



International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements





Facilitating smallholders' access to global organic markets

Enabling reasonable costs for smallholder certification through developing and promoting harmonized Internal Control Systems (ICS)

- Training manuals for the establishment of ICS and the external inspection of ICS



Developing local organic markets

Strengthening local organic markets in developing countries and striving to achieve recognition of Participatory Guarantee Systems

- International Workshops.
- Global exchange on local issues

Providing Support to Smallholders



National, regional and international lobbying

Building lobbying platforms at all levels and creating a beneficial framework for the expansion of Organic Agriculture

- FAO and IFAD Liaison Office
- Service Centers in different regions of the world
- Advocating cooperation for Organic Agriculture with international, national and regional networks



Training farmers in developing countries

Developing and producing professional and comprehensive training manuals for Organic Agriculture in the Tropics



Benefiting of local farmers' experience

Utilizing local/indigenous knowledge and its wealth of experience in the development of Organic Agriculture in the Tropics

- Field Manuals based on local/Indigenous knowledge
- Applied Research on farmer's experiences in Organic Agriculture

Foreword

Access to food continues to be insecure in Africa, and the reasons are well known to be more often of social, economic and political nature rather than a matter of not sufficient food being produced at global level. Organic agriculture, both certified and non-certified, offers considerable potential in developing countries. Small farming communities usually have limited access to external inputs, as these are often costly or not available, while their application needs training and information. Green Revolution crop varieties depend on agrochemicals, and their distribution is usually limited to areas with high agricultural potential. Farmers in marginal areas have rarely adopted Green Revolution production systems. Genetically modified crops are being pushed to Africa as a solution to hunger, while this risky, proprietary and expensive technology is very likely to deepen the Green Revolution failure.

Organic production apart from being suitable to marginal as well as productive areas, contributes to soil, water, and biodiversity conservation. It produces the diversity necessary for healthy nutrition, makes use of local resources and traditional knowledge and thus strengthens farming communities. Much farming in developing countries is de facto low or no chemical input farming, but this does not mean it is “organic by default”. Many farming technologies practised by poor people are sustainable, others are definitely not and need improvement.

In view of decreased subsidies for agrochemicals, and the general failure of the Green Revolution in Africa, viable alternatives to improve food security and food sovereignty are gaining momentum. Soil fertility management, desertification control, agricultural biodiversity conservation, agroforestry, Integrated Pest Management, rural community development, urban agriculture among others offer such approaches; many of them use organic agriculture principles and farming techniques.

Organic agriculture in Africa has grown in the past years, to a point where it becomes visible and measurable. In about half of the African countries, a considerable number and variety of farmers, communities and organisations have gained experience, both with certified and non-certified organic production, for overseas markets as well as for local food supply.

IFOAM since many years has supported organic agriculture in developing countries through its “IFOAM Goes Organic” (I-GO) Program. IFOAM plans to expand its activities in Africa by establishing a centre on the continent. It will evaluate experiences, help to identify bottlenecks and potentials, and network and advocate for the development of organic farming in Africa.

The present working paper delivers explorative information, certainly not complete, on which to build the first activities of the IFOAM Africa centre. IFOAM wants to share this very instructive and useful compilation of data and analyses not only with its member organisations, but also with like-minded movements, development agencies, policy makers and donors.

IFOAM is grateful to HIVOS, The Netherlands, for granting the necessary funds through the I-GO Program to produce the present document, and to the authors for their committed work.



Gunnar Rundgren
IFOAM President

Executive summary

The purpose of the report commissioned by IFOAM is to present an overview of the current status of the organic movement in Africa. Statistical data are presented as well as an analytical profile of both the formal (certified) and informal organic sectors. Separate summaries are provided for the three main regions (Northern, Western and Southeastern Africa). 22 African countries have been chosen which together represent around 40% of African countries and 40% of the land area¹. They are the countries where organic agriculture is most developed. Additional data for other countries are provided where it became available.

Five different systems are identified in which organic agriculture is currently practised. They vary less in their farming methods, but more in the type of actors involved:

1. Commercialised, certified organic agriculture without any significant development funding. This is generally practised on large-scale farms and oriented towards organic markets in industrialized countries. Examples include a few large farms in South Africa, Malawi and Zambia, and Northern African export production for Europe on a considerable number of farms in Tunisia and Egypt. An outstanding example is Sekem that won the Right Livelihood Award in 2003.
2. Export oriented certified organic agriculture, supported by development funding, and aimed at improving incomes of small farmers. Uganda, for example, has 28,000 certified farms with 122,000 hectares of land, and Tanzania at least 5,000 hectares of certified land, and 1,000 farms.
3. Poverty and environment oriented agriculture based on organic principles, assisted by development agencies. This system addresses soil degradation and water scarcity as well as food security, and usually supports local initiatives.
4. Organic agriculture initiatives developed by farming communities and local organisations without foreign assistance, as a means of addressing pressing social, economic and environmental problems. Such initiatives are most developed in Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Africa.
5. Research carried out by local, national and supranational institutes: Egypt has a well- developed national research system for organic cotton. Among international research organisations, ICRAF's agroforestry and ICIPE's pest management research contribute substantially to knowledge of organic management.

¹ **North Africa:** Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia

West Africa: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Mali, Senegal, Togo

A number of approaches to environmental sustainability and food security draw on organic agricultural experience. These like-minded approaches include many of the food security programmes of international donors, as well as governments and non-governmental organisations. They also include soil fertility management and desertification control strategies, Integrated Pest Management, agroforestry, nature conservation, agricultural biodiversity, urban agriculture, and approaches to reduce global warming and to increase carbon sequestration. Many of the strategies and programmes following these approaches place organic farming at the centre of their efforts to counter food insecurity, rural poverty and environmental degradation. Together they can provide the necessary critical mass to substantially promote African organic agriculture within the coming decade.

Much organic production is believed to take place in the informal sector and without certification. Here statistics are hard to come by. In the formal sector, almost 40,000 farms are certified, with 235,000 hectares of land (IFOAM 2003). Uganda has 50% of Africa's certified land and is the only African country where the certified area exceeds 1% of total agricultural land. It has a wide variety of certified products including coffee, cocoa, vanilla, avocados, banana, cotton, dried fruit, pineapples and sesame. This success is partly due to a few large cooperatives initially supported by development cooperation. There is also a strong NGO sector promoting organic agriculture in Uganda. Domestic standards and a certification body are being developed.

Africa has a few other organic strongholds, e.g. cotton production in Egypt, for both export and the local market. However, the organic sector, certified and non-certified, for both export and local market (and subsistence) production, is extremely diverse, making it difficult, on the one hand, to reduce the description to a few dimensions, but on the other hand, offering many opportunities for development approaches. These potentials need further exploration.

While data is scarce throughout the continent, it is particularly so in West Africa. Clearly, the West African organic sector lags behind other regions. While the region has often been thought of as having a potential for developing a formal certified sector, especially with regard to tropical fruit, few organic trading links have been established. Coffee in Cameroon, palm oil and fruits in Ghana, and cotton in Mali, Senegal and Benin, however, show mentionable certified organic sectors. At the same time, agroecological initiatives promoting rural development and food security, and enhancing soil fertility are relatively strong in West Africa. Women are actively engaged in these initiatives. Communication and coordination problems seem, however, to weigh heavy on the development of the sector, language being one of them.

As certification which is usually carried out by Northern organisations, makes local marketing expensive, the need for regional standard setting and certification schemes is increasing. Regional or local standards need to be harmonized with standards of industrialized countries. First positive experiences to reduce certification cost have been made with group certification (IFOAM 2003: Smallholder Group Certification).

South and East Africa: Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe

Proceedings of Three Workshops). Local certification bodies exist in Egypt, Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda. However, the development of regional standards and certification systems needs support, advocacy and coordination.

There is a notable lack of integration between organic agriculture practitioners and the research community. Practitioners' knowledge and expertise is usually retained as grey literature or is not published. This is not only a handicap for access by other user groups, but it also reduces opportunities for independent testing of claimed project success.

While research organisations most often ignore organic agriculture, there are a considerable number of researchers who focus on related principles and practices. The organic movement often misses out, at least for some time, on such useful research results, e.g. a mycopesticide developed by IITA's Biological Control Centre in Cotonou to control the short-horned grasshopper. Improved information exchange between the different communities could be very beneficial, and obviously, adequate facilitation is needed.

IFOAM as an international federation (www.ifoam.org) has 72 African member organisations, who with almost 10% of the total membership add to a rather high proportion of total membership, taking into account that the sector is not well developed in Africa. It cooperates with supranational initiatives for organic agriculture in Africa, such as the African Council of Organic Associations (Zambia), Agrecol Afrique (Senegal), African Network on the Development of Ecological Agriculture (Ghana) and the Participatory Ecological Land-Use Management (PELUM, Zimbabwe). In view of the needs and opportunities, IFOAM will set up an Africa centre in early 2004. Its first activities will be built on the database presented by this study.

Acknowledgements

We are hugely indebted to a large number of individuals who have helped in preparing this report. They have helped with identifying sources of data, providing information on projects that they are involved in and in commenting upon draft profiles for individual countries. Our thanks to all concerned. Particular thanks are due to Christian Schader at IFOAM who has acted as point of contact between our two organisations and always been prompt and helpful in replying to our questions.

Souleymane Bassoum (Agrecol, Senegal); Nicolas Bertrand (IUCN); Josh Bishop (IUCN); Birgitt Boor (Bioherb); Diana Callear (AFRISCO); Tom Deiters (Agro Eco, Zimbabwe); S. Facknath, (Faculty of Agriculture, University of Mauritius); Rene Fisher (ZOPPA, Zimbabwe); Stephanie Gallat (Agr Eco, Ghana); Christina Grandi, (IFOAM); Dr. Yousef A. Hamdi (ECOEA, Egypt); Uli Helburg (Helburg Consult); Fred Kabuye (A2N Uganda); Detlef Kalus (IFOAM); Prof. L. Kenny (Institut Agronomique et Veterinaire, Morocco); Dr. Johannes Kern (Kern & Uttenweiler GmbH); Lucy Kioko-Kimani (Association for Better Land Husbandry); Andreas Kratz (Ecocert); B. Lalljee, (University of Mauritius); Norberto Makalanbe (ABIODES, Mozambique); Ms. Ovia Katiti Matovu, (Uganda Export Promotion Board), Nadia Moali-Grine (Université de Bejaia, Algeria) ; Eusebius Mukhwana (SACRED, Kenya); Patrick Mulvany (ITDG); Bridget O'Connor (OPPAZ); Veronica Pecorella (IMC); Saro G. Ratter (Bio-Re Tanzania); Gunnar Rundgren (IFOAM); Rob Small, (Ashoka / ABALIMI, S. Africa); Deepa van Staalduinen (Agro Eco); Gabriele Stoll, Sue Stolton (Equilibrium); Alastair Taylor (Kulika, Uganda); Kees van Veluw (Agro Eco); Annemieke de Vos (Green Fox, Zambia); Fred Wajje (World Vision, Uganda); Helga Willer (FiBL); Julia Wright (HDRA, UK); Minou Yuseffi (SOEL).

We are indebted to Karen Stork and Caroline Lettinga at Agro Eco who were always on hand to help manage the project and help with the final editing and layout.

1 Introduction

1.1 Aims and Objectives

This report was commissioned by IFOAM under the I-GO programme. Its purpose is to present a detailed overview of the status of the organic and like-minded movements in Africa and of their potential for development. It has been prepared as background strategy document to inform the strategies to be adopted by the planned IFOAM Africa centre. It has four main aims:

- To provide an overview of the development and status of organic farming within Africa, with reference to the overall farming situation there;
- To provide a statistical summary of organic production within Africa;
- To provide profiles of the development of the organic sector within 20-25 African countries, and
- To provide summaries of the situation within the three regions of Africa: North; West and the Southeast.

1.2 Structure of the Report

This report is divided into five sections. The first of these describes the selected countries and methods of investigation used. It points the reader to the sources of literature employed. The section of literature, regarding the formal certified sector is far more developed than others. The greater detail, and frequent updating of this literature, compared to that relating to development led and local organic practices, probably gives an exaggerated impression of its size and importance *viz a viz* the other two approaches. This section also seeks to contextualise the role of organic farming in Africa by briefly summarising the main challenges facing African agriculture. In particular it focuses upon how the organic movement can position itself *viz a viz* contemporary discourses surrounding the future of farming in Africa.

The second section provides a more detailed examination of these different approaches to organic farming. It provides aggregate data for certified organic land and commodity production in Africa. It discusses different approaches for evaluating the benefits of certified organic production. It then examines the actors involved in promoting certified organic production and the strategies that they adopt. The section on formal organic production concludes by examining the many challenges involved in constructing and maintaining transparent supply chains, challenges that are exacerbated by the continent's political and economic climate and lack of infrastructure. The second part of this section identifies the institutions involved in explicitly promoting organic agriculture in Africa. It provides an examination of IFOAM's role and membership in Africa. It then goes in turn to identify several groups of actors: African networks,

international organisations, governmental development agencies, NGOs and civil society organisations, and private sector consultants. The final part of this section identifies like-minded initiatives, development objectives and organisations that already have organic approaches and/or where there is a strong potential. These include a number of UN conventions (on climate change, desertification and biodiversity) as well as other broad development objectives such as food security and gender issues. The section also briefly discusses the weak existing linkages between the organic sector and formal research institutes, and flags this as a potential area for building future links.

The remaining three sections examine the state of organic agriculture in North, West and South and East Africa respectively. In each region a selected number of countries, known to have an active organic sector are profiled. Table 1 provides details of these countries. It was initially intended to include three others (Congo, the Comoros Islands and the Ivory Coast). However, in the event there was very little data available on these countries and so full profiles were not developed. Each regional area has, at the end, a section for “other countries” where we have recorded the snippets of information for countries where there was insufficient information to build up a complete country profile. The countries for which we have developed full profiles are also shown in Figure 1.1. They represent 41% of African countries and about 40% of the landmass of Africa. Organic farming is substantially less developed and/or less documented in the remaining African countries.

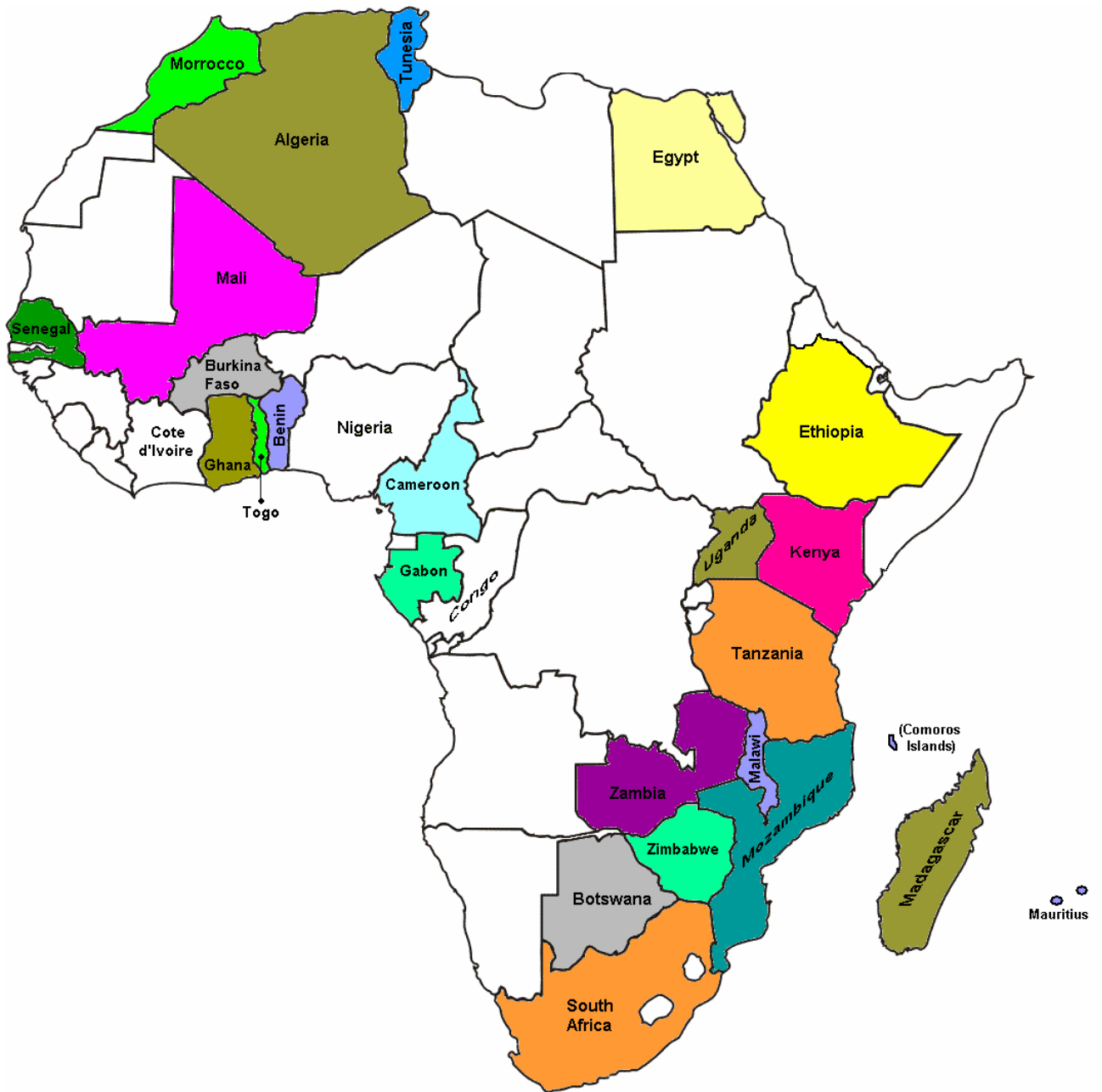
Table 1.1: Countries with Known Organic Production

North Africa (4)	West Africa (7)	East and South Africa (11)
Algeria (a)	Benin (a, b, c)	Ethiopia (c, d)
Egypt (a, b, c)	Burkina Faso (a, b, c, d)	Kenya (a, b, c, d)
Morocco (a, c)	Cameroon (a, b)	Madagascar (a, d)
Tunisia (a, c)	Ghana (a, b, c)	Malawi (a, b)
	Mali (d)	Mauritius (a)
	Senegal (a, b, d)	Mozambique (a, b, c)
	Togo (b)	South Africa (a, b, c)
		Tanzania (a, c)
		Uganda (a, b, c)
		Zambia (a, d)
		Zimbabwe (a, b, c)
	Other Countries: Gambia, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Sierra Leone	Other Countries: Congo Democratic Republic: Lesotho, Namibia, Réunion

Initial reasons for selection:

- a. Known exporter of certified organic produce;
- b. At least two IFOAM members (2002 data);
- c. Consultants have experience in and/or good contacts within these countries;
- d. Known presence of other closely aligned initiatives.

Figure 1.1: Countries Covered by the Survey



About IFOAM

IFOAM's mission is leading, uniting and assisting the organic movement in its full diversity. Our goal is the worldwide adoption of ecologically sound systems that are based on the principles of Organic Agriculture.

Leading the organic movements worldwide, IFOAM implements the will of its broad based constituency - from farmers' organizations to multinational certification agencies, ensuring the credibility and longevity of organic agriculture as a means to ecological, economic and social sustainability.

Uniting the organic world, IFOAM provides platforms to stakeholders for a wide range of purposes. Through international conferences, committee meetings, and other forums, IFOAM facilitates the ongoing and constructive dialogue about the future and status of organic agriculture.

Assisting its membership, IFOAM implements specific projects that facilitate the adoption of organic agriculture, particularly in developing countries. IFOAM also represents the organic agriculture movements at United Nations and other intergovernmental agencies. IFOAM has observer status or is otherwise accredited by the following international institutions:

- The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
- Codex Alimentarius Commission (FAO & WHO)
- United Nations Environment Program (UNEP)
- The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)



IFOAM's major aims and activities are:

- To provide authoritative information about organic agriculture, and to promote its worldwide application
- To exchange knowledge
- To represent the organic movement at international policy making forums
- To establish, maintain and regularly revise the international "IFOAM Basic Standards" as well as the "IFOAM Accreditation Criteria for Certifying Programmes", published together as the 'IFOAM Norms'
- To make an agreed international guarantee of organic quality a reality via the IFOAM Accreditation Program and Seal.
- To build a common agenda for all stakeholders in the organic sector, including producers, farm workers, consumers, the food industry, trade and society at large

Some benefits for IFOAM members and associates

IFOAM offers affiliate status to associations, institutions and businesses that are active in the organic sector. Organisations, whose activities are predominantly organic, are granted voting rights. Others may join as associates, and individuals are invited to join IFOAM as supporters.

Some benefits of IFOAM membership:

- Participation in THE international organization for organic production
- Participation in IFOAM's committees and structures
- Taking part in the process to update International Organic Standards
- Getting information from IFOAM Magazines and newsletters
- Obtaining better prices on events and publications
- Being invited to conferences and meetings
- Receiving the right to vote at the IFOAM General Assembly
- Eligibility to host IFOAM conferences and events
- Listing in the IFOAM Directory and an annually updated free copy
- A free copy of the IFOAM Norms

IFOAM HEAD OFFICE:

Charles-de-Gaulle-Str. 5, 53113 Bonn, Germany

Tel.: +49-228-92650-10

Fax: +49-228-92650-99

headoffice@ifoam.org

www.ifoam.org

The IFOAM World Board



From left to right: Sheldon Weinberg, USA; Gerald A. Herrmann, Germany; Liz Clay, Australia; Gunnar Rundgren, Sweden; Prabha Mahale, India; El Hadji Hamath Hane, Senegal; Kenji Matsumoto, Japan; Antonio Compagnoni, Italy; Alberto Pipo Lernoud, Argentina



International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements

www.ifoam.org