

ISAN

MARCH 2022
ISSUE NO.2

Southern African Network

*Supporting the growth of
food grower networks in
southern Africa*

**ENGAGING
STAKEHOLDERS IN
THE ORGANIC
EXPORT MARKET**

*Irene Kadzere, Thomas Bernet and
Kimani Njoroge*

FARMER TIPS

Sebastian Scott

**INTRODUCTION
TO ORGANIC 3.0**

IFOAM

ABOUT ISAN

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF ORGANIC MOVEMENTS (IFOAM) SOUTHERN AFRICAN NETWORK

ISAN is a regional network of organisations and individuals actively supporting the development of a sustainable, ecological organic agricultural sector in southern Africa. Its values align with the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) - Organics International principles of Health, Fairness, Ecology and Care.

ISAN was formed during the second Africa Organic Conference held in Zambia in 2012 to represent Southern Africa Development Community countries - Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, eSwatini, Zambia and Zimbabwe. To date, the following countries are active in ISAN; Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Madagascar, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

ISAN aims to develop and coordinate programmes and networks of common interest at the regional level working through National Organic Agriculture Movements (NOAMS), the Intercontinental Network of Organic Farmers' Organisations (INOFO) and the Network of Organic Agriculture Researchers in Africa (NOARA), all of which have chapters in the region.

For more information, contact: chair@isan.ifoam.bio

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Knowledge Hub for Organic
Agriculture in Southern Africa



KHSA

Knowledge Hub for
Organic Agriculture
in Southern Africa

PROMOTING ORGANIC AGRICULTURE

by gathering and
sharing knowledge

BUILDING STRONG NETWORKS

for organic agriculture
in southern Africa

ENHANCING THE CAPACITY

and skills of organic trainers



**FOR MORE
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IFOAM
SOUTHERN
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NETWORK



This publication is a collaboration between ISAN and the Knowledge Hub for Organic Agriculture in Southern Africa

EDITOR'S NOTES

The year 2022 mark 50 years since the founding of IFOAM - Organics International in a meeting held in Versailles, France. The movement has gained much momentum since then and today it has 581 members and 152 associates. It represents more than 3.1 million organic farmers from 187 countries. Farmers are practicing certified organic agriculture on 72.3 million hectares of farmland and the global market is valued at 106 billion Euros. Click [here](#) for more statistics on the industry and [here](#) to view a timeline of activities.

This year ISAN will be joining the wider organic movement in celebrating this 50-year milestone, by raising awareness about organic agriculture and the benefits it provides to both people and the planet. In this issue, we take a closer look at organics, what it is and what it is not.

From a farmer's perspective, Sebastian Scott from Zambia shares his experiences on how to fulfil today's needs, while working towards future sustainability. It is important that farmers first grow for food security before looking into markets.





Looking beyond our borders, we learn about market development from Kenyan experiences and how organic markets can be grown through systematic analysis of the challenges and opportunities within the sector while identifying and working in partnerships with sectoral stakeholders.

IFOAM - Organics International's success is due to the active involvement of many stakeholders over time. As we head into 2022, let's think about what role we and other stakeholders can play in building a strong organic movement in our own constituencies, countries and in southern Africa as a whole. We must build strong partnerships to support a successful movement in our region.

Yours in organics,

Fortunate Nyakanda

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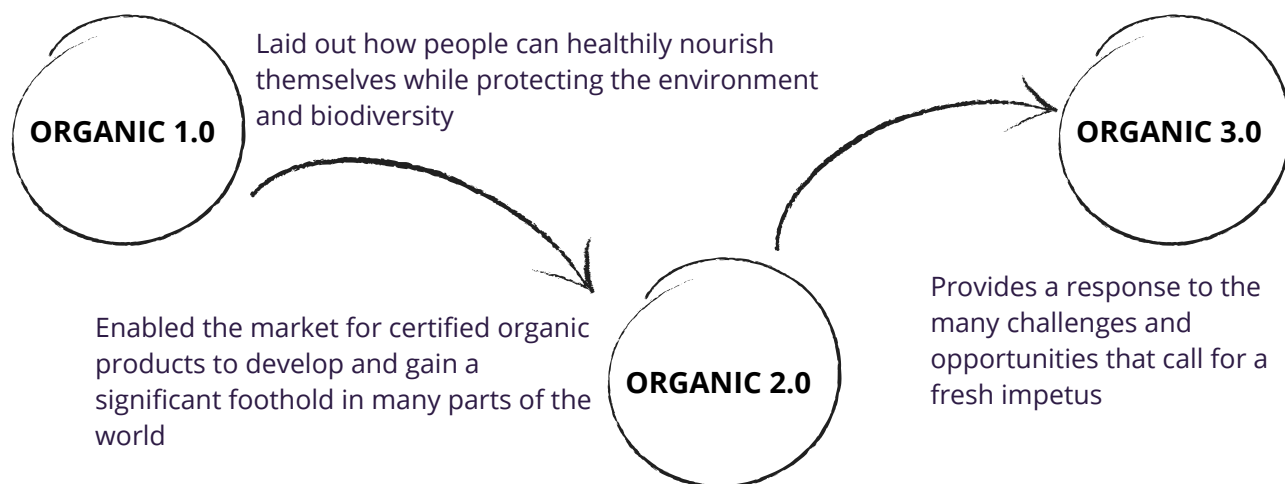
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Send your contributions for the June edition to secretariat@isan.ifoam.bio by 10 May 2022. For advertising queries, please contact chair@isan.ifoam.bio

ORGANIC 3.0

Organic 3.0 is about bringing organic out of its current niche into the mainstream and positioning organic systems as part of the multiple solutions needed to solve the tremendous challenges faced by the planet and species. It is about building relationships between consumers and producers and people and the planet in a holistic and inclusive manner. In Organic 3.0, farming systems are:

- Ecologically sound
- Economically viable
- Socially just
- Culturally diverse
- Transparently accountable.



Adapted from IFOAM_OI



What is organic agriculture?

There are different definitions of organics, but the most widely held is that of IFOAM – Organics International:

Organic Agriculture is a production system that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems, and people. It relies on ecological processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions, rather than the use of inputs with adverse effects. Organic Agriculture combines tradition, innovation, and science to benefit the shared environment and promote fair relationships and good quality of life for all involved.

IFOAM General Assembly, 2008

Principle of Ecology

Organic agriculture should be based on living ecological systems and cycles, work with them, emulate them and help sustain them.

Principle of Health

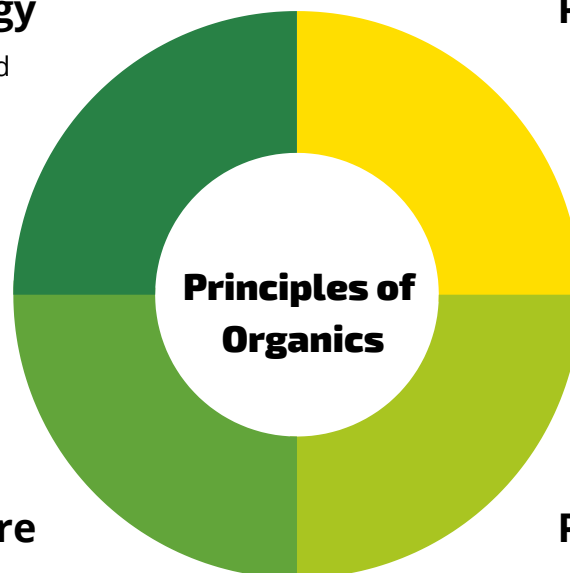
Organic agriculture should sustain and enhance the health of soil, plant, animal, human and planet as one and indivisible.

Principle of Care

Organic agriculture should be managed in a precautionary and responsible manner to protect the health and well-being of current and future generations and the environment.

Principle of Fairness

Organic agriculture should build on relationships that ensure fairness with regard to the common environment and life opportunities.



Statistics and emerging trends 2021

Oceania

35.9 million ha

Europe

16.5 million ha

Latin America

8.3 million ha

Asia

5.9 million ha

Africa

2 million ha

FiBL and IFOAM's latest report on organic statistics and emerging trends 2021 illustrates the growth of organic production in Africa, and elsewhere. Forty-two African countries shared their data for the report, enabling good insights to the state of the sector.

The global organic market continues to grow, with a current value of more than Euro 120 billion. There are now 3.4 million organic producers in the world, up 7.6% from last year. Almost 75 million hectares of land is now under organic production (up 4.1% from last year).

Land use

Africa's certified organic footprint is 0.2% of the continent's agricultural footprint and 2.8% of global lands under organic production. The organic sector has grown by 89.4% between 2010 and 2019, with the numbers of producers growing by 42.45% in the same period. Africa remains the region with the largest area (16.3 million hectares) under wild collection and beekeeping categories at 47% of global lands under this type of organic production.

For more on the statistics and trends in organics, visit:

www.fibl.org/fileadmin/documents/shop/1150-organic-world-2021.pdf

BUILDING NETWORKS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

INOFO UPDATE

By Janet Gracie

The Inter Continental Network of Organic Farmer Organizations (INOFO) is IFOAM - Organics International's farmer platform. It is the only global organic farmer organisation network in which farmers are represented through their own structures.

How to join INOFO:

Farmer organisations can join a national organic farmers' organisation, which can then join a country chapter and link to INOFO. This enables them to share to share their knowledge and to amplify their voices on issues relevant to agriculture – both on and off farms – at the regional and international level. Contact details are below.

Benefits of joining INOFO:

- Being a member of a larger constituency makes lobbying for farmer's rights more effective.
- Farmers are representing our voice and therefore are advocating from our position, and not anyone else's.
- Farmers learn from farmers. Sharing our work regionally and internationally, we find a wealth of information among ourselves, that is pragmatic, especially on topics like seed, local supply chains and participatory guarantee systems, etc.
- It often allows us to be part of the funding proposal concept stage, as opposed to being a beneficiary of projects, which often only caters to some of our challenges.
- Invitations to participate in events pertinent to farmer organisations that would not necessarily be visible/open to an individual farmer organisation.

INOFO is a structure that facilitates farmer stakeholders in working together. If there is no INOFO structure in your country, you are encouraged to form one. For more information, email us on africa@info.bio or info@africa.bio.



NOAM UPDATES

NAMIBIA ORGANIC ASSOCIATION (NOA)

By Mareike Voigts

Annual board meeting

NOA held their annual general board meeting in early 2022 to review and revise their strategy. Working groups were established to focus on strategic areas for the organisation. NOA is a country partner along with the Namibian Nature Foundation in the Knowledge Hub for Organic Agriculture in Southern Africa (KHSA).



Contact NOA on info@noa.org.na | www.noa.org.na

SOUTH AFRICA ORGANIC SECTOR ORGANISATION (SAOSO) & PGS SA

By Charmaine Koppehel

SA Organic Sector Working Groups

SAOSO and PGS SA are establishing Organic Sector Working Groups to further support and grow the sector. The Working Groups will act independently to achieve their objectives guided by both organisations. The first meetings are being convened and are set to cast a positive trajectory for food system transformation in South Africa, enabling organic agriculture to flourish.



PGS SA website

The new PGS SA website launched in February 2022 (www.pgssa.org.za) and it promises to be an exciting addition to building PGS and growing awareness in the region. It also features a PGS member login that will enable farmer groups to upload data and receive relevant content easily.



PGS | SOUTH AFRICA

PGS SA Pollinator Programme

The successful PGS SA Pollinator Programme, which is funded by the KHSA, has trained 20 individuals in various aspects of organic production and marketing.

The training has shown the Pollinators how to establish PGS groups, conduct farm visits and assess a farmer's adherence to organic production standards. To date, a total of 66 farm assessments have been conducted and 36 farmers have been certified.



Assessment of PGS Klein Slangkoppie, Cape Town, South Africa, November 2021

Contact SAOSO on info@saoso.org | www.saoso.org

Contact PGS SA on info@pgssa.org.za | www.pgssa.org.za

PGS Champions Programme

As an extension of phase one of the project, the team is launching the PGS SA Champions Programme with the intention of building capacity to support Pollinator activities by creating another tier of external support below the core team. PGS SA and SAOSO working in partnership in South Africa's organic sector, will identify a champion to work closely with the Pollinator who will then be trained to conduct farm visits in their respective PGS.

ZIMBABWE ORGANIC PRODUCERS AND PROMOTERS ASSOCIATION (ZOPPA)

By Fortunate Nyakanda

Organisational development

ZOPPA was established in 2008, and has recently undergone organisational development to become more relevant, efficient and sustainable. It has trained 100+ PGS groups and set up local compliance schemes since inception through projects or on request. PGS certified produce is sold both locally through institutions and weekly markets and regionally. There are still challenges selling PGS certified produce into the formal markets such as retail shops.



Contact ZOPPA on info@zoppa.org.zw | www.zoppa.org.za



FARMER TIPS

By Sebastian Scott, Old Orchard farm, Zambia

Improve organic farming systems through on-farm research and trials



Organic farming systems combine tradition, farmer innovation and science. For continuous improvement of the farming system, it is important that farmers continue to experiment and see what works best in their context for their crops.

Use chickens for pest control and fertiliser

Free range chickens provide producers with natural "tractors" - scavenging on unwanted green forage. The chickens also eat pests such as cutworms. In the process, the chickens fertilise the soil. And they produce tasty bright yolk eggs! Free-range, organic eggs are high in protein and other nutrients, as well as vitamins.



Practice mixed vegetable production



Planting a variety of vegetables helps to improve the soil and provide a diversity of nutrients in household diets. Legumes 'fixes' nitrogen in the soil, reducing the amount of nutrients the farmer needs to add for leafy vegetables. And the legume's bright flowers attract the natural enemies of pests to help keep them in check.



ON-FARM RESEARCH

Building on best practices and visioning for development in organic-based food production systems across Africa

Article by Sebastian Scott, Old Orchard farm, Zambia

As someone who believes that organic-based agriculture can simultaneously solve rural poverty and the need to grow food, fiber and energy for a growing global population, I often ponder on how this can be brought to scale.

All too often, the academic mind absorbs the rhetoric of the day and responds to this, often without fully appreciating the prevailing reality that faces the people we are trying to serve. This trend is often compounded when those of us who operate in research and development are relying on money from people and organisations that are even further removed from the reality on the ground, but who are anxious to set the agenda.

These issues often lead to time and money being spent on irrelevant and out-of-context research and development. This note is important, particularly for the sector we work in because, unlike the 'conventional' agriculture approach that relies on private inputs and is supported by the companies that benefit from this reliance, our focus is on farmers' profit and resilience. Having worked on my own small farm and together with smallholder farmers for almost 20 years, it has become apparent to me that although the future considerations of sustainability are valid, they pale in significance when compared to the short-term basic needs of today.

To make the impact of our work felt by the majority, we must have a collective vision of what we are working towards and act together to attain it. In this way, the meagre resources we have will contribute to attaining the goals that each country and region has set for itself.

We are working with stakeholders in Zambia to build clarity and direction in this regard. Here is an overview of what we have developed so far.

What does an efficient, productive, small organic farm look like in our context?

The basis of production is diverse dryland crops, specifically those with easily accessed markets (Maize, sorghum, millet, cassava, groundnut, soya, dry bean, mango etc.).
(Continued...)

- **Establish context-specific production systems to achieve high yields for all dryland crops**
 - Use of crop rotations with cereals, legumes and green manures (*Mucuna* spp., *Cajanus* c., *Cavanalia* spp., *Crotalaria* spp., *Vigna* spp., etc.).
 - Use of intercropping (strip, alley, mixed, etc.) to make best use of resources.
 - Use of multipurpose agroforestry plants (*Leucana*., *Gliricidia* sepium, *Sesbania* s., *Faidherbia* a., *Cajanus* c., etc.). Manage towards using offseason to grow biomass and livestock fodder. Manage toward applying nitrogen-rich biomass three weeks before cereal demand.
 - Use of crop varieties that perform well under organic-based management systems, nutrient use efficiency, pest/disease tolerance, plant structure in relation to intercropping associations, etc.
 - Efficient use of high-quality, nutrient-dense manure/compost made by adapting existing livestock housing so as to reduce nutrient losses from leaching, run-off and volatilization.
 - Application of compost in planting furrows or in planting stations to increase their efficient use by plants.
- **Integrate livestock into production**
 - Use of planned grazing, indigenous trees/shrubs and multi-purpose agroforestry plants for increased pasture productivity. Both of these can contribute to efficient nutrient cycling on the farm if manure/urine is managed to reduce losses.
 - Value addition to cheap grains and pulses (maize, soya, cowpea, pigeon pea velvet bean) by producing meat and eggs from mono-gastric animals.
- **Irrigate high-value crops**
 - Where water is available, introduce marketable high-value crops (vegetables, fruit, herbs etc.) to further grow incomes and resilience through diversity.
- **Communally managed resources**
 - Often, smallholder farms are surrounded by communal resources such as forests, pastures, wetlands, wildlife areas, etc. Efficient management of these resources can raise incomes and increase nutrient/water cycling efficiency for the benefit of the farmer and community.

My own small farm has achieved high yields and productivity for all crops and livestock types and has been able to transition into a resilient business, by following some these principles and practices. The process of developing my farm has allowed me to experiment with scientific knowledge and apply it in a combined way to see what can happen when all the parts of 'best practice' are put together.

The main point is that, once we have a vision that is well suited to the needs of the farmer, deciding where to allocate our time and effort in research and development becomes easier and more productive.

BEYOND OUR REGION

How to engage stakeholders in organic local and export market development – lessons from Kenya

Article by Irene Kadzere (irene.kadzere@fibl.org), FiBL Switzerland; Thomas Bernet (thomas.bernet.@fibl.org), FiBL Switzerland; Martin Kimani Njoroge (martin@koan.co.ke), KOAN, Kenya

The organic sector in Africa is expanding steadily as reflected by the annual global statistics on organic performance. There are both push and pull drivers for this expansion.

As smallholder farmers look for more sustainable farming practices that will build resilience to climate and socioeconomic shocks, they are more willing to engage in organic and agroecological practices. And consumers are increasingly wanting food that is produced in a sustainable way and is safer and healthier. Businesses along the value chain are also looking for an approach that makes them more competitive and sustainable over the long term. These factors are driving horizontal and vertical expansion of the organic sector, creating new and meaningful opportunities throughout the value chain.

It is increasingly recognised that improving smallholder farmers access to appropriate and sustainable markets is key to growing their competitiveness, and critical to developing the organic sector.

The Participatory Market Chain Approach (PMCA) is a promising methodology in this regard, creating innovation along value chains with a focus on demand and market opportunities (see Figure 1). The approach was first used and tested in Peru as part of a project to enhance the competitiveness of small-scale potato producers in the Andean region, and later validated in Bolivia, Ecuador, Uganda and Indonesia.

PMCA is a participatory business orientated approach that is inclusive of all actors, including producers, processors, traders, retailers, consumers, NGOs and government service providers. It is also business orientated, and facilitators are on hand to lead and support the process. Actors, with facilitation from trained PMCA Facilitators, collaboratively identify, analyse and implement business opportunities together. PMCA can be used for both the local and the export market.

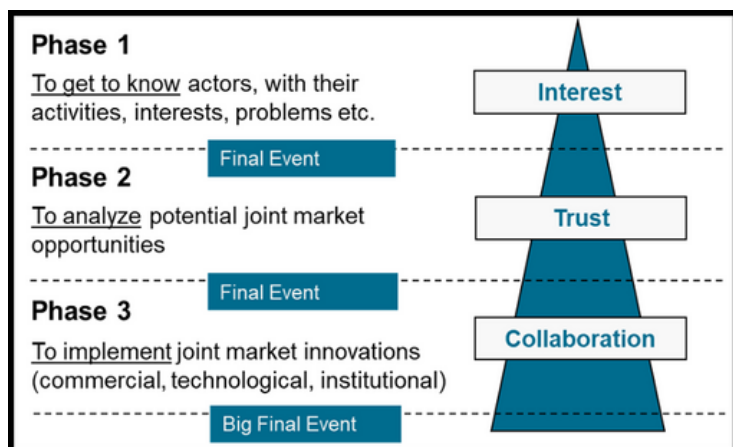


Figure 1: The three phases of PMCA



Figure 2: Rapid market appraisal (left) by PMCA facilitators



Figure 3: Negotiating for prices of organic produce



Figure 4: Organic avocado meeting between farmers and traders approach

PMCA in Kenya

In Kenya, the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) Switzerland together with the Kenya Organic Agriculture Network, the Kenya Organic Agriculture Centre of Kenya, the Kenya Agricultural & Livestock Research Organization, and Germany-based Africrops! and other stakeholders have been applying PMCA since November 2019.

The project is linking smallholder organic farmers from Murang'a County to local and export markets so that they can benefit from their organic production efforts. To date, the project has led to the formation of three business groups focused on fruits and vegetables for local markets, herbs and spices for local markets and avocados for export markets.

These groups initially met to layout their business ideas and subsequently to discuss how to continuously implement actions and address any emerging bottlenecks in order to successfully link to the markets – see Figures 2, 3, and 4 for some of the processes.

To date, the process has helped establish two local organic markets in Kangari and in Gatanga serving more than 196 farmers. Here, the farmers, with support from key stakeholders, negotiated with local leaderships to obtain space for setting up their local Organic Farmers' Markets.

44 farmers sold 16.5 tons of organic produce through these markets and they made more than KES 550 000 (about US\$4 800) in 2021

These markets make it easier for consumers to access organic agriculture, and they provided an outlet for farmers' produce during COVID-19 travel restrictions. Improvements are now being made to enhance the market stalls and improve the presentation, packaging and quality of produce in line with consumer expectations. These farmers are also increasingly selling their produce at markets in Nairobi. The Herbs and Spices group is establishing facilities for local value addition and is engaging with buyers of both raw and value-added products. The Avocado Export group is developing branding for Kenyan Organic Avocados, which is planned to be launched at Biofach 2022.

Some of the lessons and experiences from this initiative are that the continued coherence of business groups is critical for success. This can be achieved through regular interactions among the actors and keeping the focus and emphasis on the common benefits or profitable outcome. Ongoing facilitation of the business group processes is equally important. Supporting resources are necessary to leverage the business groups to meet some of the financial demands that may arise in the development of their business ideas, for example, the costs of branding, installing market stalls, improvements in packaging, innovative value addition, etc.

The social capital that is being developed among different 'organic stakeholders' along the process is likely to yield benefits that go beyond the short-term benefits of the implemented and promoted new business opportunities.

This pilot PMCA application in Kenya can be scaled out to other regions within and outside Kenya, and can contribute to lasting business partnerships among value chain actors.

Acknowledgements: Anne Muriuki, David Gathuka, PMCA Facilitators in Kenya, Andreas Wesselmann and all farmers who participated

KNOWLEDGE HUB SOUTHERN AFRICA (KHSA)

About KHSA

KHSA is part of the Knowledge Centre for Organic Agriculture in Africa (KCOA), a collaborative country-led partnership funded by the German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and implemented by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and non-governmental organisations across Africa. The KCOA aims to scale up adoption of organic farming practices through five knowledge hubs in Africa over a four-year period. The South African-based Sustainability Institute supports project implementation in southern Africa. Activities are focused in Zambia, led by Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM) Zambia; in Namibia led by the Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF) in collaboration with the Namibian Organic Association (NOA); and in South Africa led by the South African Organic Sector Organisation (SAOSO). The project is extending to Malawi in 2022. The other hubs are implemented by GIZ in North, West and Eastern and Central Africa.

PGS governance webinar kicks off exciting exchange of knowledge

Article by Charmaine Koppehel, PGS SA

On 20 January 2022, KHSA hosted its first Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) webinar focusing on governance of local organic guarantee systems. Eight speakers from various African countries, as well as Brazil and India, shared their experiences and knowledge to an audience of nearly 200 people. An overview of the presentations is provided below.

Sara Anselmi, IFOAM-Organics International

Sara spoke about the PGS approach to certification, and the benefits and challenges of the system. "It is very important to keep in mind that PGS initiatives are unique," Anselmi said, "and there are important differences across and even within countries." IFOAM supports PGS development, advocates for its recognition by governments, and supports its development globally. To date, IFOAM has recorded 242 PGS initiatives in 78 countries, with more than 1.2-million producers certified. (Continued...)

Esther Kagai, Community Sustainable Agriculture and Healthy Empowerment Program, Kenya.

Motivated by a desire for change in the way that organic food is certified, and wishing to promote equity and fairness through the value chain, PGS was established in Kenya in 2017. They now have five certified groups with several more being trained.

Kagai said: "PGS is appropriate to smallholder agriculture with principles and values that reflect the culture of the producers. Farmer groups use recognised standards, and mechanisms ensure that farmer's comply with the rules."

Sasha Mentz, PGS SA, South Africa

PGS SA currently has 13 farmer groups and 16 emerging groups being established. This totals 632 farmers of which 335 farmers certified, meaning that 415ha is under organic production. Mentz explained that PGS is a decentralised system and groups are self-governed but aligned to key principles.

"PGS SA provides guidance to establish farmer groups, supports networking and provides access to an organic certification landscape with nationally recognised seals and logos, and quality control," said Mentz. "PGS groups are obliged to share any deviation from the South African Organic Sector Organisation (SAOSO) standard."

Ana Luiza Meirelles, Centro Ecologico-Ecovidia Network, Brazil

The Ecovidia Network involves about 5 000 families, 400 farmer groups, 30 NGOs and 400 local street markets. "We currently have 32 regional nuclei that have autonomy but are supported by various committees assisting with coordination, ethics and verification," Ana said.

Karthik Gunasekar, PGS Organic, INDIA

Karthik spoke about the journey of PGS in his country. "We envision a future of socially, ecologically and economically just food systems guaranteed by trust and participation, driven by traditional ecological knowledge systems and co-owned and controlled by communities adhering to principles of co-operation," he said. "PGS is about building social capital and community engagement which forms resilient communities."

Other speakers included Ousmane Labodja, an IFOAM-OI Facilitator in Togo, and Herve Bouagnimbeck from the Knowledge Hub for Organic Agriculture in West Africa, Cameroon. The webinar was an exciting exchange of experiences and knowledge with the aim of strengthening organic networks in the region. It is the first part in a series with the second webinar planned for the middle of 2022.

For more information, please contact info@pgssa.org.za.

UPCOMING EVENTS

1. Carbon Farming, Soil conservation and new technologies conference

Stellenbosch University Cape Town

14-16 March 2022

Cost: R9 649.00 excluding VAT

To register, email Ryan Jagesar on ryan@empiretraining.co.za

2. International Conference on Organic Farming and Gardening Methods

Cape Town, South Africa

14-15 April 2022

Aims to bring together leading academic scientists, researchers and research scholars to exchange and share their experiences and research results on all aspects of Organic Farming and Gardening Methods.

For more info, click [here](#).

3. World Food Systems Centre Summer School

Switzerland August 2022

A not-to-be-missed opportunity for the student community

For more information and registration, click [here](#).

4. Organic & Natural Products Expo Africa

Johannesburg, South Africa

21-23 October 2022,

Designed as a hybrid event that caters to trade buyers, while at the same time allowing retail sales directly to consumers, the expo is set to showcase local and international manufacturers, suppliers, importers and exporters. For more info, click [here](#).

To feature your event, please send all relevant information to secretariat@isan.ifoam.bio by 10 May 2022



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