow flower, foreign spice, rosemary, bay, sumac, coriander and barberry from the rural population of Samtskhe Javakheti, Shida Kartli, Kakheti, Svaneti and Imereti regions. Annually he collects totally about 75 tons of different spices from up to 300 rural households throughout Georgia and pays from 5 to 35 Gel/kg for dried spices. Raw materials are collected by trucks and trailer type vehicles. The clients are 26 wholesale traders of spices in the agricultural markets of Tbilisi and Batumi, Kula factory and several restaurants and shawarma producers in Gori. The company also cooperates with "GEO" LLC and supplies 4 tons of dried spices during the year.
KI 19	Okriba Ltd, Brand name of tea is Bueti	August 2022	Tea and dried fruit production	Tkibuli, Imereti: established in 2020, Brand name of tea is Bueti, brand name of dried fruit - Georgian Green Valley. The company produces 6 types of tea: black tea, green tea, wild blueberry tea, forest berry tea, citrus tea, herbal tea, with different wild plants, citrus and fruits. Tea is collected from its own plantation (55 ha), while the wild plants such as wild mint, bilberry leaves, barberry, blueberry, cranberry and haw are collected from Tkibuli, Tsageri and Racha. The company contacts collectors and tells the quantity and the type of the wild plants to be collected. 50% of the tea is exported to Germany and 50% is sold at the local market in supermarket chains such as Europroduct, Carrefour, Goodwill and Agrohub. In this year, 3.8 tons of blueberry was collected. The company does not have direct suppliers. It has 3 contractors so called "makers" who supply them with wild plants. The factory is not aware of the # of people engaged in the collection, due to no direct contact with them.
KI 20	I.E. Shota Amaghlobeli	August 2022	Collection and sales of wildflowers and herbal plants	Shuakhevi, Ajara: He collects and sells wildflowers and herbal plants from Ajara, Guria, Samtskhe-Javakheti regions. He started his work in 2010 but was suspended in two years due to closure of the pharmaceutical factory, which was the main client. Shota resumed its work in 2021. Shota Amaghlobeli collects six types of wildflowers. The main plant collected is Senecio platyphyllus (600 tonnes/year). Other plants collected are Everlasting flowers (10 t), Dog rose (3 t), Elderberry (5 t), Snow pea (2 t),

				Caucasian whortleberry (4 t). Plants are collected from 400-500 households/about 2,000 farmers. Up to 30 tonnes of plants are collected daily and distributed by the entrepreneur's four vehicles to Shuakhevi, where Shota rents a place for storage and drying of plants. The main markets are the pharmaceutical company in Batumi and export to Russia, Ukraine, Latvia, Belarus. Shota has established linkages with Russian and Belarusian partners through private contacts. Price offered depends on the quality. Annual turnover amounts to 500,000-800,000 Gel. In total, 30 local people (4 women) are employed seasonally from July to November (10 Gel/per day paid) KI 20in different shifts, who are involved in unloading, drying and pressing the flowers.
KI 21	I.E. Mamuli Surmanidze	August 2022	Production/collection of green snowdrops (Galantus woronowii) bulbs	Akhalsofeli, Ajara: Mamuli Surmanidze started production/collection of green snowdrops (Galantus woronowii) bulbs in 2005. At first, he planted snowdrops in his own 1 ha land plot in Khulo and Keda. One square meter produces about five kilograms. It does not require any fertilizers and after taking out the bulbs, another plant may be planted in the same land. In 2017, the entrepreneur received an export license and exported the first batch to Holland in 2018. Two million were exported. In 2021, he has received an official permission from the National Environment Agency for collection of 5 million bulbs from the environment. This permission covers the plants that are in danger of extinction. This allowed the entrepreneur to start collection of bulbs from the local farmers. After gaining the permission, the entrepreneur was able to export 5 million bulbs collected by farmers from the environment plus 4 million from the contractor farmers. The collection season is in April and May, after that bulbs are distributed to the factory where they are cleaned, calibrated, dried for two months, and packaged for the export by August. This year, the bulbs were collected from 227 farmers for 1.5/kg.
KI 22	Noma Ltd	August 2022	Berry production and herbs collection/processor	Tsikhisdziri, Ajara: established in 2011. The company started with the collection and drying of European blueberry (Vaccinium myrtillus). In 2017 it started its own production of bog bilberries planted in 11 ha land in Gvara, Kobuleti. Also, the company collects European blueberry (Vaccinium myrtillus), Dog rose (Rosa canina), Sea buckthorns (Hippophae rhamnoides), Everlasting flowers (Helichrysum arenarium). Plants are dried in Tsikhisdziri, in the specially arranged drying rooms and sold afterwards. During transportation of European blueberry from the mountains there was leftover juice, so the company director and his wife decided to use it for a production of wine and established a new company Okrovalley in 2022. The plants are collected from about 100 families in the mountainous of Ajara and eastern Georgia. Annually, the company collects: European blueberry – 120 tonnes; Dog rose – 150 tonnes; Everlasting flowers – 30 tonnes. Dried out plants are exported to Russia, Ukraine. The company hires about 70 people (60 women) seasonally and has 7 permanent staff members.
KI 23	Kakheti Bio LLC Lizi Khmiadashvili	August 2022	Collection, processing, and sales of wild botanicals	Tsnori, Kakheti: Established in 2014 the enterprise works in two directions, i.e., collecting wild plants and growing plants locally in its organic farm. The enterprise has several founders, Georgian and German. Before the Pandemic, the enterprise collected primrose from Gombori range, Sharakhevi and

				Tianeti. To date, it collects only from Gombori range. For primrose, the enterprise pays five GEL/kg. Before 2020, 50 families on Gombori range and two cooperatives in Sharakhevi and Tianeti were involved in collecting Primroses, to date up to 20 families are involved. After the collected primrose is brought to the factory, dried, processed, calibrated and packed primrose is exported to Germany by trailer. Until 2020, up to three tons of primrose was exported to Germany for the purpose of making Sinupret, a medicine for the treatment of hymenitis. Due to the Pandemic, when people were more focused on treating against Covid-19 and also, they started wearing facemasks that lead to reducing other small viral diseases, the demand for primrose has stopped (main primrose suppliers for the Sinupret producer company were Georgia and Albania and they kept buying primrose only from Albania). After that, Kakheti Bio exported 100 Kg Primrose in 2021 and 300 Kg in 2022 to Germany which, instead of making Sinupret, was used for making an herbal Tea. The enterprise has a bio-certificate, and the collected primrose (on Gombori range) also has a bio-status. In order to export to Germany, the enterprise is asked for a bio certificate and a Phyto certificate. At this stage, the enterprise has both. The collection of plants is accompanied by a fee from the state (which came into force this year) and amounts to 0,01Gel per kilogram. The enterprise has planted mint, calendula, tarragon (French variety) and rose (Georgian, Samurabe variety) on 18 hectares in Tsnori. Produced plants are exported to Germany through its partner, Rose Office.
KI 24	Small Business Entrepreneur Giorgi Sekhniaidze, brand name Usharo	July 2022	Collection, processing, and sales of wild botanicals	Tusheti: Since 2016, the entrepreneur has been collecting and packing the following pants: thymes, St. John's wort (hypericum), oreganos, chamomile, Rhododendron caucasicum, vaccinium, red raspberry, pinecone. Collection takes place in Tusheti on various mountains in alpine and sub-alpine places. Some parts of the plants are sold in Tusheti, some parts are stored in Laliskuri and then transported to Tbilisi. Then, packed plants are sold through the Internet. The permission and accordingly the fee have not yet been requested for him by anyone. Plants are dried naturally. The entrepreneur has gained knowledge related to the collection of plants from the family. He is a member of the Farmers' Association and attended one online training session where they discussed this sphere. Four people are employed, himself and family members (1 man, 3 women). Annually, he sells 10,000 - 15,000 Gel value of production. He used to sell the production in cafes, hotels and shops, but nowadays he sells online through the internet himself. He has exported his production to England three times, totalling up to 500 packages. He thinks the exports will continue. He has also sent samples to Israel and Ireland. The enterprise does not have a bio certificate. He wants it, but he doesn't know how to get it. His products are in demand, and he thinks that export will be an even more incentive to increase and develop his production. He wants to conduct lab tests on his production in order to put the composition on the label. This will lead him to bio production and is good for export development, as well.
KI 25	NNLE Union of Therapy of Socially Disadvantaged	July 2022	Collection of wild botanicals	Signagi, Kakheti: NNLE Union of Therapy of Socially Disadvantaged People of Sighnaghi Region, known as Qedeli Community was founded in 1999 by five local residents. It is a residential unit where adults with

	People of Sighnaghi Region, known as Qedeli Community. Gela Ghlilvashvili			limited intellectual abilities have been living in a dignified, family environment since 1999. By working in occupational therapy workshops in the community, residents are given the opportunity to realize their skills and desires. 50-52% of funds come from the State, the rest from donations. In 2013 they received a grant from Czech Embassy and purchased an electric dryer, a hand tractor and arranged a greenhouse on 105 square meters for growing seedlings. They also have natural dryers for the sun and shade. The union has 28 constant beneficiaries. They collect hypericaceae, paliurus, linden, thymes, mint and sage. The collection takes place on the hills in the vicinity of Sighnaghi, no permission has been requested from anyone, therefore they do not pay any fees/taxes. The partner organization "Person and Nature" provides knowledge about plants and their characteristics. This organization has two polyclinics and a pharmacy in Tbilisi. Known as "Home of Therapy". Plant picking is carried out by the beneficiaries. Collection of herbs and their sale is an insignificant financial income for the union and amounts to 2000-3000 GEL annually. It is sold through the Internet and in one of the hotels, where a corner for the Union is set up and various products (made by the beneficiaries) are presented: herbs, wooden toys, dolls and beads. Herbs are packed in paper bags. They have not thought much about increasing the production, because the process is all part of the therapy. However, if they see demand in the market and guaranteed income, they can think about expansion.
KI 26	Home of Therapy Ltd Anano Gagua	August 2022	Clinic and Pharmacy	Tbilisi: Home of Therapy Ltd is a clinic and has an authorized pharmacy. The clinic was founded in 1993. It is an organization where different types of medicines are made through wild botanicals. The organization has a professional connection with a German company; the employees usually go through trainings in Germany. Plants are collected by two people in Tusheti, Lelubani protected areas (near Sabaduri forrest) and in Tsilkani. The following plants are collected: linden, oreganos, hawthron, thymes, rhododendron caucasicum, chamomile. The collected plants are brought to Tbilisi, where they dry and store them. They sell medicines made from the plants in their pharmacy. There is no export, they only collect the quantity which is enough for local consumption. Their products are considered as bio as they are made of the wild botanicals. Sectoral constraints: they consider unhealthy competition with conventional pharmaceutics as a problem, the market is saturated with their products; not enough attention is paid to the development of this field in Georgia. Also, the nature is polluted, and you have to travel a long distance to find plants. Potential entry point: they collect plants in different geographical areas. They are unable to pack and dry the plants nearby where they collect, so they quickly bring them to Tbilisi. This complicates the process. According to the representative of the clinic, it would be good to have a dryer, for example, in Kakheti or in the West, where the plants would be separated, dried and then taken to Tbilisi.
KI 27	Cooperative Bio-Chadunela Natalia Mamgulashvili,	August 2022	Collection, processing, and sales of wild botanicals	Argokhi Village, Akhmeta municipality: Cooperative Bio-Chadunela was founded in 2017 by 9 rural women living in Akhmeta municipality. Before the pandemic, they were collecting linden, lemon balm, hawthorns, rose hip (rosa canina), St, John's wort (hypericaceae), chicory. The plants were collected in Argokhi village,

				near the forest by the 9 founder members of the cooperative and plus 7 other women. After the collection, the plants were dried naturally and packed in paper bags. They were selling their products at various touristic festivals/exhibitions in Telavi. They also supplied a couple of small shops but stopped because the shops did not pay them. During Covid-19 the cooperative stopped activities and still has not resumed. The cooperative does not have its own building. The members of the cooperative have never been on any kind of trainings; the knowledge came from the practice. The price of one package of plants (consists of a couple of plants mixed) was 2,5-3 Gel. The Cooperative did not function as a business, practically did not have a profit, it was more like a hub for the women to gather, though they are willing to resume activities and have financial profit, as well.
KI 28	Farconi Ltd Mamuka Alphaidze	August 2022	Collection, processing, and sales of wild botanicals	Kutaisi: Farconi Ltd was founded in Kutaisi, Imereti region in 1997. The enterprise is focused on processing wild botanicals. Final product is herbal tea which sold locally in Georgia, as well as for export. The enterprise mainly collects sea buckthorn, bilberry, dog rose, linden, butcher's broom roots, common hawthorn. The products are exported to Europe and China. The company also produces spices, which are exported to the USA under the trademark "Khomli". Farconi Ltd has recently started exporting bay leaves to China. In addition, a while ago, the enterprise began supplying wild botanicals to pharmacy chains, although later they demanded that the enterprise should have had the GMP standard established. The enterprise did not have the GMP standard, and the cooperation was terminated. During the year, it processes an average of 100 tons of botanicals. Produced plants are not bio. The entrepreneur tried to start his own bio farm, he invested a considerable amount of money, but he got a very small harvest and faced problems in sales, that is why he stopped it. Collection - plants are collected on many locations throughout Georgia by up to 200 collectors. 50 people are employed in the enterprise. The enterprise has an ISO certificate. Challenges - according to the entrepreneur, the sector in which he works is quite difficult. It is difficult to find collectors, and existing stock of raw materials in Georgia is not enough, therefore this entire cycle from collection to sale is associated with difficulties. Industry needs to be developed to enable producers to function effectively. The entrepreneur looks at the development of this field quite pessimistically.
Rules				
KI 29	Davit Talakhadze	August 2022	Representative of the National Forest Agency in SJ	Akhaltsikhe: Until 2021 there was no regulation related specifically to the picking/collection of wild botanicals. From June 2021, the parliament of Georgia started working on amendments to the Forest Code. A draft law has been initiated in the parliament which determines and imposes the fee for obtaining non-timber resources and woody plant products in the forest for the purpose of commercialization. Individuals will be required to apply to the National Forest Agency to become eligible to obtain a specific resource in the designated area for a period of one year. The person entitled to obtain the resource will also be obliged to submit a report on the obtained resource at the end of the year and pay the fee defined

				by the law for the use of natural resources. It is unclear when the law will be fully enforced.
KI 30	Teona Jujunadze	August 2022	Samtskhe-Javakheti Destination Management Organization (DMO)	Akhaltsikhe: Founded in 2019 by the initiative of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development, the National Tourism Administration and USAID/Zrda. DMO represents an inter-municipal, non-commercial legal entity and aims to promote the sustainable development of tourism in the region in cooperation with other stakeholders. DMO is engaging both urban and rural population of the region in workshops, trainings, festivals and other events regarding tourism (including ecotourism), agriculture/food production, Food Safety and Hygiene issues, etc.
KI 31	Koba Silagadze	November 2022	National Forest Agency in SJ	Akhaltsikhe: The new Forest Code of Georgia was put in force from January 1st, 2021, followed by the resolution No. 221 defining the rules of forest use. According to the new regulation, the regional offices of the National Forest Agency have been granted the right to issue licenses - for extraction of non-timber forest resources for commercial purposes, except for endangered species, which are licensed by the Environmental Protection Agency. In the Samtskhe Javakheti region, the agency has so far issued only 1 permit to the HERBES LLC for the extraction of fir-tree (Abies) cones in Bakuriani. A few months ago, the agency was approached by another company to obtain the licence for the extraction of conifer, although it has not yet officially applied. The procedure of licencing is as follows: the interested company applies to the agency with a request for a license and submits a substantiated plan, which includes the name of the wild plant, quantity, purpose, location, number of employees and others. The application is reviewed by the committee at the Regional Service of the National Forest Agency based on the principles of the special guidelines. If the license is issued, the Regional Service of the National Forest Agency is also responsible for its monitoring. According to the respondent, if the demand for issuing similar licenses increases, it will be difficult for the regional services of the agency to handle with the existing insufficient human and financial resources.
KI 32	Giorgi Gujaraidze	November 2022	Forest Product Association	Tbilisi: founded three years ago. It is the only legal entity in Georgia, which unites processors and collectors of non-timber forest products on the Georgian market, including the large processors/export companies. Currently, forty companies are united in the association, out of which three are large and the rest thirty-seven are small & medium scale collectors. The association actively cooperates with the state and the private sector and acts as an intermediary. In 2021, with the help of the association, the business sector was actively involved in legislative processes. In 2022 with the assistance and advice of the association, each member company of the association has formulated applications for permits to collect non-timber forest products. At present, with the financial support of the Austrian Development Cooperation, the association is involved in making an inventory of 5 non-timber forest products in Guria according to the CENN methodology. It plans to develop the trademark for processors sourcing wild botanicals for generating added value for export.

ANNEX 2: REQUIREMENT OF THE EU BIO STANDARD FOR WILD BOTANICALS

According to the EU Bio standard, a wild crop is a plant or portion of a plant that is collected or harvested from a site that is not maintained under cultivation or other agricultural management. This means that in order for a crop to be considered wild it cannot be watered, fed, or otherwise managed. In order to certify a wild crop as organic it must be harvested in a manner that ensures that such harvesting or gathering will not be destructive to the environment and will sustain the growth and production of the wild crop. Collection activity needs to be carried out carefully as it can put pressure on the local resources. The collection of wild plants and parts thereof growing naturally in natural areas, forests and agricultural areas is considered as organic production, provided that: a) for a period of at least three years before the collection, those areas were not treated with products or substances other than those authorized for use in organic production and b) the collection does not affect the stability of the natural habitat or the maintenance of the species in the collection area. Certification of wild crop does not need a conversion period and it is like a group certification consisting of wild plant collectors and wild plant aggregator. The aggregator company is required to train collectors on bio standard, collection methods and conduct internal audits. The group should have a management system established.

As in Georgia, public lands are used for wild plant collection, the responsible authority of those lands should verify that no prohibited materials have been applied to or have contaminated the land for at least three years prior to harvest by providing a signed and dated affidavit to the certified operation. In the case of private lands, the private owner shall provide the same document. The territory where the plants are collected should be assessed by the experts and should be identified. Collectors can go directly from their villages, into the surrounding hills and mountains, or they can be transported by the companies (which purchases the collected plants) to the collection areas. According to the bio standard the collectors are allowed to collect *Roots and bulbs* 20% of total amount, *Leaves* 30% of total amount, *Flowers* 70% of total amount and *Seeds and fruits* 70-80% of total amount. The collectors should keep records of the period and location of the collection, the species concerned, and the quantity of wild plants collected. On the other hand, wild plant aggregator company should be bio certified. One of the prerequisites is that the factory should be HACCP certified as well. In the production process, the stainless equipment shall be used, in the case of plastic materials, they should be labelled as allowed in food production, disinfection of the premises should be done with the disinfection solutions allowed in bio production and all records of the production process from plant aggregation and drying to its distribution should be carefully kept.

ANNEX 3: A LIST OF WILD BOTANICALS IDENTIFIED THROUGH IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

The Table below provides a detailed list of wild botanicals which are collected by interviewed market players. It also gives information on which plant is collected in which region and how the collection is organized. It is worth to mention that some wild botanicals might be missing as key informant interviews covered the majority of but not all key market players.

Table 8 A list of wild botanicals collected in Georgia identified through in-dept interviews

#	Latin Name	English Name	Georgian Name	Region	Collector/Intermediary	Processor
1	Mentha arvensis	Wild Mint	პიტნა	SJ, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Imereti, Svanati, Racha	I.E Rafael Darbinyan, I.E. Nana Chanturia, Natur Medea Tao Ltd, Cooperative Aragvelebo, SOMEJI Cooperative, Okriba Ltd	I.E Rafael Darbinyan, I.E Gela Chkoidze-Sunelis Sakhli, Kuna Georgika Company, Cooperative Aragvelebo, Okriba Ltd
2	Thymus vulgaris	Thyme	ბეგქონდარა	SJ, Svaneti	I.E Gela Chkoidze-Sunelis Sakhli	I.E Rafael Darbinyan, I.E Gela Chkoidze-Sunelis Sakhli
3	Primula vulgaris	Primrose	ფურისულა	SJ, Mtskheta-Mtianeti	I.E Rafael Darbinyan, Cooperative "Sharakhevi 1", Cooperative Tianetis Nobati, SOMEJI Cooperative	I.E Rafael Darbinyan, Kakheti Bio LLC, Rose Office
4	Helichrysum italicum	Dwarf Everlast	უკვდავა, ნეგო	SJ, Ajara	I.E Rafael Darbinyan, Noma LLC, I.E. Shota Amaglobeli	I.E Rafael Darbinyan, Noma LLC
5	Morus alba	Mulburry	თუთა	SJ	Jieli Ltd-a mulburry proceesing enterprise, Natur Medea Tao Ltd	Jieli Ltd, Kuna Georgika Company
6	Origanum vulgare	Oregano	თავშავა	SJ	NNLE Gerogian Textile House, I.E Nana Chanturia	NNLE Gerogian Textile House, I.E. Gela Chkoidze, Sunelis Sakhli, Kula Ltd
7	Satureja hortensis	Savory	ქონდარი (როზმარინი)	SJ	I.E. Nana Chanturia	I.E Gela Chkoidze-Sunelis Sakhli, GEO Ltd, Kula Ltd
8	Bellis perennis	Daisy flower	გვირილა	SJ, Ajara	I.E. Nana Chanturia, SOMEJI Cooperative Batumi Agri Market	I.E Gela Chkoidze-Sunelis Sakhli
9	Mentha pulegium	Penny-royal	ომბალო	SJ	I.E. Nana Chanturia	I.E Gela Chkoidze-Sunelis Sakhli, Kula Ltd, GEO Ltd
10	Rubus idaeus	Raspberries	ჟოლო	Shida Kartli, Ajara	I.E. Nana Chanturia, Georgian Nectar Ltd	Georgian Nectar Ltd
11	Berberis	Barberry	კოწახური (სუმახი)	SJ, Shida Kartli, Kakheti, Ajara, Imereti, Svaneti, Racha	I.E. Nana Chanturia, Natur Medea Tao Ltd, Georgian Nectar Ltd, Okriba Ltd	I.E Gela Chkoidze-Sunelis Sakhli, Kuna Georgika Company, Georgian Nectar Ltd, Okriba Ltd
12	Malus orientalis	Wild apple	მაჟალო	SJ, Mtskheta Mtianeti	I.E. Nana Chanturia, Cooperative "Sharakhevi 1", Cooperative Tianetis Nobati, Geoflower Ltd	I.E. Nana Chanturia , Kakheti Bio LLC, Cooperative Tianetis Nobati, Geoflower Ltd, Kakheti Bio Company, Rose Office

13	Hippophaë rhamnoides	Sea buckthron	ქაცვი	SJ, Mtskheta-Mtianeti	Natur Medea Tao Ltd, Cooperative Tianetis Nobati, Geoflower Ltd, Nona LLC	Kuna Georgika company, Cooperative Tianetis Nobati, Geoflower Ltd, Noma LLC
14	Rosa canina	Rose hip	ასკილი	SJ, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Ajara	Natur Medea Tao Ltd, Cooperative "Sharakhevi 1", Cooperative Tianetis Nobati, SOMEJI Cooperative, Geoflower Ltd, Noma LLC, I.E. Shota Amaglobeli	Kuna Georgika company, Kakheti Bio LLC, Bio-Product LLC, Cooperative Tianetis Nobati, Geoflower Ltd, Noma LLC, Pharmaceutical company in Batumi
15	Vaccinium myrtillus	Blueberry	მოცვი	SJ, Shida Kartli, Ajara, Mtskheta-Mtianeti, Samegrelo, Svaneti, Imereti, Racha	Natur Medea Tao Ltd, Georgian Nectar Ltd, Cooperative Aragvelebo, Geoflower Ltd, Noma LLC, Blue Bird Berries, Okriba Ltd, I.E. Shota Amaglobeli	Kuna Georgika company, Georgian Nectar Ltd, Cooperative Aragvelebo, Geoflower Ltd, Noma LLC, Blue Bird Berries, Okriba Ltd, Latvia
16	Urtica dioica	Nettle	ჭინჭარი	SJ	Natur Medea Tao Ltd, Geoflower Ltd, SOMEJI Cooperative	Neopharm, Geoflower Ltd, Kakheti Bio LLC
17	Rubus caucasicus	Blackberry	მაყვალი	SJ, Shida Kartli, Ajara	Natur Medea Tao Ltd, Georgian Nectar Ltd	Kuna Georgika company, Georgian Nectar Ltd
18	Cornus mas	Cornelian cherry	შინდი	Shida Kartli, Ajara	Georgian Nectar Ltd, SOMEJI Cooperative	Georgian Nectar Ltd
19	Rhododendron caucasicum	Caucasian evergreen azale	დეკა	Khevsureti	Cooperative Kona, Cooperative Aragvelebo	Cooperative Kona, Cooperative Aragvelebo
20	Prunus divaricata	Wild plum	ტყემალი	Mtskheta-Mtianeti	Cooperative Tianetis Nobati	Cooperative Tianetis Nobati
21	Arctium lappa	Burdock	ოროვანდი	SJ	Geoflower Ltd	Geoflower Ltd
22	Taraxacum officinalis	Dandelion roots	ბაბუაწვერას ფესვები	SJ	Geoflower Ltd	Geoflower Ltd
23	Eucalyptus	Eucalyptus	ევკალიპტი	Ajara	Noma LLC	Noma LLC
24	Crataegus	Haw	კუნელი	Imereti, Svaneti, Racha, SJ	Okriba Ltd, Natur Medea Tao Ltd	Okriba Ltd, Neopharm
25	Vaccinium myrtillus	Bilberry leaves	მოცვის ფოთლები	Imereti, Svaneti, Racha, SJ	Okriba Ltd, I.E Rafael Darbinyan	Okriba Ltd, I.E Rafael Darbinyan
26	Vaccinium Oxycoccus	Cranberry	შტოში	Imereti, Svaneti, Racha, SJ	Okriba Ltd, Natur Medea Tao Ltd	Okriba Ltd, Neopharm
27	Senecio platyphyllus	Flat-leaved ragwort	ხარიშუბლა	Ajara, Guria, SJ	I.E. Shota Amaglobeli	Pharmaceutical company in Batumi
28	Sambucus ebulus	Elderberry	ანწლი	Ajara, Guria, SJ	I.E. Shota Amaglobeli	I.E. Shota Amaglobeli
29	Pisum sativum var. saccharatum	Snow pea	ბარდის ფურცელი	Ajara, Guria, SJ	I.E. Shota Amaglobeli	I.E. Shota Amaglobeli
30	Galantus woronowii	Green snowdrop	ენძელის ბოლქვები	AJ	I.E. Mamuli Surmanidze	I.E. Mamuli Surmanidze
31	Glycyrrhiza glabra	Liquorice root	ძირტკბილა	SJ, Racha	Geoflower Ltd	Geoflower Ltd

ANNEX 4: A LIST OF WILD BOTANICALS IDENTIFIED THROUGH FOCUS GROUP SURVEY

The Table below provides a detailed list of wild botanicals which were named by Focus Group Participant rural producers. It also gives information about picking periods, what part of plant is picked, where they are picked, average weight (kg) collected by each household, how is it sold (raw or dried), who are the buyers and what is an average price (GEL/kg). It is worth to mention that some wild botanicals might also be missing here as Focus Groups were organized in six target regions and covered 77 rural producers.

Table 9 A list of wild botanicals collected in Georgia identified through focus group survey

#	Latin Name	English Name	Picking Period	What part is picked	Where are they picked?	Ave. weight collected (kg)	How is it sold?	Who are the buyers?	Ave. Price (Gel) per kilo
1	Rosa Canina	Rose Hip	Aug-Nov	Fruit	Village, neighbouring Villages	682	Raw	Collectors/ Intermediaries	1.1
2	Malus Orientalis	Wild apple	Sep, Oct	Fruit	Village, neighbouring Villages	2003	Raw	Collectors/ Intermediaries	0.2
3	Hippophaë rhamnoides	Sea Buckthorn	Sep, Oct	Fruit	Village, neighbouring Villages	617	Raw	Collectors/ Intermediaries	1.2
4	Mentha arvensis	Mint	May, Jun	Leaf	Village, forest	236	Dried	Collectors/ Intermediaries	1
5	Senecio Platypyllus	Common Ragwort	Jul, Aug	Stem	Forest, Mountain field	7333	Raw	Processors	0.9
6	Urtica dioica	Nettle	May, Jun, Jul, Aug	Leaf	Village, neighbouring Villages	526	Raw	Collectors/ Intermediaries	0.4
7	Taraxacum officinalis	Dandelion	Apr, May	Flower, entire plant	Village, forest	360	Raw	Collectors/ Intermediaries	2
8	Helichrysum italicum	Dwarf Everlast	Jul, Aug	Flower	Forest, Mountain field	375	Dried & Raw	Processors	3.4
9	Vaccinium myrtillus	Blueberries	Sep, Oct	Fruit	Village, Mountain field	73	Raw	Collectors/ Intermediaries	15
10	Primula vulgaris	Primrose	Apr	Flower	Mountain fields	283	Raw	Collectors/ Intermediaries, Processors	3.8
11	Sambucus ebulus	danewort (elder)	Sep, Oct	Fruit	Village	150	Raw	Processors	1.5
12	Pisum sativum	Pea(s)	Whole year	Leaf	Village	523	Raw	Processors	2.5
13	Cornus mas	Cornelian cherry	Sep, Oct	Fruit	Village, forest	800	Raw	Collectors/ Intermediaries	1
14	Allium ursinum	Wild garlic	Feb-May	Entire plant	Forest	300	Raw	Consumers buying from the village, Collectors/ Intermediaries, agri market	25
15	Rhododendron caucasicum	Caucasian evergreen azalea	May	Leaf	Village, mountain field	20	Raw	Consumers buying from the village	5
16	Helichrysum	Immortelle	Sep, Oct	Flower	Village, forest	5	Raw	Agri market	3

17	Vaccinium myrtillus	Blueberry leaf	Sep	Leaf	Village, forest	4	Raw	Consumers buying from the village	2
18	Crataegus	Hawthorn flower	Oct	Fruit	Village, forest	2	Dried	Collectors/ Intermediaries	7
19	Papaver	Poppy	Apr, May	Flower	Village, forest (bio certificated area)	150	Raw	Collectors/ Intermediaries	1
20	Prunus divaricata	Wild Plum	Jul, Aug	Fruit	Village, forest	1500	Raw	Collectors/ Intermediaries	0.5
21	Juglans	Walnuts	Sep, Oct	Fruit	Forest	700	Raw	Consumers buying from the village, Intermediaries, agri market	5.5
22	Rubus caucasicus	Blackberries	Sep, Oct	Fruit	Forest	25	Raw	Processors	9
23	Lilium monadelphum	Caucasian lily	May	Leaf	Forest	20	Dried	Collectors/ Intermediaries	10
24	Aruncus dioicus	Goat's-beard	May	Leaf	Village	20	Raw	Collectors/ Intermediaries	20