



ORGANIC 3.0

for truly sustainable farming & consumption

2nd updated edition, 2016
IFOAM – Organics International & SOAAN

A guiding concept paper by Markus Arbenz, David Gould and Christopher Stopes, based on think tanking by the Sustainable Organic Agriculture Action Network (SOAAN), by IFOAM - Organics International, by the IFOAM Action Group, and the Global Organic Movement.

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FOREWORD

In 2010, a farmers' gathering in Schleswig Holstein, Germany titled its discussion "R-Evolution of Organic Agriculture – Organic 3.0". The idea of Organic 3.0 was born!

At that time, the participating farmers could not yet imagine how their ideas would evolve into a global discussion, inspired by many think tanks, BIOFACH fairs and congresses of IFOAM – Organics International. Subsequently, SOAAN, the Sustainable Organic Agriculture Action Network crystalized the discussions and developed contents linked to Organic 3.0 presenting its visions of the future of the Organic Movement.

The first version of this booklet was published in 2015 at the Organic EXPO in Goesan, South Korea, the biggest organic event ever with 1.2 million visitors over three weeks. In the meantime, we received much enthusiastic feedback to the ideas and concepts we presented, which proved that the organic movement is ready to address its own challenges and that the ideas described in Organic 3.0 meet with support. At the same time, we felt that the new ideas that came up during the consultation were enriching, resulting in the presentation of this updated version.

We would particularly like to thank Markus Arbenz, David Gould and Christopher Stopes for leading this process; we are thankful to those who allocated space for the Organic 3.0 discussion in their fora; we are grateful for all the content contributions over the last years by individuals and groups, and we owe a particular thanks to those that financially contributed from their budgets.

This publication is a background paper that explains in more detail the landmark document on Organic 3.0, discussed at the General Assembly of IFOAM – Organics International in November 2017 in India. We hope that it manages to inspire you and all those participating in small and big decisions for the development of the organic sector locally and worldwide.



André Leu
President, IFOAM -
Organics International



Urs Niggli
Chair
SOAAN

We would further like to acknowledge that we received and took into consideration the following reports from various think tanks:

- **Digests of the Organic 3.0 fora** during BIOFACH 2014, 2015 & 2016 by IFOAM - Organics International
- The **main track summary** and the **final declaration of the Organic World Congress 2014** in Istanbul by IFOAM – Organics International
- The report of a think tank group from FiBL, Bio Suisse, Naturland, Bio Austria and Bioland: **"Mit Bio 3.0 zu einer nachhaltigen Landwirtschaft"**
- The report on **"Transforming food & farming, an organic vision for Europe in 2030"** by IFOAM EU
- The **"Global Vision and Strategy for Organic Farming Research"**, by the Technology Innovation Platform of IFOAM, TIPI
- The German Agrarian Research Alliance's future organic research strategy events with the report: **"Fachforum Ökologische Lebensmittelwirtschaft: Forschungsstrategie der DAFA"**
- **"Les Marché Bio à Horizons 2025"** by Organic Cluster
- The **Organic 3.0**, trend and potentials analysis of the Austrian Zukunftsinstitut
- The reports from the SOEL trainee program **"Die neue Generation denkt das neue Bio"**
- The Demeter International Workshop on the **"Future of Agri-Culture"** a contribution to Organic 3.0



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The organic timeline can be measured in approximately 100 years: from the early days of imagining organic by those who saw the connections between how we live, eat, and farm, our health and the health of the planet (what we call 'Organic 1.0'); to the forming of the movement and the codification of standards and enforced rules that have established organic in 87 countries with a market value of over \$80 billion per year (what is termed 'Organic 2.0'). Looking to the future, this paper is a call for change of culture and spirit, a call for institutional and strategic reforms and a call for actions to implement what the next phase of organic, 'Organic 3.0' can and should be.

Organic 2.0 shaped the visions of the pioneers into a practical reality. Organic has inspired producers and consumers alike and has changed unsustainable habits around the globe. There is evidence of positive impacts on a wide range of important issues including consumer health, biodiversity, animal welfare and the improved livelihoods of producers. The standards maintained by state governments and private organizations mainly define minimum requirements for organic production and processing. However, they often fail to entirely meet the principles of health, ecology, fairness and care that are at the core of the organic philosophy. The rules and regulations of Organic 2.0 have also resulted in the organic movement facing constraints on three

fronts. First, it has excluded many producers who grow organically without organic certification: smallholder and peasant farmers - frequently women, and often in the least economically developed countries in the global south - who play a critical role in feeding much of the world's population. Second, it has limited opportunities to build bridges with other sustainability initiatives that share the objectives but do not aim at full compliance with organic standards, including agroecology, fair trade, food movements, smallholder and family farmer movements, community supported agriculture, urban agriculture and many others. Third, economic pressure and economies of scale forced many producers to specialize and abandon diversity and other desirable organic practices.

Although the many achievements of the organic movement are significant and have gained recognition worldwide, the reality is that after a century of innovation and disruption, certified organic agriculture has not even reached 1% of global agricultural land or of food consumption.

Agriculture should be a force for good, providing solutions to global issues of hunger, inequity, energy consumption, pollution, climate change, loss of biodiversity and depletion of natural resources. The positive, multi-faceted environmental, social and economic benefits of a truly sustainable agriculture can contribute solutions

to most of the world's major problems. If mainstream agriculture adopted truly sustainable practices, the need for certified organic agriculture would cease to exist. Until now, though, organic has not been included - or inclusive - enough to contribute these solutions on a global scale. The Organic 3.0 concept seeks to change this, by positioning organic as a modern, innovative system that has positive impacts on the above-mentioned issues.

ORGANIC 3.0: GOAL & CONCEPT

The overall goal of Organic 3.0 is to enable a widespread uptake of truly sustainable farming systems and markets based on organic principles and imbued with a culture of innovation, of progressive improvement towards best practice, of transparent integrity, of inclusive collaboration, of holistic systems, and of true value pricing.

Organic agriculture is a lighthouse for truly sustainable agriculture and agriculture products systems. Organic 3.0 expands the participation options, and positions organic as a modern, innovative farming system that holistically integrates local and regional context including



its ecology, economy, society, culture and accountability. Regeneration of resources, responsibility in production, sufficiency in consumption, and the ethical and spiritual development of human values, practices and habits are concepts that guide the building of a new organic culture that can drive societal development. The core of Organic 3.0 is the living relationships between consumers and producers, which includes the stories of products and production and the multiple benefits of organic agriculture.

At its heart, Organic 3.0 is not prescriptive but descriptive: instead of enforcing a set of minimum rules to achieve a final static result, this model is outcome-based and continuously adaptable to local context. Organic 3.0 is still grounded upon clearly defined minimum requirements such as the ones maintained by many government regulations and private schemes around the

world, and in the objectives of the IFOAM Standards Requirements. But it also expands outward from these base requirements: it calls for a culture of continuous improvement through private- and stakeholder-driven initiatives towards best practices based on local priorities, and as described in the Best Practices Guidelines of IFOAM – Organics International.

ORGANIC 3.0: STRATEGY

The strategy for Organic 3.0 includes six main features, consistently promoting the diversity that lies at the heart of organic and recognizing there is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach:

- **A culture of innovation**, to attract greater farmer conversion and adoption of best practices. Organic 3.0 proactively scouts for traditional and newly arising innovations and assesses them against impact risks and potentials.
- **Continuous improvement toward best practice**, for operators along the whole value chain covering all dimensions of sustainability: ecology, society, economy, culture and accountability.
- **Diverse ways to ensure transparency and integrity**, to broaden the uptake of organic agriculture beyond third-party certification;

- **Inclusiveness of wider sustainability interests**, through proactively building alliances with the many movements and organizations that have complementary approaches to truly sustainable food and farming. However, it also clearly distinguishes itself from unsustainable agriculture systems and ‘greenwashing’ initiatives;

- **Empowerment from the farm to the final consumer**, to recognize the interdependence and real partnerships along the value chain and also on a territorial basis; It particularly acknowledges the core position of smallholding family farmers, of gender relations and of fairness in trade; and

- **True value and cost accounting**, to internalize costs and benefits, encourage transparency for consumers and policy-makers and to empower farmers as full partners.

Corresponding to the six features of Organic 3.0, six operational objectives - against which progress can be monitored - indicate the pathways to implementation. It starts with internalizing Organic 3.0 strategies into all organic institutions. From there, it broadens outside of the traditional circle and builds bridges to other groups including the research community, operators throughout the value chain, and media, policy-makers and international bodies.

2. INTRODUCTION



BOX 1 | LADY EVE BALFOUR AT THE FIRST IFOAM CONFERENCE IN SWITZERLAND IN 1977

“Contrary to the views held by some, I am sure that the techniques of organic farming cannot be imprisoned in a rigid set of rules. They depend essentially on the outlook of the farmer. Without a positive and ecological approach it is not possible to farm organically.”

An early pioneer of organic and a founder of IFOAM - Organics International, Balfour seemed to already fear that organic might box itself in or define itself in an exclusive way, and so she argued for a farmer-led approach, which prioritized the outcomes and impacts necessary to foster the ‘wholeness’ of a diverse, ‘living world’.

Society today is challenged by the endangered state of the planet and the possible consequences for all life upon it.

Humanity relies on agriculture (and fishing/aquaculture) for food and other products like textiles and body care products to meet the most basic human needs. Sadly, hunger, food insecurity and obesity remain a threat for billions of people. Agriculture, as most widely practiced, significantly contributes to issues such as loss of biodiversity or climate change – yet when practiced differently, is also a source of solutions.

Far-reaching changes in agriculture and agricultural product systems are needed without delay if future generations are to have equal or improved preconditions for prosperity, particularly in view of a growing world population. The positive and multi-faceted environmental, social and economic benefits of truly sustainable agriculture can significantly reduce current problems and help us rise to the challenges.

The principles of health, ecology, fairness and care can be used to shape any farming and ecosystem, whether they provide with food, textiles, body care products, energy, ecosystem services, leisure activities, or other products. They are the foundation for the proposal to implement Organic 3.0, as outlined in this document.

Sustainable means meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Alongside the organic movement, an astonishing diversity of pioneers and a huge number of organizations and businesses and farmers represent many approaches to improve sustainability in agriculture: agroecology, fair trade, slow food, smallholder and family farmer movements, community supported agriculture initiatives, food movements, urban agriculture and others. They all share the direction of the aforementioned vision of the organic movement and can be included in any thoughts around the development of Organic 3.0.

This paper offers an overview of the concept of Organic 3.0 and proposes a general strategy for its implementation. It can form the basis for a commonly shared and up-to-date understanding of the future direction of the organic movement.

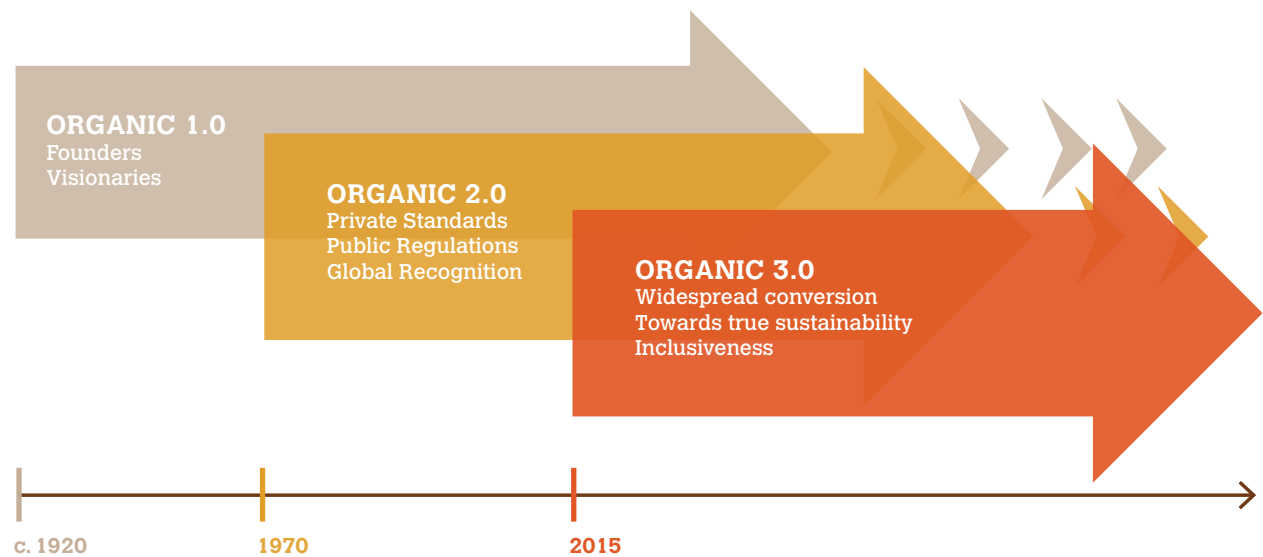
ORGANIC 1.0 – 2.0 – 3.0: A CONTINUING JOURNEY



BOX 2 | SOME ORGANIC PIONEERS:

Albert Howard (U.K.), Anna Primavesi (Brazil), Bill Mollison (Australia), Bhaskar Save (India), Efraim Hernandez Xolocotzi (Mexico), Eve Balfour (U.K.), Hans & Maria Müller (Switzerland), Jerome Rodale (U.S.A.), Rachel Carson (U.S.A.), Masanobu Fukuoka (Japan), Raoul Lemaire (France) and Rudolf Steiner (Germany, Austria, Switzerland).

FIGURE 1 | Widespread Conversion Development Towards True Sustainability Inclusiveness



ORGANIC 1.0 – PIONEERS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

The organic movement was founded around 100 years ago by visionary pioneers who saw the connections between the way we live, the food we eat, the way we produce that food, our health and the health of the planet.

The concept arose in several places around the world. ‘Organic’ was one of a number of terms the visionaries used to describe and define their diverse approaches. Looking back, one century on, we have termed this first phase of the organic movement Organic 1.0.



ORGANIC 2.0 – NORMING AND PERFORMING

With the establishment of IFOAM - Organics International, the early 1970s saw the emergence of Organic 2.0.

Over the following decades, production and processing standards were developed and certification schemes were introduced by organic organizations around the world. Organic claims became regulated in great detail. Official regulation was first introduced in Europe and the United States of America in the 1980s. By 2016, 87 countries in Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and Oceania had implemented organic regulations. Organic standards and control through inspection and certification has gained the trust of consumers and policy makers. There has been rapid growth in the area of certified organic land

(around 81 million hectares in 172 countries worldwide by 2014), and in the consumer purchases of certified organic food, textiles and body care products (\$80 billion worldwide in 2014). On top of those figures, there are non-certified organic systems in place, which should not be underestimated. Numerous smallholder and peasant farmers (oftentimes women) are largely organic at their core and ensure that there is enough to eat for their families and communities.

The past decades have also seen a concerted effort to enable political and administrative support, market development, and therefore access to and availability of better food, textiles, personal care, and other healthy products. Many technical challenges have been overcome through research and development, in institutes, universities and on farmers' fields in participatory programs. (Further Organic 2.0 achievement see box 3)

BOX 3 | ACHIEVEMENTS OF ORGANIC 1.0 & 2.0: HIGHLIGHTED EXAMPLES

- The growth in scale from a very small recognition in policy to a widespread uptake of a clear and detailed legal framework.
- In some countries in Europe the area of certified organic land accounts for up to 20% of the agricultural land, while in some alpine regions there is even a majority of farmers managing their land organically.
- Organic baby food represents up to 80% of the baby food market in many countries.
- In some countries in Latin America exports of certified organic crops like coffee, cacao and banana are greater than non-organic.
- The introduction of internal control systems and group certifications has improved access to international markets and connections with smallholders.
- Some Himalayan states have pledged to become 100% organic.
- Many organic farming models are high yielding and provide a range of highly effective ecosystem services.
- There is evidence that organic produce has improved health qualities.
- Proven positive effects on soil fertility and biodiversity.
- Organic is increasingly proven to be a better economic model for farmers.

THE NEED FOR ORGANIC 3.0

FIGURE 2



The Organic 2.0 strategy of developing a reliable certification system that is supported by government regulations has enabled continuous growth from a few farmers in many pockets of the world to a globally active sector with millions of producers and consumers.

There is evidence of positive impacts on a wide range of important issues such as consumer health, biodiversity, response to climate change and the improved welfare of producers. A holistic system view that concentrates on more than the exploitation of short-term market opportunities has proved to be robust and has assured growth even in times of economic crises in many countries.

While there is sound development and wide prosperity in the organic sector, many stakeholders also see a need for reforms, or they call for a paradigm shift in order to make production and consumption truly sustainable. Even though achievements are undisputedly impressive, certified organic agriculture has not even reached 1% of agricultural land and of global food and fiber consumption; And there are many organic operations that need to improve their practices to become truly sustainable for their environment, their society, their tradition and their business.

Organic agriculture has offered many of opportunities for farmers. Many managed to escape the poverty trap and bankruptcy that can accompany being a pioneer in their communities. However, in recent times organic

farmers are often forced, due to the dominant economic paradigm, to specialize and scale up production, at the cost of biodiversity and sustainability. The most significant constraints of Organic 2.0 are summarized in Box 4 on page 8.

The envisaged reforms are rooted not only in problems but also in the huge opportunity that the organic world has to serve as an approach for global sustainability issues. Farming the planet using living soils; farm organisms and integrated ecosystems; farmers who are empowered and self-aware and who function as caretakers; processors and traders who act as social entrepreneurs - this is a viable alternative for caring for people and the planet.

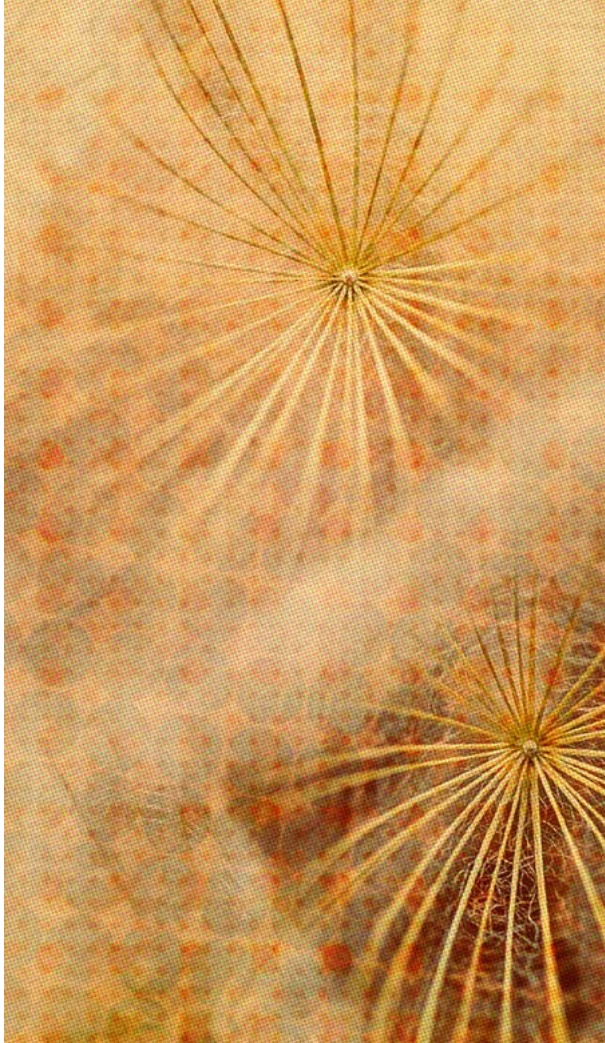
Delivering on these ambitions requires further scaling up, to tap unexploited potentials and address constraints.

BOX 4 | THE NEED FOR ORGANIC 3.0 IS UNDERLINED BY SOME EXEMPLARY CHALLENGES OF ORGANIC 2.0

- In many countries, organic production and consumption is too small to have a big impact.
- There is a low rate of conversion to organic agriculture and growth of organic agriculture land is much slower than the dynamic market development.
- Even though some organic fields outperform conventional ones, the average yield is lower than in comparable conventional systems, particularly under good agriculture conditions.
- Organic standards set minimum requirements and not a high target. In certain instances this leads to operations that meet standards, but that neither fulfill the Organic Principles nor progress towards true sustainability.
- Not all production techniques allowed under standards and certification fully meet the organic principles (e.g. inputs for horticultural crops, livestock medication, recycling of nutrients, use of synthetic inputs in processing of food/fiber/extracts, social requirements, fairness in trade).
- Certification, third party verification, detailed standards and related bureaucracy in Organic 2.0 have imposed an oftentimes unaffordable and unpractical burden on farmers and the value chain.
- The certification system can't fully avoid fraud, especially in longer chains.
- Some high priority areas such as instance social requirements or fairness in trade aspects are not directly regulated in most organic standards and cannot be claimed, although there are many farmer and business initiatives delivering very well on them.
- Effective delivery of ecosystem services and other common goods are often not rewarded.
- Organic is excellently positioned for high value and healthy products, and trust is placed in its ecological processes and animal welfare. However, it does not sufficiently cover other sustainability dimensions and is rarely considered by policy makers as an option for mainstream agriculture strategies.



4. THE ORGANIC 3.0 FRAMEWORK



OVERALL APPROACH AND THE GOAL OF ORGANIC 3.0

The overall goal of Organic 3.0 is to enable a widespread uptake of truly sustainable farming systems and markets based on organic principles and imbued with a culture of innovation, of progressive improvement towards best practice, of transparent integrity, of inclusive collaboration, of holistic systems, and of true value pricing.

Organic agriculture is a lighthouse for truly sustainable agriculture and agriculture products systems. Organic 3.0 expands the participation options and positions organic as a modern, innovative farming system that holistically integrates ecology, economy, society, culture and accountability into local and regional context. Regeneration of resources, responsibility in production, sufficiency in consumption, and ethical and spiritual development of human values, practices and habits are concepts that guide the building of a new organic culture, which can drive societal development. The core of Organic 3.0 is the living relationships between consumers and producers, which includes the stories

of products and production and the multiple benefits of organic agriculture.

While Organic 2.0 focused on clearly defined minimum requirements and organic claims on products, Organic 3.0 puts the impact of and on the farming system in the foreground. Organic 1.0 and Organic 2.0 approaches and achievements are not abandoned. Organic 3.0 retains the original bedrock concept of Organic 1.0 and expands the progress made under Organic 2.0.

Through the new Organic 3.0 understanding and strategy, the organic movement wants to showcase its ability to have impact on issues of critical importance to billions of people – e.g. ensuring climate change mitigation, resilience and adaptation, access to capital and adequate income, availability of land, water, seeds, adequate and healthy diets, and avoidance of waste in production and consumption. Fertile soils, clean water, appropriate and diverse genetic resources, social and economic opportunities for both genders, and cultural heritage that reveals the identity and accessibility of traditional and scientific knowledge are just a few examples of vulnerable resources that matter to future generations.

The organic movement is ready and keen to ally with and be seen as a partner of all those who share the vision of truly sustainable agriculture.

THE ORGANIC 3.0 MODEL AND ITS KEY FEATURES

Organic 3.0 is a revised understanding and positioning towards more ambitious and common-good goals, and therefore has a strong focus on the spirit, attitudes, values and strategic plans of stakeholders inside and outside the organic movement.

It calls on governments to create an environment conducive to empowering stakeholders by setting legal frameworks and public investments that support the Organic 3.0 concept. Governments should partner with and enable the participation of civil society and foster private initiatives in the sector rather than overregulate and bureaucratize operations.

Organic 3.0 embraces a strategy of dynamic and continuous improvement. The organic narrative develops from its past offering of certified agricultural products into the smartest, most authentic and fully regenerative way of production and consumption of nutritious food, ecological textiles and natural body care products. Living soils, intact ecosystems, caretaking farmers, sensible processors and traders and responsible consumers drive

FIGURE 3 | Towards More Sustainable Agriculture

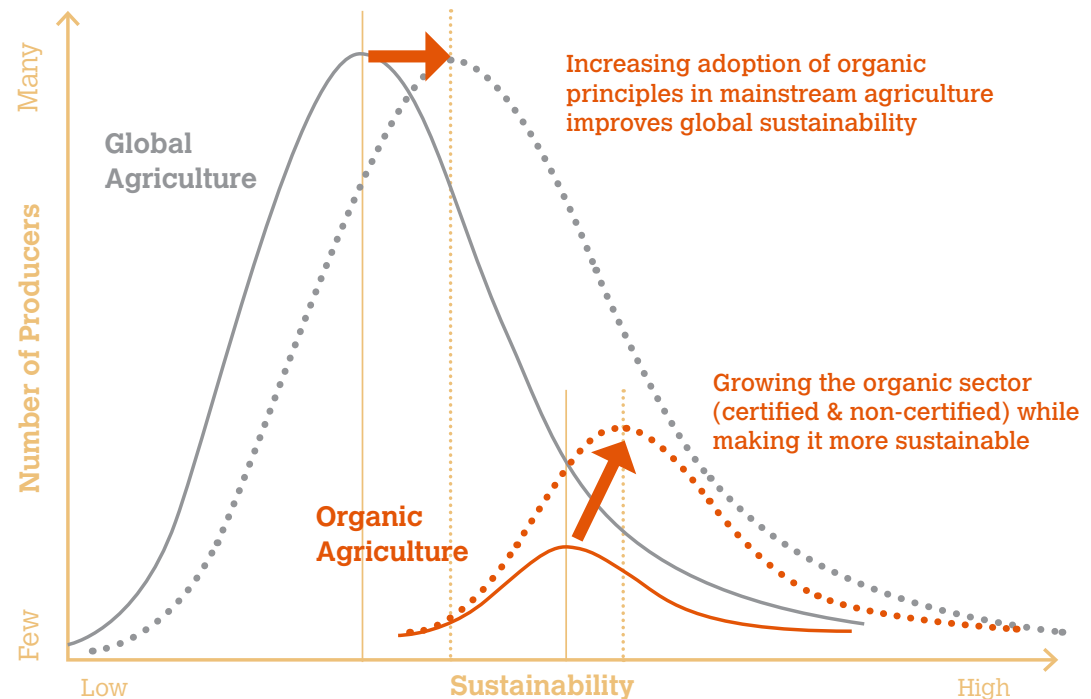
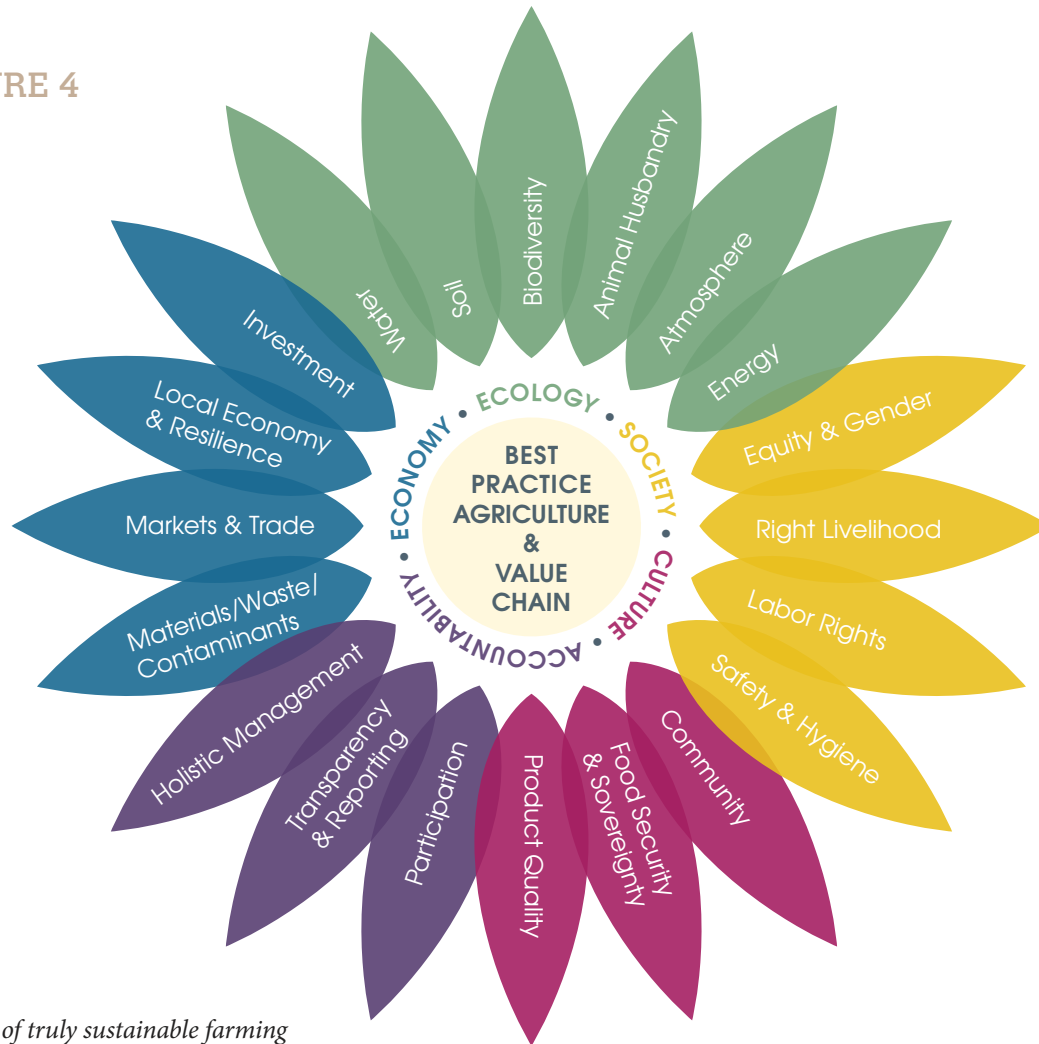


FIGURE 4



Symbol of truly sustainable farming and value chains. It visualizes the five dimensions and 20 criteria of sustainability as described in the IFOAM Best Practice Guideline for Agriculture and Value Chains.



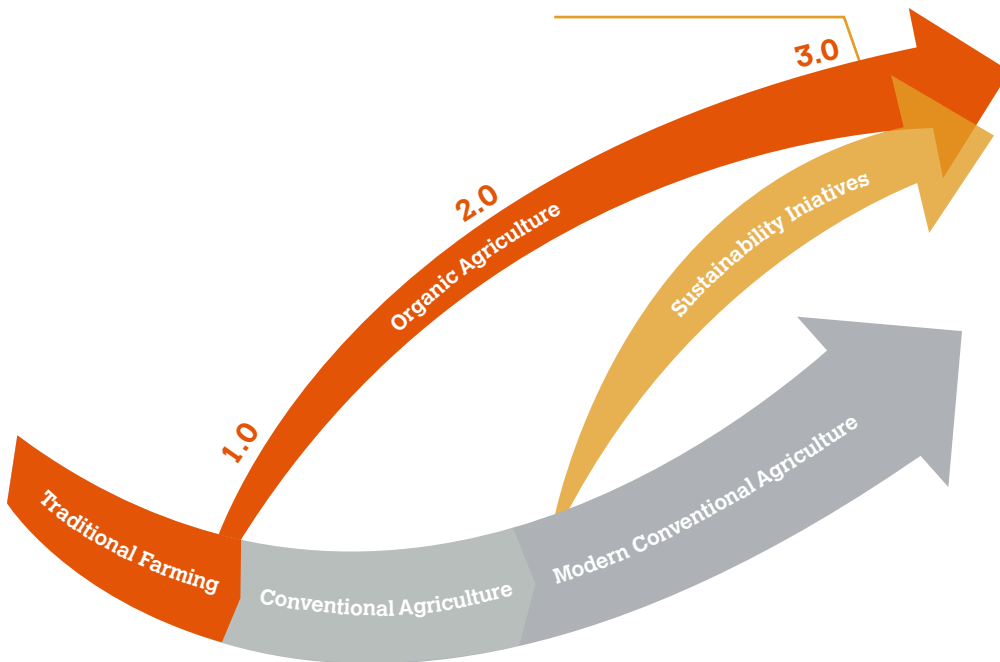
inclusive long-term prosperity and are supported by civil society and the public sector.

With its ‘more and better’ approach it aims at increasing relevance and credibility not only for a limited organic niche, but also as an integral part of the societies of all countries (see figure 3, page 10). This strategy requires clearly defined minimum requirements such as the ones defined in many government regulations around the world and in the objectives of the IFOAM Standards Requirements (e.g. no applications of GMOs). But it also requires a culture of continuous improvement through stakeholder driven initiatives towards best practice, and adapted to local priorities as described in the IFOAM Best Practice Guidelines.

Six features characterize Organic 3.0. as visualized in Figure 5 (p.12) and as further detailed below.

FIGURE 5

-  #1 A culture of innovation
-  #2 Continuous improvement towards best practice
-  #3 Diverse ways to ensure transparent integrity
-  #4 Inclusive of wider sustainability interests
-  #5 Holistic empowerment from farm to final consumer
-  #6 True value and cost accounting



Sustainable Food & Farming Systems



FEATURE #1: A CULTURE OF INNOVATION

To successfully address the challenges of the 21st century, a combination of social, ecological and technological innovation is essential. Organic agriculture is not a farming system that is disrupted by inappropriate new technology, nor dominated by conservative thinking. Rather, Organic 3.0 is a disruptive force itself by enabling more people to adopt leading-edge concepts that bring substantial change to solve major social and environmental issues that the planet faces.

Two priorities are innovations to overcome the present very low rate of farmers' conversion, and to increase nutritional revenues from fields while maintaining ecosystem vigor. Organic farmers need viable answers to their agronomic challenges particularly since they do not have the option of quick and unsustainable technology fixes such as synthetic inputs (including GMOs) to 'solve' fertilization, pest, livestock health, or weed problems. Certain practical tools become common practice, for example those that test to ensure correct nutrient balance, or those that enable more timely monitoring pest and

disease pressure so that farmers can consistently get good yields and perform according to the concept of eco-functional intensification. Farmers intensify biological processes rather than intensify inputs.

This includes revival and enhancement of traditional knowledge, and possible combination with new high potential technologies of which the organic movement is presently rather skeptical, but that are in line with holistic system approaches. Some examples illustrate the way in which a culture of innovation will help:

- Systematically extract, evaluate, preserve and renew indigenous or tacit knowledge of farmers and farm communities.
- Smart technologies such as robots and precision farming, information and communication technology, or intensified crop and livestock breeding techniques that are avoiding genetically engineered varieties.
- Further development of methods that provide assurance of compliance to sustainability criteria – those that enable value chains to demonstrate how key issues are addressed, quality and authenticity are assured, and impact achieved.
- Use of modern Internet technology by social networks, by food, fashion, personal care and health movements and by urban farming, community supported agriculture and collective land ownership initiatives etc., to democratize the value chain.

- Societal and economic transformation through increased consciousness of the concept of sufficiency/eco-sufficiency in production and consumption, and connection of society at large to the natural production base on which it depends, in order to reduce negative impacts of the use of natural resources (e.g. reduced meat consumption, promotion of organic lifestyles or fostering spiritual health).
- Foster relationship building, with innovative models and initiatives that reinforce interdependency, e.g. the economy of the common good.

Not only farming, but also processing and trade of food, fiber, extracts and other agriculture products need innovation to increase sustainability for the benefit of the consumers and the planet.

While applying the precautionary principle, innovation committees explore potentials and develop positions on the use of upcoming technologies. The innovation committees assure a fast uptake of potentials, but they also carefully assess the risks and act timely to exclude technologies that are not in line with organic principles. Innovation committees get the same type of importance as standards committees in Organic 2.0.

Operational objective related to feature #1:

Impacts of the organic sector are assessed, achievements are evaluated, bottlenecks to future developments are recognized, innovation opportunities are identified, new

technologies are evaluated against the principle of care and suitable innovations/best practices are promoted.



FEATURE #2: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT TOWARDS BEST PRACTICE

Certification requirements based on private standards and government regulations – the core of Organic 2.0 – will not be the most important focus any more. However, they will still identify the ‘no go’ and the minimum requirements, and have participatory revision processes. There is no particular intention to steadily increase details the production requirements for instance in government regulations. Standards may however become outcomes-based, become broader and/or address neglected dimensions of sustainability in order to underpin the holistic nature of organic agriculture. And they may evolve to play an important role in facilitating continuous improvement by integrating tools for monitoring individual progress of the operators.

Continuous improvement of operations and systems should address the ecological, social, economic, cultural and accountability dimensions. It is up to producers to

identify the priorities in their specific context – diversity is essential and desirable. The Organic 3.0 framework should provide guidance for prioritizing developments that have the biggest impact. Meaningful criteria and credible targets will be agreed by stakeholders and used to evaluate and communicate improvements in a transparent way. Not everything can be accomplished at once by any given enterprise; over time more and more will be achieved.

The IFOAM Best Practice Guidelines show in which direction operations can be developed. Farmers, processors and traders shall use an appropriate tool to benchmark their own operations, in order to demonstrate their improvements year by year. Proudly and transparently reporting self or third party assessed progress creates consumer, client and government trust. An attitude of continuous improvement towards best practice rather than an economic optimization on the



minimum standard also supports the above-described culture of innovation.

Operational objective related to feature #2:

Organic sector operations are working towards best practice through continuous improvement.



FEATURE #3: DIVERSE WAYS TO ENSURE TRANSPARENCY AND INTEGRITY

Organic 2.0 successfully developed standards and implemented certification systems validated in a legally enforced system of compliance verification. It has enabled the growth of the production base and the market for certified organic products. This will continue to be important as the supply and demand for certified organic products continues to grow. However, a broader uptake of organic agriculture cannot be based on third party certification alone. Tools from Organic 1.0 like self-claims based on personal relationships and trust may regain importance. Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) that rely on the relationships between farmers and consumer groups are engines of social development.

In various parts of the world, short chain markets, community supported agriculture and consumer cooperatives manage conformity assurance with a very high level of consumer trust. Peer assessments and social control of producer groups that share a common reputation and brand value will be equally acceptable if consumers positively respond to clearly demonstrated credibility.

Different, new verification schemes may become practiced depending on the length and complexity of value chains. Reputation economy and web-based communication technology offer new opportunities; the organic movement must be open to this. For long chains, the process-oriented paperwork might be complemented and reduced by modern authentication, tracing and tracking technologies, which will become widely used as they become more affordable (e.g. remote sensing, highly improved analytics).

Third-party certification will remain important particularly for marketing in large quantities in retail chains. The Organic 3.0 model in this case must entail reforms to lower the burden of producers for onerous reporting requirements.

Greater transparency across the value chain and among all associated relationships will also help ensure that potential conflicts of interest are more readily exposed. Organic 3.0 communications systems will enable parties to identify and address such concerns.

Operational objective related to feature #3:

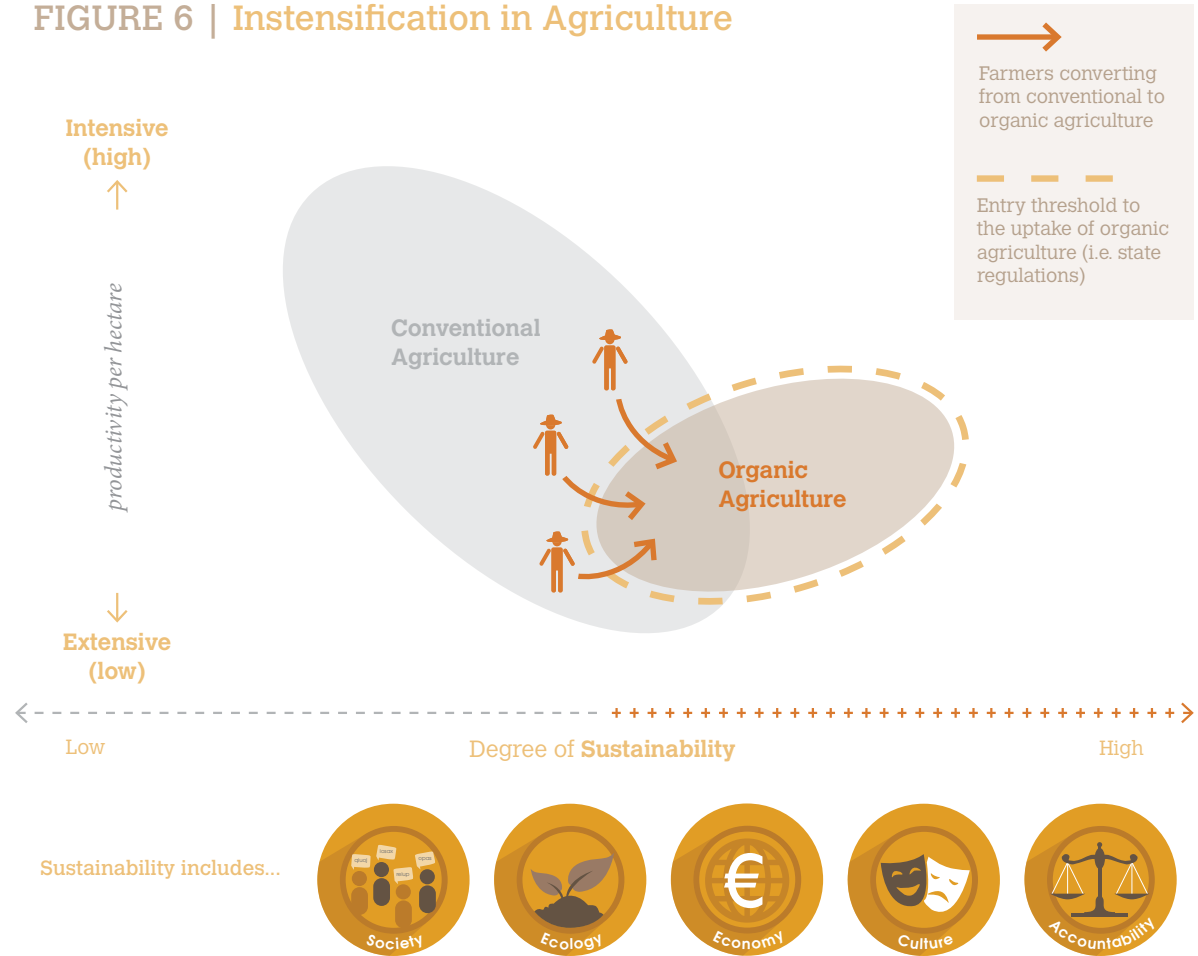
Transparency becomes the organizing principle of guaranteeing integrity. A diversity of appropriate methods for ensuring transparent integrity is developed and promoted.



FEATURE #4: INCLUSIVE OF WIDER SUSTAINABILITY INTERESTS

The goal to become more relevant and to increase impact implies a strategy to build alliances with the many movements and organizations with aligned goals and complimentary approaches to sustainable food and farming systems. The organic movement is a pioneer but not any more alone in working for a paradigm of ecological and social intensification based on natural processes and closed cycles. The organic movement strives anew to include like-minded movements and civil society organizations. But just as important is to be included: The organic movement seeks to be an active partner in the diversity of the worldwide actors that are pushing for sustainable food and farming systems. Potential allies include for example agroecology, fair trade, smallholder and family farmers movements, food

FIGURE 6 | Instensification in Agriculture



sovereignty alliances, community supported agriculture, food movements, green fashion, natural beauty, urban agriculture and many others.

Organic becomes a mechanism for achieving true sustainability, a shared journey with others, respecting differences and working with diversity. To achieve this means proving the benefits of organic practices and systems through evidence-based findings and helping others to adopt such practices into their systems.

Beyond market success of organic labels, the organic movement must develop substantial leadership in the development of up-scalable truly sustainable farming and value chain systems. Such leadership could be for instance in offering best farm or best food handling practice packages and informing consumers about healthy diets. Another form of leadership could be the role of the organic movement as a guide and guardian of a modern, responsible and caring innovation culture.

Being inclusive and taking leadership and responsibility also means defining limits and taking clear positions against policies and practices that go against the objective of truly sustainable production and consumption. The organic movement must be inclusive on the journey towards true sustainability – regardless of whether they comply with minimum organic requirements – but it must also make clear and pointed positions against greenwashing, abuse of organic claims where not legally protected, and against the greed-fuelled exploitation

of the planet and society. Issues may for instance include the use of inputs with adverse effects, creation of vulnerable stakeholders' systemic dependency on big corporations or powerful countries, genetic engineering, patenting of life, and food waste.

Operational objective related to feature #4:

Organic is part of a wider sustainability debate and the organic movement works with like-minded movements to pursue common goals.



FEATURE #5: EMPOWERMENT FROM FARM TO THE FINAL CONSUMER

Organic agriculture is farm-based but also engages processing and trade. It allies with consumers – the force that ultimately pulls developments. Organic 3.0 repositions organic from chain to system, from certified product to a way of life that addresses all sustainability dimensions. Such a repositioning implies real partnerships along the whole value chain. It demands empowerment of disadvantaged stakeholders such as smallholding family farmers in difficult ecological, economic or governance environments, of farm laborers who deserve payment

of living wages or of the women who largely carry the burden of assuring decent livelihoods for their families.

The focus on empowerment of stakeholders in the whole system may imply for example:

- A shift towards designing agroecological, low input, closed loop, high yielding, resilient systems that implement the concept of ecological intensification, which will mean less costs and better production outcomes for farmers.
- Farmers are one of the lowest socioeconomic groups in many countries even though they produce most of the food on Earth. They must be empowered to be drivers of change rather than the current situation in which production systems are imposed on them through a top-down system of standards, checklists, and financial obligations. Many farmers risk losing their farm if crops fail and are often consequently forced to give up their farms to live in abject poverty on the fringes of the rapidly growing cities.
- Production costs, margins and prices along the value chain become more transparent and benefits from the sales of high value products are shared fairly including with the farmers in long chains.
- The majority of farmers and the majority of decision-makers among consumers – two primary stakeholders in organic systems – are women. Their critical role must be acknowledged. In many countries, numerous



women have no property, financial or reproductive rights, and are the object of physical violence. Even in the institutions of the organic movement, women are grossly under-represented in leadership roles. The principles of fairness and care mandate that organic 3.0 actively address gender equity.

- The present food system does not serve the more than 1.5 billion people who show temporary or chronic symptoms of malnutrition including stunting, wasting and obesity. There is a stagnation in the growth of life expectancy through ‘civilized’ non-communicable diseases (e.g. diabetes, cancer, Parkinson’s, Alzheimer’s) that are highly correlated with people’s lifestyle and eating habits. Healthy nutrition is an objective of organic 3.0. The understanding of organic broadens from production processes and products to also include consumption patterns.

Operational objective related to feature #5:

The most vulnerable stakeholders – including farmers and their livelihoods, and consumers and their health - are empowered so that they become real partners in the system.



FEATURE #6: TRUE VALUE & COST ACCOUNTING

Fair prices throughout the value chain must be an essential component of Organic 3.0 – producers should be price makers, not price takers, in all supply chains.

It needs to be economically viable for farmers, processors and traders to do the right thing and for consumers to make better choices. If the positive and negative externalities are not reflected in the price then inevitably the marketplace becomes distorted and the consumer is unable to comprehend the true value and make appropriate choices. It is thus key to more fairly account for the costs and benefits to the environment, biodiversity, human health, society and culture of any production system and farming method. This depends on developing tools for true cost accounting and pricing. From the consumer’s point of view, the perceived true value matters, so a premium price can easily be associated with clear benefits.

Examples of distortions that true cost accounting would help resolve include the abolishment of fertilizer subsidies (often practiced through hidden energy subsidies), the full implementation of the ‘polluter pays principle’ via taxing (e.g. of energy, CO₂, pesticides, nitrogen) and clear labeling of unsustainable practices (for example GMO, pesticide use and intensive animal rearing practices) so that consumers can make informed choices. In addition, public subsidies and direct payments to farmers must be coupled to farming systems that provide public goods and ecosystem services.

Much science and study already exists on the topic of true cost accounting. Establishing a system to account for the

true costs and responsibilities involved in production and consumption requires a combination of consumer awareness raising campaigns, market mechanisms, and policy mechanisms. These must all work concurrently under a common framework of goals, primary indicators toward those goals, and the specific practices that lead to them. Such a framework must be simple enough to be understandable and actionable by all stakeholders across the value chain. Positive practices should be incentivized and negative practices discouraged through economic instruments. Agreement on the qualitative or quantitative (financial or otherwise) impacts of different practices should be based on scientific assessments that are part of ongoing, transparent study and refinement.

Operational objective related to feature #6:

A common, easily understood, science-based, and transparently reviewed cost assessment methodology is applied and recognized as a base for fair pricing, assigning appropriate responsibilities to all actors in the production-consumption loop.

FIGURE 7



ORGANIC 3.0 – ACHIEVING OUTCOMES & IMPACTS



Organic 3.0 means the evolution of the present situations of stakeholders and institutions into new priorities, with reoriented strategies and with a new organic culture.

The achievements of Organic 2.0 and of institutions do not need to be given up, but they need to be reformed and complemented with new approaches. The desire to achieve the newly defined goals and objectives demands more open attitudes and reformed beliefs about the core tools and methodology of the organic movement. Figure 7 states a few examples of the direction of travel and outcomes of the transition.

The new strategy demands integration of organic into the development of the planet and societies rather than

concentration on the perfection of the niche. The impact of the organic movement must also be measured in the increasing adoption of organic principles in mainstream agriculture in order to improve global sustainability. This is achieved through growing the organic sector (certified and non-certified) while making it more sustainable (see Figure 6 on page 15).

The inclusive nature of Organic 3.0 with its innovative vigor, the better adaptation to local conditions and the inclusiveness to various development stages will make the organic movement even more diverse than it is today. The diversity of situations will lead to a diversity of outcomes that contribute to the desired impact of increased sustainability of global agricultural systems and their products (see examples in Box 5).

BOX 5 | EXAMPLES OF ORGANIC 3.0 OUTCOMES:

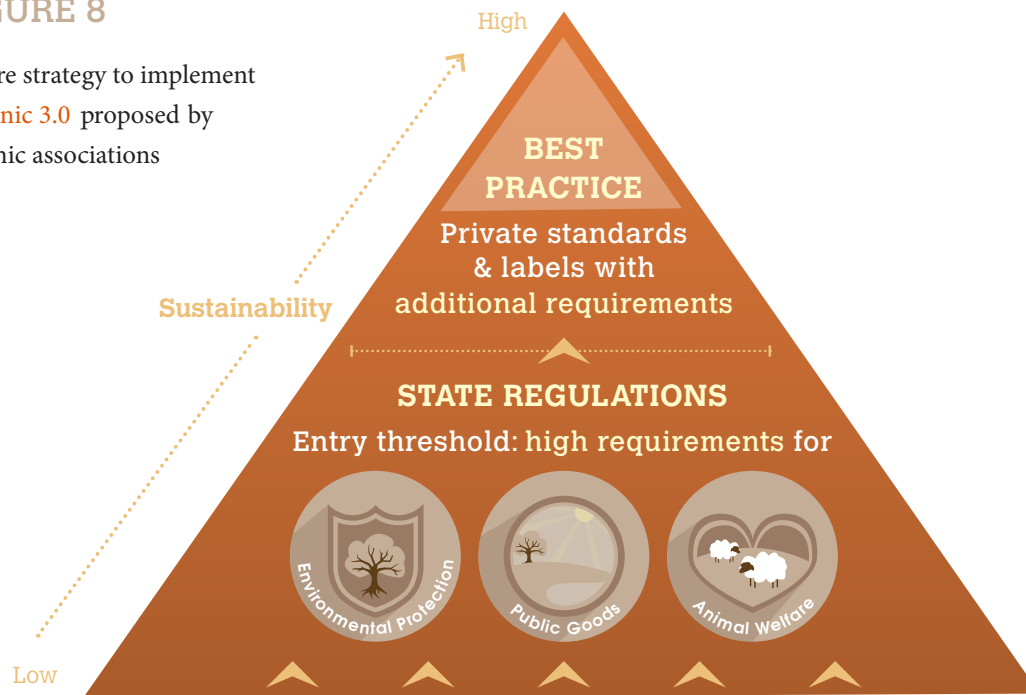
- Contribution to reversing the effects of human-induced climate change (e.g. mitigation through soil carbon sequestration) and helping farmers adapt to climate change;
- Preserving & stewarding biodiversity;
- Protection of genetic diversity and improve breeds of plant varieties and livestock suited to agro-ecological production;
- Reduction of dependency on non-renewable resources and close nutrient loops in production systems and in living soils;
- Improvement of productivity (nutrients and ecosystem services) of organic systems, while regenerating natural resources;
- Improvement of ecosystem health and resilience with focus on water, air quality, biodiversity and soil fertility;
- Improvement of human health through wholesome nutrition and avoidance of hazardous substances in food production;
- Assurance and support of fair and decent livelihoods for all;
- Improvement of gender equity;
- Preservation and support of cultural diversity and development;
- Minimization of risks through comprehensive application of the precautionary principle and the principles of true cost accounting in the value chains of food, textiles, body care, and other products.



6. TRANSITIONING FROM 2.0 TO 3.0 – A CALL FOR ACTION

FIGURE 8

Future strategy to implement
Organic 3.0 proposed by
organic associations



All stakeholders are invited to make the idea of Organic 3.0 a reality and be the attitude and change that is needed.

The shift from Organic 2.0 to Organic 3.0 means a change in thinking. The call for action includes a call to include the Organic 3.0 features in institutional and individual strategies. Basic values and attitudes promoted in Organic 3.0 such as continuous improvement, a culture of innovation or the outcome-based orientation need to become part of a new self-realization.

Depending on the roles of individuals and institutions, required actions vary.

1. UMBRELLA ORGANIZATIONS

Local, national, regional and global umbrella organizations, including IFOAM – Organics International and its self-organized structures make the transition to Organic 3.0 in their respective sphere of influence, i.e. their geographical scope or the sector they coordinate. They participate actively in all of the six features. They take a lead in implementing the overall Organic 3.0 concept and lead feature #4, “inclusive of

wider sustainability interests” and feature #5, “holistic empowerment from farm to final product.”

The call for action includes to:

- Create awareness and showcasing willingness to transition.
- Agree with one’s own stakeholders on a transition strategy that includes one’s own system changes and advocacy for Organic 3.0 contents; Advise and facilitate stakeholders in implementation. Monitor progress and communicate achievements and barriers.
- Clarify the non-negotiable elements of organic standards that are central to delivering the required outcomes, and create systems and a culture for continuous improvement towards best practice.
- Build and host innovation committees on national and international levels of outstanding specialists that track and critically assess emerging innovations and potential conflicts.
- Recognize, critically appraise and value the objectives and achievements of like-minded organizations and movements; Be included and inclusive: create bonds, incentives and strategic alliances based on common vision and goals.
- Assure participation and empowerment of vulnerable stakeholders, respecting their rights and their power.

- Advocate to decision makers and communicate to consumers and citizens.

2. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (R&D)

R&D leads feature #1, “a culture of innovation” and supports the other features with systemic advice and innovative solutions. The call for action includes to:

- Evaluate our achievements and assess our impact honestly and openly, in the context of the scale of the global challenges that society and the planet face, and support advocacy and communication with evidence.
- Identify the key bottlenecks that hold back the scope for organic, that could be resolved through more and better research, development and practice. Assess opportunities for science and evidence-based innovation (including both natural and social sciences) to realize alternative approaches that are consistent with the organic principles.
- Support operators and verification bodies in their efforts for continuous improvement and the demonstration of product authenticity and transparency through the development of better benchmarking, analytical, reporting, and other tools.
- Innovate, test and scale up integrative organic approaches for smallholding family farms, that open

up opportunities on household, local, national or international levels. Develop low-investment cost conversion and integration methodology to improve performance by enhanced system design.

- Assist with the introduction of a true cost accounting system for both simple and complex value chains, that shares a common framework, is practical to implement, and robust enough for scientific analysis.

3. OPERATORS

Operators take a lead in feature #2, “continuous improvement towards best practice” in feature #3, “ensuring diverse ways of transparent integrity” and in Feature #6, “true value and fair pricing.” They also play important roles in the features #1 and #5. The call for action includes to:

- Build internally and externally more awareness for best practice and for the need to address all sustainability dimensions; Adopt a strategy for continuous improvement rather than optimization on the baseline standard; Use peer and own past performance as a benchmark and report about one’s own improvements.
- Reassess one’s own current scheme for organic guarantees and innovate for customer relationship building. Transparency and common interest should become the fundamental organizing principles of assurance systems.

- Acknowledge true costs, publish and advocate for true value and fair pricing, and expand application where possible. Empower stakeholders to negotiate true value and fair prices.
- Work with umbrella organizations for sector coordination and strategy building. Work with R&D for technical, social, and policy innovations.
- Empower partners up and down the value chain and mainstream gender equity in own operations including in high-level positions.



4. CONSUMER AND CITIZEN ORGANIZATIONS

Consumer and citizen organizations guide consumers, the force that eventually pulls organic developments. These organizations play a crucial role in explaining the transitions and in representing the voice of consumers and citizens. They play a role primarily in features #1, #3, #5 and #6 and lead communications about consumption patterns. The call for action includes to:

- Be receptive to the far-reaching interests of consumer and citizen perspectives and be in a dialogue with the organic movement.
- Contribute to a culture of innovation and continuous improvement amongst all operators by understanding and welcoming the Organic 3.0 concept and by supporting it with ideas and feedback. Show openness to new ways of demonstrating transparency and integrity and engage in relationship-building with organic operators.
- Focus on holistic performance, overall impact, consumer behavior and healthy nutrition, based on agreed holistic criteria, not only on single issues, single products or single failures.
- Inform consumers about the reality of farming and thereby foster relationships with farmers and foment

the creation of an understanding of the power of consumption choices.

- Build values that impact fairness of trade interactions along the value chain.
- Acknowledge the empowerment of vulnerable groups, which includes fair pricing. Make political claims for true cost accounting, polluter-pay principles and the determination of true value.

5. SERVICE PROVIDERS

Service providers support all features and take a co-lead in Feature #2, “continuous improvement towards best practice” and #3, “ensuring transparent integrity.” The call for action includes to:

- Inspire and support all stakeholders with advice for the transition to Organic 3.0.
- Enable operators to choose appropriate assurance concepts, thus adding to the quality of assurance and integrity. Transparency and common interest should become the fundamental organizing principles of assurance systems.
- Improve information infrastructure to enable collaboration and access both regionally and globally on topics of common interest, e.g. reporting platforms,



registries of evaluated production materials, reviews of technologies, certification and trade data, risk assessment matrices, peer review criteria, etc.

- Develop specialized media to promote the Organic 3.0 strategy on a daily basis and help build awareness amongst stakeholders, including producers and consumers.

6. GOVERNMENTS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Governmental and intergovernmental organizations set the regulatory framework and play a very important role in all the features, since policy and legal changes may be required. The call for action includes to:

- Review agriculture policies, recognize the opportunities of Organic 3.0 and adopt an updated organic strategy in consensus with the sector. Reform organic policies in line with Organic 3.0. This particularly includes innovative farming practices, the adoption of the principle of continuous improvement in organic regulations, expansion of the options of conformity assessments, expansion of scope to a holistic understanding, and the institution of true cost accounting.

- Invest in the Organic 3.0 culture of innovation with its research agenda and budget, and invest in rewarding public goods provision by farmers.
- Support the development of diverse accountability initiatives, enabling development by individual operators and of the sector as a whole.
- Mandate the purchase of organic goods in public procurement policies.
- Evaluate the impact of organic agriculture for social equity and environmental sustainability and use it in solutions toward government priorities.
- Apply financial instruments that take into account the positive and negative external effects of agriculture production. Incentivize practices in the right direction and reward common-good provisions accordingly.

INTERESTED IN ORGANIC 3.0?

HELP US FURTHER DEVELOP THE FUTURE
OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE.

The Sustainable Organic Agriculture Action Network (SOAAN) is a think tank that positions organic agriculture and its related supply chains as a holistic, sustainable approach to the production of food and fiber for all of human society. Its second major achievement was the development of 'Organic 3.0', following on from the 'Best Practice Guideline for Agriculture & Value Chains', a reference document that sets the benchmark for what is involved with a comprehensive discussion of agriculture-based sustainability. Phase three of SOAAN's work has begun with the creation of a think tank on 'True Cost Accounting, True Value & Fair Pricing'.

A voluntary initiative, this action network relies on financial contributions to continue its work.

Help us make a difference and donate at
www.ifoam.bio/luvorganic
and/or contact David Gould to find out how
to get involved: d.gould@ifoam.bio

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