



DIR Foundation



ORGANIC CHAIN DEVELOPMENT IN ETHIOPIA

Participatory Networking Workshop
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 24-25 May 2007



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Acronyms

BCS – German Certification Organisation	MoARD – Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
BoARD – Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development	NGO – non-governmental organisation
CB – certification body	NOGAMU – National Organic Agriculture Movement of Uganda
CBO – community-based organisation	NOP – National Organic Policy (of the United States of America)
ECOPIA – Ecological Products of Ethiopia	NTFP – non-timber forest products
EIAR – Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research	OAPC – Organic Agriculture Production Council
ENDA – Environment and Development Association	OIRSA – Organic organisation based in Latin America
EOSA – Ethiopian Organic Seed Action	PGS – Participatory Guarantee System
EPA – Environmental Protection Authority	PPP – private-public partnership
EPOPA – Export Promotion of Organic Products from Africa	PRSP – Poverty Reduction Strategy Program / Paper / Policy
ETI – Ethical Trading Initiative	QSAE – Quality and Standards Authority of Ethiopia
EurepGAP – European Retailers Programme on Good Agricultural Practices	R&D – research and development
FAO – Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations	RA – Rainforest Alliance
FTI – Fair Trade Initiative	RMA – rapid market analysis
HACCP – Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point	SAI – Social Accountability International
HoA-REN/C – Horn of Africa—Regional Environment Network/Centre	SCR – Social Corporate Responsibility
IBC – Institute of Biodiversity Conservation	SEA – Safe Environment Association
ICS – Internal Control System	SSNC – Swedish Society for Nature Conservation
IFOAM – International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements	SWEDA – Social Welfare and Development Association
IMO – Institute for Market Ecology	TOAM – Tanzanian Organic Agriculture Movement
IOAS – International Organic Accreditation Service	UNCTAD – United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
ISD – Institute for Sustainable Development	UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme
ISO – International Organization for Standardization	USAID – United States Agency for International Development
ITC – International Trade Centre	
KOAN – Kenyan Organic Agriculture Network	

Organic Chain Development in Ethiopia

Participatory Networking Workshop

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 24-25 May 2007

REPORT

Introduction

A workshop to stimulate awareness and the need for an organic agriculture movement in Ethiopia was held in the Semien Hotel, Addis Ababa, 24-25 May 2007. The collaborating institutions in the organization of the workshop were Agro Eco of the Netherlands, the Dir Foundation of the Netherlands and Ethiopia, and the Safe Environment Association (SEA) and Institute for Sustainable Development (ISD) of Ethiopia. Responsibility for raising the funds and organizing the logistics of the workshop were given to ISD.

Although the plan was to invite up to 45 participants, interest in the workshop grew rapidly, particularly from mid-May, so that there were 76 people present on the first day, including 9 journalists, and over 60 on the second day of the workshop – see the List of Participants.

Participants included representatives of the major stakeholder groups in the country – government offices, non-governmental and civil society organizations (NGOs and CBOs), agricultural research, certifiers, exporters, and farming cooperatives, – as well as representatives from Grolink of Sweden, Agro Eco of the Netherlands, and the Horn of Africa-Regional Environmental Network and Centre (HoA-REN/C) based in Ethiopia.

Both exporters and local growers' groups, principally youth and women practicing organic urban agriculture, put up displays of their produce. These ranged from high quality vegetables, and even eggs, through samples of honey and wax, aromatic plants, spices, coffee and sesame to field crops. Particularly interesting was a display from the Institute of Biodiversity Conservation of samples of farmers' varieties (landraces) of Ethiopia's traditional crops.

At the end of the workshop, a task force was identified to establish an Organic Agriculture Movement for Ethiopia.

Background

In 2003, the government announced it would support the development of organic agriculture, and a task force was established to draw up an Ethiopian Organic Agriculture Regulation, which could become law, and a Regulation for Organic Agricultural Products to describe how organic products should be defined, and what may or may not be used in their growing and processing. In March 2006, the Government issued Federal Negarit Gazeta: Proclamation No. 488/2006 to establish "The Ethiopian Organic Agriculture System".

Ethiopia has a large potential for sustainable production of organically grown crops that can be produced to high quality standards for the local and regional retail markets. Certified organic production can be developed for the European, American, Middle East, Japanese and other export markets. Organic/Fair Trade coffee has already been brought into the European and American markets.

Participants were invited from stakeholders already operating in organic export market chains and those interested in supporting the development of, or converting to organic production: government, certifying bodies, research institutions, cooperatives, donors and others currently working in sustainable agricultural production in Ethiopia.



Registration with Ms Azeb Worku and Mr Addisu Alemayehu



The Opening Session

FIRST DAY

Opening Session

The workshop was chaired throughout by Mr Tsegaye Kassa of the Dir Foundation.



Mr Tsegaye Kassa

Introduction to the workshop

Ms Sue Edwards of ISD opened the workshop by welcoming all the participants and thanking everyone for their strong interest. She gave special thanks to the groups who had put up displays of their products and explained there would be time for the participants to visit these later. The main objectives of the workshop were to:

- ✦ Bring stakeholders in Ethiopia together to discuss the potential for and interest in the development of sustainable organic agriculture chains locally and regionally, and where possible include Fair Trade Chains for the export market; and
- ✦ Formulate a plan for further action with commitment by the stakeholders.

The Chairperson invited the Guest of Honour Dr Bateno Kabeto of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development to give his Opening Speech.

Official Opening (Dr Bateno Kabeto, MoARD)

Dr Bateno recalled that the Agricultural Sample Survey for Ethiopia for the 2005-2006 cropping season showed that only 1.3% of the agricultural land was held by persons who cultivated 10 ha or more each. The average size of land holding was in fact, only 1.2 ha, and the average cultivated land was 0.98 ha/holder. This makes Ethiopia truly a country of smallholder farmers. That is why the government's focus for improving food production has been on helping the smallholder farmer intensify production. The intensification of agricultural production is needed because Ethiopia must use its obvious potential to feed itself to actually feed itself. Agriculture is also the sector that contributes the most to exports from Ethiopia.



Dr Bateno Kabeto

Organic agriculture is, by its nature, more labour intensive than industrial agriculture. Therefore, it makes economic sense for Ethiopia to compete globally in the organic rather than in the industrial agriculture sector. Currently, much of Ethiopia's smallholder

farmer agriculture is produced without chemicals, though not much of it is as yet certified as organic. Ethiopia's agriculture is, therefore, largely what has come to be known as 'organic agriculture by default'.

Looking at the global development of agricultural production, the certified organic agriculture sector is growing fast. Therefore, if it develops an internationally recognized organic produce certification system, it means that Ethiopia can benefit from this growing niche market. Ethiopia's strategy for industrialization, stated in its Agriculture Led Industrialization Policy, aims to develop agriculture as the basis for its industrialization. Enabling Ethiopian agricultural production to benefit from this growing niche market of organic agricultural produce is thus an obvious step that must be taken to implement its Agriculture Led Industrialization Policy. In 2006, the government issued its policy on organic agriculture.

The certification of organic agricultural products has already started in a small scale with coffee produced by some cooperatives in different regions. The benefits that these cooperatives are deriving are substantial. Therefore, it is obvious that the smallholder farmers in Ethiopia, and the Ethiopian economy in general, would benefit from an extensive globally recognized system of certifying agricultural products to cover not only coffee, but also pulses, oilseeds, cereals, fruits and vegetables, all of which are important items of export. Failing to do that could end up in losing markets as the global organic agriculture niche market expands. It should be noted that this niche market is growing globally at a fast rate and may soon become the main market.

What happens globally sooner or later happens also locally. Though the niche market for certified organic agricultural products is as yet extremely small in Ethiopia, it can therefore, be expected to grow with time.

But just as organic agriculture itself is labour intensive, promoting it is also labour intensive. That is why we hope that international organizations, national, regional and local associations, non-governmental organizations and community based organizations will help promote organic agricultural production and certification in Ethiopia.

Dr Bateno concluded by declaring the workshop open and wishing everyone a fruitful discussion to prepare the way for bringing nearer the formal certification of all organic agricultural products in Ethiopia.

The Chairperson invited Dr Tewolde Berhan Gebre Egziabher, Director General of the Environmental Protection Authority of Ethiopia to give his keynote address.

***The Future for Organic Agriculture in Ethiopia
(Dr Tewolde Berhan Gebre Egziabher, EPA)***

Dr Tewolde said he felt honoured to be delivering a keynote address on the future for organic agriculture in Ethiopia. He accepted this honour with the greatest pleasure because he loves organic agriculture. He grew up in a smallholder farming family in the 1940s, which was organic since they knew no other kind of agriculture.



Dr Tewolde Berhan

Agriculture, by satisfying people's need for food, links us all to life throughout our existence. It should, therefore, not surprise anyone to note that many feel emotional about organic agriculture, which is kind to living things. For the same reason, many object to industrial agriculture, which is seen as distancing people from life. Dr Tewolde considers organic agriculture as the better option for Ethiopia's development because of the principles underlying it.

The human species, together with all animals and many other forms of life, obtains its food from plants. That is why the old English adage that all flesh is grass is true. Animals feeding on animals feeding on other animals eventually feed on plants, to produce physiological waste or themselves to die and become waste to feed other animals or micro-organisms that feed other micro-organisms that eventually feed plants, to start all over again feeding the first set of animals. Even this long sentence fails to describe the intricacy of the process of green plants being eaten to feed all life and themselves! If humans and other animals and micro-organisms did not feed on plants, then plants themselves would become unable to feed themselves, and they would die out. Everyone knows that, however we love life, it is inseparable from death; that, if death did not exist, neither would life exist.

Organic agriculture leaves the whole process of eating and being eaten, which is the most characteristic feature of life, intact, as it naturally stands. In contrast, industrial agriculture accepts to disregard the intricacies of eating and being eaten and uses industrial products to substitute for the failures that our process of maximizing our food imposes on the natural processes of life that produce that food. This disregard disturbs the balance between living and dying. When biomass is removed from the top of the soil, that soil is deprived of its source of humus, the soil organisms of their food, and the plants that grow in and on that soil of their nutrients. If the rules of organic agriculture are obeyed, people put back into the soil the waste derived from the biomass. This restoring of nutrients into the soil can be achieved by composting all organic waste and using the compost as fertilizer to replenish the humus content of the soil.

In industrial agriculture, usually a narrow range of plant nutrients made from petrochemicals are put on or in the soil in one go. Therefore, most of them are washed or leached away by rain or irrigation water. This reduces the usefulness of the nutrients. Equally importantly, both the ground water and the water that flows from fields into streams then become polluted.

Soil organic matter feeds soil organisms and maintains a good soil structure. A well structured soil resists erosion by water in the rainy season and by wind in the dry season. Therefore, by maintaining high humus content in the soil, organic agriculture reduces the rate of soil erosion. It also improves water infiltration to recharge aquifers and thus helps to maintain the hydrological cycle.

Humus holds and slowly releases not only chemicals that are plant nutrients, but also water. Housewives in Ethiopia, especially the rural ones, usually state that food produced with chemical fertilizer is not as tasty as food produced organically. It is also more certain that food that has a higher content of all the micro-nutrients is better for health, e.g. in preventing anaemia.

Biological diversity's current most serious threat is climate change. Climate change is caused by global warming, which is itself caused by atmospheric pollutants that trap the sun's heat in the biosphere and keep it from being reradiated back into outer space.

The main atmospheric pollutant responsible for global warming is carbon dioxide from industrialization. Any human activity that sequesters carbon dioxide will help stave off the threat of climate change. Industrial agriculture, by deriving agrochemicals from petrochemicals, contributes to climate change. It also reduces agricultural biodiversity and decreases the adaptability of agriculture to climate change.

Organic agriculture starkly contrasts with industrial agriculture in all these. By using only organic waste as fertilizer, organic agriculture refrains from increasing atmospheric pollution and global warming. It also sequesters carbon in the soil and helps to reduce the rate of climate change. By fostering agricultural biodiversity, it increases the adaptability of agriculture to climate change. All in all, though organic agriculture alone is unlikely to save humanity from the looming catastrophe of climate change, it will play a major role in helping people save themselves.

Dr Tewolde then turned to the future of organic agriculture for Ethiopia. It is a country of mostly smallholder farmers and its agricultural systems are a mix of animal and crop production. It is one of the 12 major Vavilov centres of crop genetic diversity in the world. Because of these strengths, it has suffered relatively insignificant crop genetic erosion. This makes it easy to intensify agricultural production in Ethiopia without resorting to industrial agriculture. The large crop genetic diversity will also enable Ethiopia to adapt to climate change more easily than most other countries in the world.

Strengthening its existing organic agriculture with needed scientific inputs will, therefore, give Ethiopia a globally competitive edge in agriculture. Developing a formal system of certification of organic agricultural products will then also give it a globally competitive edge in trade in this era of climate change. That is why I see organic agriculture, the erstwhile symbol of Ethiopia's underdevelopment, becoming its effective lever in shifting to an adapted and adaptive modernity. Ethiopia should, therefore, reorganize its agricultural research capacity away from supporting a mistakenly expected growth in industrial agriculture to supporting the strengthening and fine-tuning of its widespread but mistakenly sidelined organic agriculture.

Dr Tewolde concluded by stating his belief that organic agriculture can ensure that the children and grandchildren of Ethiopia and their following generations into the future are healthily fed in a hospitable biosphere. He reminded the participants that he is an environmentalist pre-occupied with the well-being of the biosphere who sees organic agriculture as a continuing pillar of this biospheric well-being. Organic agriculture, the old pillar of Ethiopian culture strengthened with new scientific knowledge could propel Ethiopia into the globalizing future.

The chairperson invited Mr Merid Kumsa from the Government's Organic Task Force to give his presentation.

***The Policy Environment for Organic Agriculture in Ethiopia
(Mr Merid Kumsa, Ethiopian Organic Task Force)***

Mr Merid explained that he worked in the Crop Protection Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MoARD). Before he presented the Organic Policy for Ethiopia, he reminded the participants of the challenges of crop pests for Ethiopia, and some of the problems that had arisen from the unsafe use of pesticides.



Mr Merid Kumsa

It is well known that spraying pesticides has many adverse effects: worldwide acute poisoning has been recorded for 800,000-1,500,000 humans. Other problems which are occurring through the misuse of agro-chemicals are cancer, disrupted sexual development, damage to genetic materials, etc.

Although most of Ethiopia's agricultural production takes place above 1500 metres, the lowlands are areas where locusts breed, especially in the north and eastern parts of the country, and then fly up into the highlands. Control of these and other migratory pests (quelea birds, armyworms, Wollo bush cricket, etc.) is done using pesticides, which are annually distributed by the Government to district offices. The last spraying for locusts was in 2002. However, chemicals to control these pests and others are imported each year in the form of aid as well as through trade.

In Ethiopia, recorded cases of misuse of chemicals include: 500 people who were poisoned by DDT through eating bread made from contaminated flour in February 2003; 7 cows died after drinking water contaminated with Malathion in Addis Ababa; 15 cows were poisoned in 1998; 2 people died in Tigray because of DDT poisoning.

In 1993, the Government requested FAO to help it conduct a survey of the pesticide situation in the country. The survey found that 3000 tonnes of pesticides were distributed in 120 sites in the country. Only 400 tonnes could be reused; the remaining 2600 tonnes were obsolete. The Obsolete Pesticide Project was launched in 2000 with the aim of removing these dangerous chemicals, and 1500 tonnes were disposed of in the first phase of the project. The remaining 1100 tonnes would be disposed of in the second phase, which is part of the African Stockpiles Project. The costs for this disposal are very high – USD 5 million in first phase and USD 6 million in the second phase.

The Government is also interested to expand its markets for exports, but importers are becoming more and more stringent on the conditions for import, particularly lack of contamination by pesticides. The government realised that an alternative way of agriculture production needed to be looked into and a Task Force was established to draw up a policy for an *Ethiopian Organic Agriculture System*. Negarit Gazeta Proclamation No.488/2006 was approved by the Parliament on 8 March 2006.

The members of the Task Force were:

- ✦ Crop Protection Department of the MoARD – Secretary
- ✦ Coffee and Tea Authority – Member
- ✦ Legal Office Secretary – Member

- ✦ Oromia Coffee Union – Member
- ✦ Institute of Biodiversity Conservation (IBC) – Member
- ✦ Quality and Standards Authority of Ethiopia (QSAE) – Member
- ✦ MoARD Extension Department – Chairperson

The Task Force followed the following steps in drawing up the policy document.

1. An international consultant was hired in December 2002, who prepared the basic elements and presented these to the Task Force.
2. Some amendments were made by the Task Force.
3. The draft for a national law/rule was distributed and presented for discussion in a workshop on 1 January 2003.
4. The proposed modifications were incorporated in the draft on 2 March 2003.
5. A workshop was held to finalize the national law/rule.
6. The national law/rule was interpreted into Amharic.
7. The Proclamation was extracted from the national law/rule.
8. The Proclamation was improved and submitted to the Council of Ministers before it was presented to the parliament and defended.

The following had been used as source documents in drawing up the national law/rule:

- ✦ FAO, Codex Alimentarius
- ✦ European Union Regulation
- ✦ United States Department of Agriculture National Organic Policy (NOP-USA)
- ✦ Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food – Japanese National Organic Law
- ✦ OIRSA (Central America)
- ✦ The Guatemala Organic Legal Framework

Mr Merid then summarized the structure of the Policy Proclamation. Its 17 Articles are divided into 3 parts. Each of the participants in the workshop was given a photocopy of the Proclamation. It has 5 objectives among which the following are considered the most important:

- ✦ Protect consumers of Ethiopian organic products against fraudulent acts to be committed by the use of misleading labels; and
- ✦ Facilitate international recognition and acceptance of Ethiopian organic products and system in the relevant international markets.

The third part of the Proclamation identifies the system for accreditation, the powers and duties of the MoARD and the composition of the Organic Agriculture Production Council (OAPC). The members of the OAPC are:

- ✦ MoARD as Chair with secretary designated by the Ministry
- ✦ Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research (EIAR)
- ✦ Institute of Biodiversity Conservation (IBC)

- ✦ Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)
- ✦ A representative from the private agricultural sector
- ✦ A representative from recognized inspection and certification bodies
- ✦ A representative from the business community

The OAPC will have 7 functions including being the highest technical body to advise the Minister on the proper implementation of the proclamation, rules, guidelines etc.

Mr Merid gave the following conclusions and recommendations:

- ✦ Organic farming utilizes the environment's own systems for the control of pests and diseases, and avoids the use of toxic synthetic pesticides.
- ✦ All concerned citizens of Ethiopia need to seriously assess and see how far institutionalising organic agriculture and making use of the benefits of organic farming can assist in alleviating poverty and raising the productivity of Ethiopia's farmers.
- ✦ The OAPC needs to be established as soon as possible.
- ✦ A detailed organic rule needs to be finalized and implemented.

The chairperson invited Ms Haïke Rieks of Agro Eco to present an overview of the data on the organic sector in Ethiopia



Ms Haïke Rieks

An overview of the organic sector in Ethiopia (Haïke Rieks, Agro Eco – The Netherlands)

Ms Haïke Rieks started by summarizing what was known about organic agriculture in Africa. In 2003, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda each had over 30,000 farmers growing certified organic crops, but there was no information for Ethiopia. Each of these countries now had a national organic movement (NOGAMU in Uganda, KOAN in Kenya, TOAM in Tanzania) helping to stimulate organic production and marketing. These were membership-based organisations which lobbied their Governments for support, and shared knowledge on organic agriculture.

It had been very difficult to get data on organic production in Ethiopia. However, Ethiopia is a large country with a large population of smallholder farmers. In many parts of the highlands over 60% of the land is cultivated. But these cultivated areas are mostly severely to very severely affected by soil degradation. In Eastern Africa, the organic agriculture movement had mostly grown out of efforts to introduce sustainable or low input agriculture to smallholder farmers.

There is a similar situation in Ethiopia with the advantage that Ethiopian farmers still use very little agro-chemicals and the growing of high yielding varieties requiring high external inputs is not yet widespread. Although by 2001, about 5% of the farmers were using chemical fertilizer, many of these opted out after the drought of 2002 because of the increase in price and fear of debt.

The following actions had shown that the Government considers organic agriculture an important option for Ethiopia.

- ✦ In 2003, Agro Eco trained 27 agriculturists, mostly from government offices, in organic agriculture
- ✦ In 2003, the Organic Taskforce was established
- ✦ In 2004, the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety was adopted by the Parliament
- ✦ In 2006, the Ethiopian Government passed a law setting out a framework for organic agriculture
- ✦ In 2006, environmental issues were included in Ethiopia's Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme (PRSP).

Through the internet, Ms Haike had found that Ethiopia has certified organic coffee, honey, sesame, pulses, teff, pineapple, bananas, incense (myrrh), linseed, spices and herbs although it is not all exported.

There are 4 internationally recognized certification bodies – BCS, Control Union, IMO and Ecocert – now carrying out certification in Ethiopia through locally-based representatives. However, Ethiopia could also consider setting up its own certification body as has been done for Uganda (Ugo Cert) and Tanzania (Tancert).

There are a number of NGOs carrying out low input or sustainable agriculture in Ethiopia. This is a good basis for developing organic farming, because:

- ✦ The improved soil condition has a positive impact on yields, income, local economy, health, and nutrition
- ✦ Farmers can become food secure
- ✦ A domestic market can be built on trust
- ✦ An export market can also be built on trust, including organically certified products

Ms Haike concluded her presentation by pointing out the challenges and opportunities to get Ethiopia on the map in Africa as a producer of organic products. Establishing a National Movement and Local Certification body would be important in this process. Then there could be recognised organic produce for both the domestic and exports markets.

Panel discussion on “Experiences of local organic producers”

The Chairperson, Mr Tsegaye, invited representatives of producers actively engaged in producing and exporting organic products from Ethiopia to present their experiences. The panellists were:

Mr Addisu Shume of Genesis Farm

Mr Tadesse Meskela of Oromia Coffee Union

Dr Mussie Yacob of Mandura Ethiopia

Dr Amare Getahun of Apinec and APM Consult Plc



Left to right: Dr Mussie Yacob, Dr Amare Getahun, Mr Tadesse Meskela, Mr Addisu Shume

Mr Addisu Shume of Genesis Farm

Genesis Farm was established in 2001. It is found 47 km from Addis on the outskirts of Bishoftu / Debre Zeit town. The initial investment to establish the farm was 3.3 million Birr on 15 ha of land. Currently the Farm runs 3 projects: vegetables, chicken and dairy. The farm has 40 ha under vegetables, 110 dairy cows, and 50,000 chickens. The vegetable farm has 302 permanent workers and 52 daily labourers.

The Farm uses organic fertilizer for 70-80% of its vegetable production. There are two biogas units connected to the dairy farm which produce around 60,000 litres of liquid fertilizer each week.

In the afternoon, workshop participants visited Genesis Farm.

Mr Tadesse Meskela of Oromia Coffee Union

The world market price for coffee has decreased dramatically over the last ten years. One alternative for producers to improve their returns is to go for organic production supported by fair trade. Organic fair trade coffee is increasing its market share by about threefold each year with most of it being exported to the USA. Through these quality certificates, a minimum of 20 per cent is added on top of the local price for farmers. This has changed the livelihood of the farmers and their communities: 10 schools are completed as well as 4 health centres and several clean water delivery points.

Oromia Coffee Union is buying from 115 cooperatives. They were the first organic certified cooperatives in Africa, selling more than 4,000 tonnes of organic coffee obtained from 80,000 ha of organic certified land. All farmers from the cooperative are listed in the Internal Control System (ICS) and inspected internally. BCS inspectors are inspecting 20% of the farmers. Organic and fair trade certifications bring roughly 2 million USD more back to the farmers in comparison to conventional coffee.

Oromio Coffee Union has good relations with buyers in Europe as well as America. They are certified according to organic EU and NOP (USA) standards. They initiated the Government to go for an organic law, and to start working on a system for organic certification.

Dr Mussie Yacob of Mandura Ethiopia

Dr Mussie reported that Mandura Ethiopia was established in 1994 as the first organic producer and exporter of field crops. The development of the next 10 years followed an expansion into three major oil seed growing regions and specialization in the production of organic sesame seed. For 14 consecutive years Mandura managed to keep their organic status and was certified by Eco-cert International (1994-1995), Skal (1996-1997) and BCS (1998-2007).

Since 1995, Mandura has introduced various types of organic farming through different projects in different parts of Ethiopia. This has been done by dissemination of information on ecological farming for the entire farming society near and around Mandura farms and processing plants.

The beginning was difficult. The company faced problems such as losing land, the challenge of the concept of organic farming, the challenge of buyers and the challenge of finance. Marketing the produce again was a challenge, remaining with unsold produce and lack of organic trade fairs. Marketing improved after Mandura had participated in Biofach in Germany, visited customers yearly and established their own website. Currently Mandura supplies to over 10 countries in three continents.

Mr. Mussie ended his presentation with the future challenges and opportunities.

Challenges:

- ✦ The need to establish an active organic movement;
- ✦ The need for a concerted and coordinated effort on behalf of local and international environmental NGOs for the dissemination of the concept of sustainable development;
- ✦ The need for an organized “organic society” to bring the sector to the attention of the Government;
- ✦ The invitation to multinational investors of the industry for a joint venture in various form of business cooperation; and
- ✦ The development of a broad nation-wide network for the dissemination of awareness of the concept of organic and sustainable agriculture through the establishment of an Ethiopian-Organic Society.

Opportunities:

- ✦ A favourable Rural Development Strategy;
- ✦ The emergence of new market-oriented Cooperatives and Unions;
- ✦ The emergence of new market actors such as medium and large-scale farmers; and
- ✦ Above all the current policy momentum or political will for change as evidenced by new agri-market and assertive export performance.

Dr Amare Getahun of Apinec and APM Consult PLC Bonga on honey and organic teff

Apinec is focusing on exporting honey from Bonga in the southwest forests. The Ethiopian government provided 250 ha in three different locations in Bonga to the company. It is primarily working on honey, coffee and other non timber forest products (NTFPs).

The company produces a limited amount of its own products, but 80% of the processed product is coming from the surrounding farmers. The company has a training centre in Bonga to provide technical services and other facilities to assist farmers. They are to be certified by Control Union.

Teff is one of the few cereal crops with a low gluten content suitable for people with gluten intolerance. It has a high level of vitamin C and is rich in iron and boron, which are essential nutrients for health. For people suffering from sugar problems teff is a proper alternative. The interest in teff is increasing rapidly and more and more research on teff is being done. The smallholders that grow teff do not have a lot of fertilizers. Attempts at production with the promotion of minimum tillage are resulting in higher yields.

Discussion

The following points were forwarded by the participants:

- ✦ Implementation of organic agriculture had been difficult at the start, but now organics are growing and implementation is getting easier. Some problems are still there, such as a constant supply, for example, pineapples to the UK. Perhaps discussion with the Government will assist in solving the problem to get a constant market for pineapples (and other specific crops).
- ✦ A National Organic Movement Ethiopia should be established which can focus on international and domestic markets. To supply organic products to the domestic market is not easy. In Europe organic products go to middle and higher-income people who can afford the higher prices – perhaps a similar clientele could be encouraged to buy organic in Ethiopia.
- ✦ Every three months reports of agricultural production should go to the Government. It is important that the MoARD has the information concerning organic production within Ethiopia.
- ✦ Organic production is not simply a ban on the use of chemicals; it is a complete / holistic producing system. It involves protection of land fertility, use of different locally appropriate agricultural practices, protection of land from erosion, planting trees etc. For the export market production needs to be certified to obtain a higher value product.

- ✦ Currently there are four international certifiers represented in Ethiopia. The option of establishing a local certifier body was raised. External certification is expensive and a local body might be able to certify for lower costs. Competition amongst certifiers will probably increase in the future with an increase in organic production.
- ✦ However, reducing costs and competition among certifying bodies might bring the danger of poor quality in operations through, for example, a reduction in time spent to inspect the organic producers.
- ✦ Previously inspectors came from abroad. Now local inspectors are present and they can do inspection on behalf of the foreign certifying bodies. Within Ethiopia, there is capacity to inspect and certify for organic, fair trade, Eurep-GAP, Utz Kapeh and others.
- ✦ One problem for international certifiers is the high demands from Ethiopian authorities in the registration procedure.
- ✦ Certified organic production requires that the grower goes through a Conversion Period. The length of the period depends on how the land was being treated previously. For example, after using chemicals a minimum of 2 years conversion is needed, while for perennials a 3 year conversion period is required. Even if a farmer has not used chemicals, a 1 year conversion period is required.
- ✦ There is little research to support the development of organic agriculture in Ethiopia. Some exporters have developed Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) with some research institutions. Experience of the commercial enterprises is that research is often in a cage, i.e. isolated, and does not know what problems farmers are facing. It is necessary to push the research into the organic agriculture area.

Field visit to Genesis Farm

In the afternoon, around 45 of the participants went on a bus to the Genesis Farm, 47 km from Addis Ababa. Mr Addisu Shume introduced the different section heads on the farm who explained how Genesis attempts to use an organic approach in its production.

The participants visited:

- ✦ The dairy production unit including the biogas digester and the milk processing unit
- ✦ The poultry unit
- ✦ The compost making unit
- ✦ The vegetables and seedling raising unit, and
- ✦ The shop

The experts explained that there are many challenges to organic agricultural production and some of the units cannot strictly adhere to organic principles, particularly in the poultry unit.

The visitors from Grolink and Agro Eco were impressed by the large area covered by the farm and the general good quality of the vegetables. However, they were disappointed that the dairy cows were confined to a limited space.

Many participants bought some products from the shop and were impressed by the generally low prices but good quality of the vegetables.



Visit to Genesis Farm showing:

top left – participants in front of compost admiring vegetables

top right – being given an explanation in the dairy section

bottom left – viewing the seedling production unit

bottom right – outside the milk processing unit

SECOND DAY

Mr Tsegaye, the Chairperson, welcomed the participants and opened the second day by inviting Ms Sue Edwards of the Institute for Sustainable Development (ISD) to give her presentation.



Sustainable Agriculture for combating poverty (Hailu Araya and Sue Edwards, Institute for Sustainable Development)

Ms Sue started by saying that she would try and show how sustainable organic agriculture can help alleviate poverty. She was responding to one of the participants who on the previous day had raised doubts about the viability of organic agriculture and its ability to help Ethiopia become a food secure country.

Ms Sue Edwards

ISD had been set up in 1996 in order to try and find out if an ecological approach to natural resource management and crop production could improve the productivity of Ethiopia's small holder farmers, particularly those living in environmentally marginal areas with poor soils, erratic rainfall and degraded landscapes. Most of ISD's work with farmers has been carried out in Central, Eastern and Southern Tigray.

From the beginning, ISD had worked in partnership with the Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development (BoARD) of Tigray, which assigned an experienced extension officer, Arefayne Asmelash, to work with the local experts, development agents and farmers. When Arefayne retired from the Bureau, he became a full time staff member of ISD but kept his office in the Bureau.

The farmers were encouraged to take up a set of technologies to enhance their traditional farming practices and knowledge using their own agrobiodiversity. Making and using compost was the new technology for the farmers. They also made trench bunds to catch and retain water and soil, and enriched these with multipurpose trees, particularly *Sesbania*, and local grasses, and controlled the grazing of their animals. The farmers were encouraged to organize themselves and draw up by-laws to protect their areas. In 1998, the Annual Farmers Field Day for Tigray took place in Gu'emse, Eastern Tigray, and the regional officials were convinced of the positive impacts of the 'package' of technologies being used by the farmers. They then incorporated these as part of the strategy for the Region to become food self-sufficient. This experience has been written and published by the Third World Network as "*The Tigray Experience: a success story in sustainable agriculture*". From 4 initial communities in 1996, in 2006 ISD was interacting with and following activities with farmers in 57 communities found in 12 of the 35 woredas in Tigray.

In order to monitor the impact of using compost on crop yields, ISD has recorded the yields of crops from farmers' fields using a technique of crop sampling developed by FAO. All in all, records from over 900 fields were collected between 2001 and 2006. These results were analysed and a summary was presented at the International Conference on Organic Agriculture and Food Security hosted by FAO in Rome, 3-5 May 2007. The results showed that use of compost generally doubled or more than doubled yields when compared to fields where no compost or chemical fertilizer had been applied. Composted fields also gave significantly higher yields than fields treated

with chemical fertilizer (diammonium phosphate and urea). Most of the farmers who have become accustomed to making and using compost have been able to give up using chemical fertilizer.

Another indicator of the widespread uptake of making and using compost is that figures for Tigray Region as a whole show a decrease in chemical fertilizer uptake from 13.7 to 8.2 thousand tonnes between 1998 and 2005, while total grain yield for the Region almost doubled from 714 to 1,354 thousand tonnes between 2003 and 2006. Farmers are often reluctant, for various reasons, to declare their actual yields, but these figures show that much enhanced production is possible with an organic ecological approach.

Poverty is not only a feature of the rural population; it also affects large numbers living in towns and cities. There is also the challenge for those suffering from HIV and AIDS to find adequate and good quality food. It is, therefore, ISD's hope that the availability of organic produce will be for all sectors of Ethiopia's population, and that setting premium prices will be only for products destined for export. Under these conditions, promotion of organic agriculture can do much to help reduce poverty in Ethiopia.

The chairperson invited Dr Girma Tegegne to give his presentation on research to support organic agriculture.

Biological prospects in plant disease management based on plant extracts (Dr Girma Tegegne, EIAR/Melkassa Agricultural Research Centre)

Dr Girma explained that he was a plant pathologist, particularly interested in fungal diseases of crops. He started his presentation by reminding the participants that the majority of pesticides used are based on synthetic chemicals. These pose a risk to human health because they pollute the environment, have toxic effects on non-target organisms and contaminate food. Use of chemicals also stimulates the development of resistant strains of fungi and insects.



Dr Girma Tegegne

Use of natural plant extracts as bio-pesticides are considered an alternative to synthetic chemicals because they have less impact on environment, and pose a smaller risk to humans. However, at present this alternative is not comparable to synthetic chemicals because they are not readily available on the market, at least not in Ethiopia, and their efficacy in comparison with synthetic products might be questioned. But there is a promising future for these natural products because they are becoming increasingly important.

Plants have a wide range of useful biological components with properties such as insect and disease control and resistance. They also contain natural growth-promoters. Many farmers still carry the knowledge of which plant have what properties within their living areas.

Dr Girma showed the participants a short video of how farmers use the root of *D. kilimandscharica*, locally called 'bosha', as a local seed treatment to control sorghum

smuts. However, no attempt has been made to test whether this claim is valid and find out how it affects the growth of plant pathogens. He, therefore, decided to find out how to test plant extracts by studying them for his Ph.D. in South Africa. He went on to describe the methodology and results of his research.

This ability of extracts from wild plants to control plant pathogens is studied both *in vitro* and *in vivo*. Dr Girma's doctorate research had evaluated broad spectrum bioactivity of different plant extracts against a range of plant pathogenic fungi. He also tested the bio-catalytic effect of plant extracts on the growth of tomato, onion and maize.

Leaves and seeds from various plant species indigenous to Ethiopia were collected and the effects of the extracts compared with extracts of roots, leaves, stalks and flowers collected from *Agapanthus africanus*, an indigenous plant of South Africa. [The closely related *Agapanthus praecox* is widely cultivated in Ethiopia.]

In vitro antifungal tests were carried out on plugs of the fungi: *Botrytis cinerea*, *Fusarium oxysporum*, *Sclerotium rolfsii*, *Rhizoctonia solani*, *Botryosphaeria dothidea*, and *Pythium ultimum*.

Tests were also made on Purple Blotch of onion and Early Blight of tomato, Citrus Anthracnose and various root rot diseases.

In vivo antifungal test were carried out on detached leaves of *Pisum sativum* using pre- and post inoculation with *Mycosphaerella pinodes*. Seed treatments were carried out to estimate the control of plant extracts on covered and loose smuts of sorghum.

The results were shown in a series of slides pf graphs and photographs.

The bio-stimulant effects of different plant extracts were tested on the growth components and yield in maize.

In summary, both *in vitro* and *in vivo* investigations strongly indicated the fungicidal potential of the botanical extracts to control plant diseases; for example, different plant parts of *Jatropha curcas* were tested successfully against citrus root rot pathogens. They also showed a bio-stimulant effect on maize. Extracts of *Agapanthus africanus* showed broad spectrum activities in reducing the radial growth of various important pathogens *in vitro* and were found superior for the control of both sorghum smuts *in vivo*.

Dr Girma concluded that his studies provide evidence to support the likely development and adoption of botanicals for plant disease control in Ethiopia. Much of the plant kingdom still remains unexplored for possible identification of useful biopesticides against major fungal pathogens and insects in agriculture.

Organic Certification

The Chairperson, Mr Tsegaye, introduced the three speakers who were going to discuss different approaches for producers to get recognition for their organic produce.

- ✦ Ms Eva Mattsson of Grolink on the participatory guarantee system
- ✦ Mr Bo van Elzakker of Agro Eco on group certification for an internal control system

- ✦ Dr Hassen Jemal of IMO on the challenges for certification bodies in Ethiopia

***Participatory Guarantee Systems,
(Eva Mattsson of Grolink, Sweden)***

Introduction to certification in general

Ms Eva explained that it is important to remember that certification is a tool or system by which the conformity of products to applicable standards is determined. There are many types of certification: for example, ensure the safety of products, have reasonable technical performance etc of machines; for effectiveness of organisation and management (ISO 9000, ISO 14000); for processes and production methods (organic, eco labels, Eurep-GAP etc); to identify the area/country of origin of a product (geographical indications); for personnel (accountants, auditors etc.)



Ms Eva Mattsson

A certification system usually has the following components:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| ✦ Standards | ✦ Management |
| ✦ Contracts | ✦ Labelling |
| ✦ Inspection | ✦ Information |
| ✦ Certification, approval | |

The contents of these are often set by standards authorities and/or certification bodies, for example, the EEDD legislation 2092/91, the NOP (National Organic Program) of the USA. Several other countries have their own legislation. There are also international standards; for example those developed by Codex Alimentarius of FAO, and IFOAM. There are also many private standards.

There are 8 certification bodies (out of a worldwide total of 400) working in 11 countries in Africa. Those active in Ethiopia include BCS, IMO, Control Union, Eco Cert.

The terms used in certification are generally 'First party' for the supplier, Second party for the customer, and Third party for an Independent body, i.e. not associated with either the supplier or the customer. Certification normally means "third party certification".

Why Participatory Guarantee Systems?

The participatory guarantee system (PGS) has developed as a reaction to the high costs of third party certification. It was also how organic was guaranteed in Europe before official certification systems were developed. Official certification systems involve high costs which are not required with the PGS system. PGS has a social control aspect amongst farmers in that they show they can fulfil obligations according to standards. Training and development of farmers' groups is not a focus of third party certification.

What is PGS?

A PGS system can give a credible guarantee for consumers. It puts emphasis on the participation of the stakeholders, particularly farmers and sometimes also consumers. It gives a high priority to knowledge and capacity building by producers and consumers. It involves the sharing of ideas and local capacity building. The producers have the power and responsibilities to make the PGS work. However, it is seldom accepted for export.

How can a PGS function?

A well functioning PGS requires identifying/defining the group (farmers and consumers) that will work together. Some paperwork is needed, but it is often less important than in third party certification. There is a need for recognised standards, contracts, etc and some kind of documentation of the production processes.

Different systems have been developed for evaluating the members of the group – they may visit each other, or have a small team or one person to do the visiting. Decision making has to be clear, again by the group or parts of it. Sometimes oversight is delegated to an external certification body. There also need to be clearly defined and implementable consequences for farmers not fulfilling the standard. Seals and labels also need to be recognized.

Where is PGS used?

PGS is widely used in Latin America, especially Brazil, also in the USA and New Zealand. In Africa it has developed in Uganda and Kenya. IFOAM has taken the lead to develop the PGS system (see www.ifoam.org).

In 2006, a study on PGS in East Africa was undertaken by Gunnar Rundgren of Grolink. The results were published in May 2007¹.

IFOAM also carried out a study on local markets in Africa. It found that there are very few certified operators selling on the local markets. Most organic products for local markets are “certified” by an NGO, or through a NOAM (National Organic Agriculture Movement), or not at all. A survey of 85 cases from 11 countries found that organic assurance in the local market in Africa is mostly through self claims (61 cases), 16 were PGS groups and only 8 through Third party certification.

Strong farmer groups were essential for handling a PGS (or ICS) system. A weak group can not handle either although it may be able to do so if it is supported by an NGO.

¹ PGS in East Africa by Gunnar Rundgren, available at http://www.ifoam.org/about_ifoam/standards/pgs.htm

***Group Certification based on an Internal Control System
(Bo van Elzakker of Agro Eco, The Netherlands)***

Mr Bo started by explaining that group certification fits into a strategy to reduce the cost of certification through open competition of certifiers. Certification can be easily achieved in a group using an Internal Control System (ICS). Inspections are done through local inspectors and certification bodies. While the participatory guarantee system is suitable for local markets, an ICS system can provide the environment for third party certification for export markets.



Mr Bo van Elzakker

The cost of third party certification should be 1-2 % of certified organic product sales. It helps improve the efficiency of business and leads to an economy of scale. For the export market, group certification is an exception because normally inspection should be external, and cover every farm every year. However, the EU and US allow certification for groups of smallholders in developing countries when an Internal Control System is in place.

When can smallholder group certification be considered?

Group certification can be considered where there are many farmers producing the same crop using similar production practices. There should be some organisational structure and a common marketing strategy. At the individual level, smallholder farms produce small quantities of produce which may have low output value making it too expensive for individual external inspection.

What is an ICS?

An ICS is an internal audit (ISO 53), managed by the project operator itself (either an exporter or farmer group). All actors are identified, instructed in the requirements, contracted, inspected and, if needed, sanctioned by the operator itself. The external certification body evaluates the ICS, based on file review and risk assessment, and does a number of re-inspections.

ICS is ideally combined with extension work, on-farm research, or other quality management functions of agricultural professionals.

The actors are smallholders, organised in a group working with their extension officer/internal inspector. Documentation is carried out by the ICS manager/documentation officer who has contacts with a recognised certification body.

ICS is a group process, not top down, with the farmer group taking responsibility. The basic documents for setting up an ICS include a members' list, map of the area showing the location of the farms/fields, an agreed internal standard, grower declaration or contract, farmer entrance form, internal inspection form and a certifier approved growers' list,. It is also necessary to conduct a risk assessment from the production up till export.

The Main Challenges for Organic Certification in Ethiopia (Dr Hassen Jemal of IMO)

Dr Hassen said that the main challenges for organic certification in Ethiopia are:

- ✦ The high costs for setting up an external certification body
 - Registration of a third party body is very expensive (25,000 USD) in Ethiopia. It is only non-Ethiopian businesses that are expected to provide this type of registration fee. Many third party certification bodies can not afford to pay this large amount.
 - Unfortunately, the requirements for organic certification were not well accommodated in the Proclamation of March 2006. The Ministry of Agriculture can mitigate these problems through their by-laws.
- ✦ The absence of a local certification body
 - Uganda and Tanzania have local certification bodies. If Ethiopia established a local certification body costs might decrease, and the number of operators would increase, meaning a larger competition amongst the certifiers.
 - Organic inputs (for perishable products) for production and storage are not available.
 - There is a lack of appropriate inputs in Ethiopia that have been approved for organic production. Although some could be imported, most farmers do not have the money to buy them. Even sourcing compost is very difficult. This is one reason why composting in coffee does not happen. It is not possible to import organic inputs.



Dr Hassen Jemal

Discussion

The presentations were followed by a vigorous discussion with several important questions raised.

Does a product need to be organically certified for the domestic market, yes or no?

It was generally agreed that the opportunity should be sought for developing an organic market within Ethiopia. The organisations displaying their produce during this workshop had expressed interest in this option. It would be good to see supermarket shelves with organic products from Ethiopia. Control can be done by the Ministry of Agriculture. There are already some products, such as coffee, where “organic coffee” is written on the package although it is not controlled or inspected at all.

IFOAM did a study on local organic markets in Africa and found there were two main obstacles: a steady supply of produce, and some kind of organic assurance.

Queries on compost and chemical fertilizers

The monitoring of the impact of compost on crop yields had included the amount of straw. Compost increases the overall biomass. The straw is used for feeding animals; afterwards it can be collected and used in making compost. Even in Tigray the results had shown that there is enough biomass for compost. It is recommended to make compost before the farmers start harvesting when there is enough green plant material, and usually some crop residues from previous harvests. Overall, there is enough biomass in Ethiopia to make compost, but it needs to be collected and made into compost on time.

Another factor in favour of compost is that it does not need to be applied each year. Farmers recognised this residual effect and say that it remains for up to four years before they need to reapply compost.

Transporting compost is not seen as a problem as farmers are mostly encouraged to make compost within their fields. At the beginning there were some complaints about transporting compost, but when they saw the benefits they solved their own problem. They put it in baskets or sacks and carry it on the back of donkeys if the fields are far away.

Most urban waste in Ethiopian towns and cities is organic. However, managing this waste to make compost is a challenge. On a small scale, in individual gardens or small groups, it is possible but on a large scale it is difficult. It can smell unpleasant, rats get in, etc and people where large scale composting of urban waste has been tried have often complained.

ISD was asked about the opportunity cost of making compost. No detailed economic studies have been done except by one student. His results had been rather unrealistic. The best evidence that farmers do not consider the opportunity costs is that most of the farmers give up using chemical fertilizer two or three years after starting to use compost. With compost, the farmer has no debt, but with the use of chemicals on credit he has to pay after harvesting. Generally yields from using compost are equivalent to chemical application or higher. The only crop to sometimes show a higher response to chemical fertilizer is maize, particularly when the farmers use one of the new varieties which have been developed to respond to chemical fertilizer.

Research for organic agriculture

Export buyers analyse the content of the seed (protein or oil content). Is there an impact on these contents from the different methods of agricultural production comparing compost and chemical fertilizers?

The costs for this type of analysis are too high within Ethiopia - 3000-4000 birr to have one grain analysed. The Government has been setting up new laboratories so a dialogue needs to start to get them to help in making analyses.

Ethiopia is in the process of becoming a member of WTO. It is hoped that foreign donors will assist in getting the new laboratories up and running. It was important for different users to make their wishes known so that the different development programmes can put this on the agenda.

Organic products - Would it be possible for 20% of the producers be inspected?

For external inspection, the inspectors have to check a square root times the risk factor of the total producers.

It is not possible to mix chemical applied products with the non-chemical applied products. Anywhere where there is spraying of pesticides, all the crops in the area get contaminated. Certification is not only for the crop but also for the land, the total farm, processing etc. There has to be a systematic approach for produce to be certified as organic. Products can not be called organic as such without some form of verification, even 'organic by default'. To say a product is organic, the requirements for the different international systems need to be in place.

Ethiopia has to set its own definition of organic. It is recommended to have a dialogue between all the stakeholders; private sector, farmers, NGOs, government, exporters, buyers.

Marketing

After a break, the Chairperson indicated that there were three presentations on different aspects of marketing.

- ✦ Ms Haike Rieks of Agro Eco on Social Corporate Responsibility & Fair Trade Initiatives
- ✦ Dr Mitslal Kifleyesus-Matschie of ECOPIA on domestic marketing experiences of ECOPIA
- ✦ Victoria Burke of Agro Eco (East Africa) on developing market chains for organic produce

Social Corporate Responsibility & Fair Trade Initiatives (Haike Rieks of Agro Eco, the Netherlands)

Ms Haike started by explaining that Social Corporate Responsibility (SCR) is a code or set of standards for labour practice that is adopted by a company. It is meant to apply internationally and, in particular, to the labour practices of its suppliers and subcontractors. SCR focuses on:

- | | |
|----------------|---------------------|
| ✦ Human rights | ✦ Capacity building |
| ✦ Safety | ✦ Transparency |
| ✦ Ethics | ✦ Communities |
| ✦ Environment | |

She then gave the following examples of SCR initiatives with their logos.²

- ✦ Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI)
- ✦ EurepGap
- ✦ Institute for Market ecology (IMO)

² Refer to the power point presentation "Fair Trade Initiatives – Haike Rieks" for illustrations of the logos.

- ✦ Rainforest Alliance
- ✦ Social Accountability International (SAI)
- ✦ Utz Kapeh

These initiatives had been developed in order to increase the value of products and respond to an increasing awareness of consumers in developed countries of the need for better and fairer working conditions for farmers and farm product processors in developing countries. They had also arisen from specific market demands, the need for better market access and to build integrity with farmers and other people along the production and marketing chain.

Fair Trade is defined as “A trading partnership based on dialogue, transparency and respect, that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers - especially in the South.” It brings SCR into trade relations to help secure fair prices for producers and labourers.

The Fairtrade Labelling Organisation is the best known certification body. It has a well known certification mark that is easily recognized. At present, Fairtrade product standards have been established for banana, cocoa, coffee, cotton, dried fruits, fresh fruit and vegetables, juices, honey, nuts and oilseeds, rice, spices and herbs, sugar, tea and wine grapes. It has helped fix minimum prices and premiums. It mostly functions for cooperatives or “farmers’ organizations”.

The IMO “Fair for Life” logo is now being promoted. So far they certified 8 projects within three continents. One coffee project in Ethiopia has been certified “Fair for Life”. It attempts to maintain one standard across different products. It also certifies contract farmers. It does not have a fixed minimum price or premium. IMO is able to combine organic and fair-trade inspection and certification.

The Ecocert Fair Trade label was launched in February 2007 and is being used in India, Uganda, Madagascar, Namibia, and Colombia. All products can be certified. Ecocert provides certification for cooperatives and contract farmers and organic and fair-trade inspection and certification can be combined.

FairWild concentrates on wild harvested products, medicinal and aromatic plants.

Within the next 10 years, Europe might require a kind of SCR to be included within all exports. Whichever initiative is selected, it will show that the exporter is committed to better social and ethical fair trade purchasing.

***Ecological Products of Ethiopia (ECOPIA) “The Pure Joy of Nature”
(Dr Mitslal Kifleyesus-Matschie of ECOPIA, Ethiopia)***

The presentation was given by Mr Hailu Araya of ISD, as Dr Mitslal was not in Ethiopia at the time of the meeting.

ECOPIA focuses on developing the value chain of organic food production, processing and marketing in Ethiopia. Its activities are divided into three main functional categories:

- ✦ Pre-Production and Production
- ✦ Processing Logistics and Supply Chain
- ✦ Value Addition and Marketing

At present, its primary activities include processing of organically grown fruits, vegetables and cereals, and promoting these through different marketing opportunities and services. Support activities include: web-based administrative infrastructure management, training of farmers before and after harvesting (human resource management) and R&D (research & development). The supply-chain aims to operate within 5 regions.

Typical marketing methods include direct sales to individual consumers, or groups of consumers. It hopes soon to start box schemes and internet marketing for the international communities in Addis Ababa. It also works through direct agreements with specialised retailers or restaurants.

It also hopes to build chains with certified processors through partnership agreements to sell to domestic/export markets. In April 2006, ECOPIA started selling locally in Addis Ababa in a Bazaar.

ECOPIA is aware of the need to add value through innovation to successfully market organic products. Consumers in Ethiopia or in the region demand the same range of products from organic sources as they are getting through conventional sources. In the near future, the firm will not only ensure product freshness, but also traceability through an after sales service. Reports of each product which traces the origin of the fruits and ingredients are available.

ECOPIA realizes its consumers are complex decision-makers. They take many factors into account when buying. Is it convenient? What is the packaging like? Is it expensive? Is it healthy? Is it delicious? Does it suit my lifestyle?

It is already working on products for the future: for example, making ECOPIA Jam for yoghurt and yoghurt drinks with organic flavour.

ECOPIA has started to fulfil the direct wishes of its clients for honey and sesame oil. These are produced in Derra, North of Addis Ababa. The ketchups and pickles are highly requested. It is going to work with *Menschen für Menschen* for producing organic tomatoes. It also sells syrups and juices.

The first ECOPIA marketing Open Day attracted 150 visitors over 2 days. There was also media coverage in Addis, with French and America (the Voice of America) channels who showed interest in Ecopia's concept and approach. ECOPIA has its own logo and website www.ecopia.de

ECOPIA is the first organic food processing business in Ethiopia. The expectations of the market and the government are very high. Domestic marketing has started in the international hotels. There are some challenges to overcome to have fixed contracts. One of the critical ones is glass bottles and jars. The Addis Ababa Bottle Factory cannot fulfil ECOPIA's order.

The expectations of the market and the government are very high. Their clients expect ECOPIA to move to a blister production and packing system. Hilton and other hotels would like to have products in blisters and the market is very promising. This goes hand-in-hand with ECOPIA's problem to get bottles and jars. Other challenges include the need for qualified personnel, managers and experts that are interested to work in a start-up company, etc.

ECOPIA has trained its own personnel to fulfil client requirements. It is working with a German company to fulfil the certification of the processed products, but certified farmers are also needed. Presently they work with 300 farmers through their own farmers' association. They are interested in group certification and are planning to apply for a Private Public Partnership to assist first in training and then finding an organisation that can support the cost of certification.

Last but not least, ECOPIA is looking for people who are interested to join their dreams. ECOPIA is willing to provide a share of the company for committed and knowledgeable people who would be willing and able to work in Ethiopia with them.

***Developing market chains for organic produce
(Victoria Burke of Agro Eco, Uganda)***

"The Strength of a Market Chain Lies in its Links"

Ms Victoria said that a Market Chain describes the links associated with the number of transactions that occur between a product (or service) and the market where it ends up with the final user or consumer. The Links and services in the chain generally consist of:

- ✦ Production for input supply
- ✦ Post harvest, requiring technical and business services
- ✦ Trading, requiring market information, intelligence, and financial services
- ✦ Processing, requiring regulation and policy
- ✦ Trading and retailing processed product, requiring communication and transportation
- ✦ Consumers
- ✦ All stages also require support from research

A Market Chain is synonymous with a:

- ✦ Production chain
- ✦ Supply chain
- ✦ Value chain

At each stage in the chain the product:

- ✦ Changes hands through actors



**Ms Victoria Burke and
Ms Birzaf Tekle looking
at the displays**

- ✦ Each transaction incurs costs
- ✦ Value is added to improve a market chain's performance

A Market Chain Analysis involves understanding of:

- ✦ What is involved in your product and the services associated with it from the farm to the buyer and/or consumer
- ✦ What are the constraints, opportunities and entry points for your business, so that you can identify the best market chain to work on for a specific client, and locate the market chain actors who will buy your produce
- ✦ How to design, implement, evaluate and upscale your business

One needs to gain good information through:

- ✦ Secondary data such as reviewing trends, and
- ✦ Primary data through interviews with market chain actors

The results can be descriptive as well as quantitative.

It is important to consider the complexities and identify the various stages and actors.

It is essential to look at activities and market channels through which the product is delivered to the buyer, i.e. the traders, processors, wholesalers, retailers, etc.

A good starting point is the product, the basic unit to be traded, and identify whether it is a primary, secondary or tertiary product. More divided or differentiated products require more specialized markets and buying conditions.

One also needs to identify the various distribution channels and how the product will move through these asking if the produce comes from one or many farmers, is purchased by local or travelling traders, and how it is transported between markets. Traders known as intermediaries usually bulk the produce that is sold in a range of markets.

One needs to know the market type and coverage. General commodity markets carry more generalized bulk goods. The opposite are Niche markets which are highly specialized, and have limited numbers of customers looking for high-value produce that is usually limited or scarce.

The basic steps to carry out Rapid Market Analysis (RMA)

- ✦ Define a sub-sector (this can be done by drawing a map)
 - Make an account of time, staff, skills and resources available
 - Apply a systematic approach to data collection and basic common sense to the market chain analyses
 - Define/Identify critical constraints and opportunities
- ✦ Plan basic survey; identify a team, delegate roles and link activities to time and budget
- ✦ Collect and tabulate available data, and analyse secondary data, e.g. feasibilities, data (literature) review, price trends, volumes traded, market players etc

- Include market facilitators, local service providers, representatives of development agencies, etc
- Small teams are useful especially where market chains are local and discussions involve sensitive information e.g. select markets visits to link farmers
- ✦ Based on these findings, define a key study area (the scope of the study is critical)
 - Identify as broad a scope as possible to give good market information (but the process rapidly becomes more complex and costly with distance from the farm gate)
 - Draw a sub-sector or market chain map, thinking through the stages of every transaction
 - Define issues and questions for focused study
 - Select a team of a few people who can work together
 - Identify and interview key informants: These include farmers, farmer groups, production managers, input producers/suppliers, traders, shopkeepers, institutional buyers, importers/exporters, ngo's, extension agents, managers of government agencies, university researchers.
 - 'Mirror' or cross check by asking similar questions with actors at different levels of the chain
 - Limit interviews to 3-5 at each stage in the chain
 - Visit facilities
- ✦ Produce a draft report and share findings through discussions
- ✦ Revise report based on feedback and prepare a plan. The report may indicate:
 - policy and regulatory reform, technological institutional arrangements, organizations, coordination of market functions, etc
- ✦ Develop a monitoring plan and focus where more applied research is needed.

An RMA can collect information for a specific product related to its market chain actors, efficiency, opportunities and constraints. The information should highlight the growth potential of the product and the efficiency of and access to business support services.

For example, Market Chain Performance can be improved through value addition:

- ✦ Bulking, cleaning, grading, bagging or moving the product closer to a large market for processing, packaging, promotion to attract consumers
- ✦ Identifying the value segment, i.e. who is the consumer/buyer, (poor, rich, young, old, ethnic, industrial) and what can they afford or expect. Each segment has specific demand requirements based on price and quality. Match the needs of the segments with specific products.
- ✦ The performance or efficiency depends on; how well the actors are organized, and the business development support services available. The aim is to assess both goods and services along the chain and the relative strengths of market information and signals.

Developing a plan

Develop a plan starting with prioritising information on options for specific chain actors and services, for example:

- ✦ Buyers, the types of deals available
- ✦ Buying conditions (price, location, minimum quantities, quality, frequency of supply, payment conditions, willingness to enter sales discussion etc)
- ✦ Opportunities to improve the market chain performance based on specific intervention prioritised according to clients' needs
- ✦ Technology or innovation available for value addition
- ✦ Organizational innovation: group formation
- ✦ Technical assistance to improve competitiveness
- ✦ Business support – improved market information, extension, production and marketing research that reduces transaction costs, increases demand
- ✦ Policy and regulation reform

Monitoring the chain

Develop a supply chain and monitor it for information on:

- ✦ Fulfilment of supply orders at each stage of the supply chain vis-à-vis the orders given by the buyer: a high percentage of order fulfilment is a good indication of mutual benefits, capacity of the chain
- ✦ Time to supply an order; time is a measure of responsiveness and can reveal constraints
- ✦ Cost of fulfilling an order; price competitive from a smallholder or from a competitor
- ✦ Time between fulfilling an order to time of payment: an important measure reflects the cash flows from the buyer to the supplier/ including farmers.
- ✦ Other measures developed as needed

However, measures and monitors may not guarantee success of a market chain. There needs to be readiness to put the chain interests in every stage of the enterprise through good communication with different chain participants and sharing risks and opportunities.

Good coordination involves good cost management and finding the balance between collaboration and competition. Each supply chain is competing for a share of the market from the buyer.

Reports from Working Sessions

The participants were asked to join one of the three working groups under the following subjects:

Working Session 1: Certification Systems for National and International markets
facilitated by Eva Mattsson of Grolink and Dr Hassen Jemal of IMO

Working Session 2: Organic sector development in Ethiopia: needs and gaps facilitated
by Dr Girma Tegegn

Working Session 3: Marketing challenges and building market chains facilitated by
Addisu Alemayehu and Bo van Elzakker

After one hour of discussions, the groups reported back to the meeting.



Mr Addisu Alemayehu, Mr Genene Gezu and Ms Frehiwot Kidane

Working Session 1: Certification Systems

Ms Frehiwot Kidane reported that reliable and trustworthy certification has to be built on good communication among the various parties involved, national as well as international, but particularly the certifying body and the producer.

Certification involves costs and these have to be covered one way or another. However, the price should not negatively affect the client, particularly in raising the costs of the end products. The certifier should have a team which is competent and be able to give good advice to their clients to help them improve the efficiency of their production.

Ms Eva Mattsson explained the experiences of organic certifiers in Europe. Many countries have one or more local certifying bodies which have accreditation recognised by government or another independent body.

It was pointed out that Ethiopia is now building a good cadre of experience through local certifying agents and that these have to be developed for the local market. The Government should provide an oversight body to control and issue licences.

Working Session 2: Organic Sector Development

Mr Genene Gezu reported that the group had recognized the environmental benefits of organic agriculture and also that it has the prospect of enhancing production on a long

term basis. Organic agriculture is also healthier for both producers and consumers than conventional / industrial agriculture.

It was also pointed out that organic agriculture can provide gainful employment and Ethiopia has a large labour force.

The challenges identified for the development of the organic sector in Ethiopia at the present time are:

- ✦ There is no responsible organization or body for co-ordination and focus;
- ✦ There is a general lack of awareness of the benefits of organic agriculture and capacity in all concerned stakeholders;
- ✦ There is lack of data on who is producing what, where and an analysis of the available data; and
- ✦ There is lack of investment, especially during initial start-up phase.

The group suggested the following strategies for the way forward. There should be:

- ✦ A network / movement / association of like-minded individuals, which should build capacity from the grassroots;
- ✦ A data base of actors in organic agriculture;
- ✦ A complete survey to map the existing situation;
- ✦ An analysis of existing potentials and challenges;
- ✦ Continuous capacity building and demonstration of the potential and contribution of organic agriculture through:
 - Experience sharing
 - Backstopping
 - Organising annual events such annual shows;

Other important areas to focus on include:

- ✦ Urban agriculture as a means of promoting awareness of organic vegetable production and providing employment, particularly for youth and women. A major challenge for urban agriculture is the highly polluted sources of water;
- ✦ Local institutions for education and training, e.g. Farmers' Training Centres. Organic agriculture should also be part of the curriculum in colleges and universities.

Working Session 3: Marketing challenges

Mr Addisu Alemayehu reported that the group had identified that lack of a domestic market for organic products is a major constraint for developing production. This was partly due to lack of awareness of the potential contribution of organic agriculture and no recognition of excellence/standards. There were a number of organizations involved in building awareness of the importance of production standards, e.g. there were now 5 consumers' associations in Addis Ababa, but this pointed to a lack of coordination among consumer groups.

The export market for high value products is developing, but it was constrained by the high costs and the requirement from buyers for quantity and a steady supply. A mechanism is needed to reduce high certification costs. There should also be a strong authority for controlling quality.

In order to identify the potential of organic products, it was necessary to find out:

- ✦ Who buys?
- ✦ Why organic products are in demand?
- ✦ Where they could be sold?
- ✦ Where they could be promoted?
- ✦ What prices were acceptable to consumers?

It was suggested that a start could be made with organically produced fresh vegetables and fruits. This could show how to develop the trust of consumers for smallholder producers, the participatory guarantee system (PGS) was suggested as a means to build capacity and develop trust in farmers.

A lot of work was needed to promote organic production. This could be assisted by:

- ✦ Having a special market place / day for domestic farmers / producers;
- ✦ Learning from and cooperating with the international Eco Farms, which is promoting ecological / organic agriculture for Africa;
- ✦ Producing a newsletter, other promotion materials and share information; and
- ✦ Establishing a centre of excellence for both domestic and export products.

The group also recommended a price premium of 10-20% for the domestic market.

General Discussion

All the groups emphasized the importance and need for capacity building, including through elementary schools.

The government is aiming at reaching over 98% enrolment of school age children in primary schools, and the majority of these schools are in rural areas. Many of the students will complete 8 years of primary education and they should then be able to stay in or rejoin their communities as educated farmers. Ethiopia is presently participating in the FAO school garden project, but this could be expanded and institutionalised. This could provide an entry point for building awareness and training on what is needed for organic agriculture.

The ATVETs (Agricultural Colleges) should also be encouraged to introduce training in organic agriculture in their curriculum. This give 3 years of training with a strong emphasis on practical work and the graduates are the main source of development agents for the agriculture extension systems throughout the country. There is virtually no private extension system in Ethiopia.

All the participants stressed the importance of sharing information and experiences among themselves.

A special market is an interesting suggestion but it would need good management and control.

Some of the participants did not support the increase in price for organically produced products. Particularly, smallholder farmers should not need to put on a premium price if they were selling direct to consumers or exporters.

The way forward:

The international perspective – Bo van Elzakker of Agro Eco

Mr van Elzakker outlined the issues he considered important for Ethiopia. These involved linking Ethiopia with the international arena so it can become part of the international network. The East Africa Organic Conference would be held the week after the present workshop in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. This conference is being supported by a number of international organizations including UNCTAD, UNEP, ITC and IFOAM. He encouraged organizations to consider becoming members of IFOAM.

The products from Ethiopia with export potential include:

- ✦ Coffee
- ✦ Cotton/teff/sesame, specialty grains, pulses
- ✦ Honey
- ✦ Fruits and vegetables by airfreight
- ✦ Dried fruits, fruit juices, concentrates
- ✦ Herbs, essential oils, spices
- ✦ Incense, myrrh, gums, NTFPs (non-timber forest products)

The export market focus was mainly to Europe, the US, and Japan, but there is also a large market in the Middle East.

Some of the challenges facing the development of organic agriculture and export from Ethiopia include the increased awareness of the contribution of air travel and hence airfreight to global warming. There were also conflicts in regulations, such as the decision to use DDT fumigation for controlling malaria mosquitoes and the possible contamination of organically grown crops, as had happened with sesame.

It was also important to look carefully at the proclamation to make sure it would not become a barrier to organic development.

Very important is to remember that the image of Ethiopia in most of the world is of hunger and drought. Food security should be guaranteed for local communities in projects. Good promotion of organic production could help change the world image of Ethiopia. Buyers like to have a positive reference.

Ethiopia could also consider joining in the East African movements, which had developed a joint standard and marketing image, or developing its own standard. Biofach 2008 was giving a focus for Africa and Ethiopia was being invited to present itself as a country. Agro-Eco would be interested in helping develop this opportunity.

Ethiopia should stop talking about 'organic by default' as this only gave a negative image of non-productive subsistence farmers. There were many opportunities to develop good quality products, not organic only, for markets. Marketing requires high quality and modern packaging, but the attempt should not be to comply with everything right from the beginning, but to do a good job in the Ethiopian context.

There are also other opportunities for helping farmers get better prices for their products, particularly 'fair trade'. The following systems were mentioned: RA, EurepGAP, HACCP, BRC.

Another opportunity was the market for carbon fixation where organic agriculture has a special contribution through compost, green manures, improved fallows, trees etc. for carbon sequestration.

Mr van Elzakker concluded by noting that there is a strong interest from foreign assistance to help develop this sector. There is also a world of experience outside Ethiopia. Some of the information is free, but other has to be obtained through subscriptions, etc. He felt Ethiopia could learn a lot from integrated development programmes like EPOPA (Export Promotion of Organic Products from Africa). There were also specifically business-oriented programmes such as that of USAID, PPP (public-private partnerships), and PSOM. Some banks were also interested in providing green funds for what they consider environmentally friendly activities.

The International Organic Accreditation Service (IOAS) can assist government to approve certification bodies (CBs). By the end of this year a course will be given to government officials on how to approve certification bodies, which might be interesting for the Ethiopian Government.

Establishing a movement in Ethiopia could help develop a programme and coordinate funding and implementation. It is important for all parties / stakeholders to cooperate!

The Way Forward

The Ethiopian Perspective – Addisu Alemayehu

Mr Addisu said that there was a need to look at how the existing organic policy could be implemented for both the local and export market in the Ethiopian context. It was important to identify the driving forces.

For export, the critical elements are to meet the requirements of the importers, which are getting more and more precise and demanding, for example, avoiding contamination with pesticides.

Local food security is a priority of the government so it is important to show how organic agricultural production could meet both the demands for local food security and the need for the farmers to enter market chains.



Mr Addisu Alemayehu

Ethiopia did not have a good image in the world, but promoting organic agriculture and organic products could be one way to make a good image in the world market. Even

Ethiopia's conventional products are not seen in a positive perspective at present. New strategies and techniques are needed to help promote and change this image.

The major marketing challenge is to create a vibrant domestic organic market and supply chain where all parties from producers to consumers could benefit. Just promoting a domestic organic product is not good enough; the whole system needs to be developed including how organic production can solve many of the problems of smallholder farmers.

The biggest challenge is the cost of certification. Now there are a number of trained Ethiopian personnel based in Ethiopia, and employing these for certification can help to reduce costs. The process of certification is also not well understood. There is a need for a programme of continuous training and information sharing in all aspects.

Research for organic farming is not well developed. Some interesting results have been generated but these have not been compiled and made available to the extension and training services or to policy makers. All sectors should be made aware and assist in promoting organic production, not just agriculture but also education, health and water.

In health, there were the special challenges of malaria and HIV/Aids, and how organic production could assist in combating these should be studied and made widely available.

Last, but not least was the challenge of establishing a centre of excellence for organic agriculture.

None of these challenges could be solved by any one institution or body. It was necessary to get collaboration among all the stakeholders and build a national movement or network. There are other countries in Africa with organic agriculture movements and these have helped to contribute much for the development of the organic sector in their countries. Ethiopia could do likewise.

Discussion and comments

There was a vigorous discussion. Some of the points forwarded included the following:

- ✦ Ethiopia is very keen to become part of the international Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) for carbon trading – the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and the Ethiopian Meteorological Agency were the main government bodies involved. Organic agricultural techniques should be recognized as a means of carbon sequestration.
- ✦ Ethiopia is building its capacity for competent environmental analytical laboratories, but these are not needed for most certification procedures.
- ✦ Working to develop private-public partnerships strengthens all 3 partners: government – private – civil society.
- ✦ There are only a few initiatives working to promote organic agriculture at the ground / community level. These need to be strengthened and scaled-up. It was particularly important to have good follow-up after training and to consolidate small holders to work together at community level. Training on organic agriculture needs to be provided.

- ✦ This present meeting did not involve any representatives of the independent smallholder farmers of the country. All stakeholders should be recognized when developing a national organic movement.
- ✦ There are different interest/production groups who can push in their areas. The meeting had representatives of 3 producer groups – urban agriculture (the youth and women), the private sector (high value products for export), and smallholder farmers working in cooperatives. How to go forward?
- ✦ If there is a demand, trade systems / chains tend to develop themselves. There are many buyers coming to look for products to buy, and potential entrepreneurs are also looking for good products to develop. A study of these potential agricultural trade growth areas has been made by the Government
- ✦ Ethiopia had recently launched a country-wide French-supported GEF project on developing Geographical Indicators for local products / specialties. The aim is to improve the production and quality of local specialties that can be traded at good prices.
- ✦ A representative from the FMoARD felt that agriculture was left fighting a war between environment and economics, i.e. between environmental conservation and food production. He felt it was rather late to put emphasis on the conservation of Ethiopia's natural resources.

The chairperson pointed out the need to identify a task force to take the process forward. It is necessary to facilitate integration among concerned bodies and much promotion of organic agriculture is needed. It is also important to recognize all the stakeholders to make a national organic movement.

A participant from the private sector indicated that they had tried to make an association of private organic producers.

The task force should include representatives of the various sectors as well as persons who have a strong interest and commitment to take the process forward.

It was also important to include other government offices such as the Ministry of Trade (export promotions) and the Standards Institute.

Perhaps the MoARD could host the movement as the Ministry is now responsible for marketing of agriculture products.

The following names were forwarded for the task force:

1. Mr Tadesse Meskela – Oromo Coffee Union
2. Dr Amare Getahun – Apinec, business/private sector
3. Dr Mussie Yacob – Mandura Ethiopia, business/private sector
4. Mr Tesfaye Tekle Haimanot – Kaleb Service, business/private sector
5. Mr Ephraim Zaude – Tebets, marketing
6. Mr Yonas Menamo – Federal MoARD, Extension Department, government
7. Ms Sue Edwards – Institute for Sustainable Development, local NGO
8. Dr Girmay Tegegn – Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research, Nazareth
9. Ms Frehiwot Kidane – BCS, certifier
10. Mr Abiye Alemu – Safe Environment Association, local NGO
11. Mr Tsegaye Kassa – Dir Foundation, international NGO
12. Ms Birzaf Tekle – Institute of Biodiversity Conservation, government

13. Mr Genene Gezu – Ethiopian Organic Seed Action, local NGO / CBO
14. Mr Addisu Alemayehu – Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research, Holetta

ISD was asked to be the coordinator and organize the next meeting to take place before the end of June, after Ms Sue returned from the East African Organic Conference in Dar es Salaam, 28 May to 1 June.

Votes of thanks and comments

Mr Mussie Yacob thanked the organizers for organizing the workshop. It was a good beginning. It was important to maintain the momentum and organize a bigger meeting in the next 6 to 12 months. He also recommended that the supporters for the present workshop should be approached to continue their support to develop the movement.

Mr Tesfaye Tekle Haimanot recalled that he had been working for 12 years for the private sector and its involvement in organic agriculture. This was a very important development for Ethiopia.

Ms Eva Mattsson of Grolink thanked everyone for their contributions to the meeting. This had been her first visit to Ethiopia and she was looking forward to coming back.

Mr Bo van Elzakker of Agro Eco said he felt the workshop could provide the basis for the birth of an organic movement in Ethiopia. He appreciated all those who had made a start to become and/or support Ethiopia's organic farmers. Everyone needs to work together to become a family and plan the future together. He was carrying warm memories of the workshop away with him.

Ms Haike Rieks of Agro Eco recalled that she had come in 2005 and given training in organic agriculture in the cooperative union in Sidama. Agro Eco had continued its relation with Sidama, but it had been very difficult to get information about other organic development in the country; figures are not readily available. She thanked all the participants for their active participation and positive contributions.

Mrs Sheila Taylor of 'Send a Cow' in Uganda recalled that she and her husband had seen and been part of the birth and development of Nogamu in Uganda. It had largely grown out of projects to help farmers develop sustainable / low input agriculture. She had seen how this had made a real difference to the lives of the farmers.

Ms Birzaf Tekle of IBC recalled the pioneering work of Dr Melaku Woreda and Dr Tewolde Berhan Gebre Egziabher in protecting and enhancing the appreciation of Ethiopia's rich agro-biodiversity. She felt that the development of an organic movement in Ethiopia could help promote the appreciation, use and development of this rich inheritance, and IBC would be happy to be part of such a body to take the movement forward.

Dr Amare Getahun of Apinec recalled that he had lived in Kenya for 23 years, and had first become involved in organic agriculture with KIOF (Kenyan Institute of Organic Farming). He recalled the importance of women farmers and how the movement had really assisted women to improve their lives. Organic agriculture is gender sensitive and recognizes the importance of women's work and knowledge. He was happy to be co-opted into the Task Force. He believed and knew it would work. He also pointed out that large scale commercial farming often gets into organic production through out-

growers; surrounding smallholder farmers. The FAO and other UN bodies concerned with agricultural production and environment are now supporting this movement.

The chairperson invited Ms Sue Edwards to make some closing remarks.

Closing Remarks

Ms Sue started by thanking all the participants for their active contributions to the workshop. The interest had been much stronger than the organizers had expected.

She then continued to give a brief background as to how the workshop had come about.

ISD is a member of IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements). She had met Mr Gunnar Rundgren of GroLink (Sweden) in IFOAM meetings where she had also expressed her interest to see a strong organic movement developed in Ethiopia.

GroLink and Agro Eco are two of the collaborating organizations working together in a complex project called EPOPA (Export Promotion of Organic Products from Africa) being promoted in Uganda, and Tanzania. Part of this project has involved the development of a common East African Organic Standard and East African Organic Mark. The East African Organic Standard and the East African Organic Mark were to be launched at an International East African Organic Conference in Dar es Salaam the week after the workshop in Addis Ababa, 26 May to 1 June.

The East African Organic Standard was finalized in a meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya, in December 2006. Mr Gunnar Rundgren had taken the opportunity of stopping off in Addis Ababa on his way to Nairobi based on the invitation by Deputy Director General of EIAR, Dr. Solomon Aseffa, to discuss the possibilities of making Ethiopia join the East African Organic Standard. He had visited ISD with Mr Addisu Alemayehu. He had met Mr Addisu when he had joined a GroLink organic training in Sweden. It was at the informal meeting in December that the idea of trying to launch an organic movement in Ethiopia had been discussed. This was part of the development plan made by Mr Addisu for the Organic Agriculture Development course in Sweden.

Agro Eco was also interested in supporting such an initiative. Ms Haike Rieks had visited Ethiopia in January 2007 when she had been one of the trainers in promoting organic honey production. Ms Azeb Worku and Ms Sue of ISD and Mr Hadera Gebremedhin of SEA had met with Ms Haike and discussed further the idea of holding a workshop as soon as possible. Ms Haike very quickly put together a draft proposal and budget which were forwarded to ISD. ISD and SEA further developed the budget and it was decided that requests for financial support should be sent out by ISD, and that ISD would handle the finances for the workshop. The initial budget was for nearly Euro 15,000.

A small local organizing group (Addisu Alemayehu of EIAR, Abiye Alemu and Hadera Gebremedhin of SEA, Azeb Worku and Sue Edwards of ISD, and Tsegaye Kassa of the Dir Foundation) was formed to follow up the local logistics and work with Agro Eco to request financial support and identify and invite possible participants. It was also decided to hold the workshop towards the end of May so the visits by the

representatives of Grolink and Agro Eco from Europe could come just before the launching of the East African Organic Standard in Dar es Salaam.

The initial plan was to try and invite a maximum of 45 local participants, but the interest in the workshop continued to grow, particularly in the last week before the workshop so that, including the journalists, there were 76 participants on the first day of the workshop, and over 60 on the second day.

There had also been good support from donors. The first organization to offer support was the Swedish Society of Nature Conservation (SSNC). The SSNC new head of their international programme, Ms Karin Höök, had visited ISD in Addis Ababa in March and had indicated SSNC's strong interest to support the development of organic agriculture in Ethiopia. But SSNC indicated that it could not cover all the costs of the workshop and encouraged ISD to look for other supporters. SSNC offered to make up the difference.

Cordaid of the Netherlands through its regional office in Nairobi quickly expressed interest and provided Euro 5000 towards the costs of the workshop.

The third supporter is the Horn of Africa – Regional Environmental Network and Centre (HoA-REN/C) based in the Science Faculty of Addis Ababa University. HoA is a regional network of institutions focusing on support for better environmental governance and care in the Horn of Africa. One of HoA's thematic areas is support to market chains. ISD is a partner of HoA. HoA very generously and quickly decided to cover all the local costs of the workshop amounting to nearly ETB 45,000.

Ms Sue expressed her thanks and the thanks of the all the participants for the rapid and positive response from these three donors that had made it possible to go ahead with the workshop at such short notice.

Ms Sue then thanked her colleagues in the organizing committee for their hard work and commitment to make the workshop a success.

She first thanked Mr Abiye Alemu and Mr Hadera Gebremedhin of SEA for their constructive contributions and assistance in inviting the representatives from government offices of Amhara, Oromiya and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regions. It was unfortunate that neither Mr Abiye nor Mr Hadera had been able to participate in the workshop. Both had had sudden commitments come up which prevented them from being present.

She then thanked Mr Tsegaye Kassa of the Dir Foundation for his many useful comments and taking on the overall chairperson's work and making all the activities run smoothly and keep to time. The Dir Foundation is based in the Netherlands and has a strong interest in promoting fair trade of Ethiopia's produce. The local office in Addis Ababa works mainly with people with special challenges, particularly the disabled, and also supports a local group including 250 women who grow and sell vegetables. It was pleasure to get to know Mr Tsegaye and his colleagues through this workshop.

Ms Sue thanked Ms Haike Rieks of Agro Eco for her collaboration with the local organizing committee through e-mail and for putting ISD into contact with the Dir Foundation.

Ms Sue then offered a special vote of thanks to her colleagues in ISD – Mr Solomon Hailemariam for taking pictures and video, Mr Alemayehu Ayalew for handling the funds, Mr Simon Malede for helping with the displays and many other small tasks, Ms Asnakech Aklilu in the ISD office for following up invitations and contacts. But her special thanks went to Ms Azeb Worku who always followed up any tasks needed and for particularly arranging about the food in the hotel and field trip to Genesis Farm. Ms Azeb had a thorough understanding of organic vegetable production as she has been teaching it to youth groups for the last four years and had seen the quality of the produce.

Last, but not least, Ms Sue expressed her appreciation of all the organizations who had brought along examples of their work and produce. She had been particularly encouraged to see the youth groups and women who had brought their produce for display and sale. She hoped a strong organic urban agriculture market could be developed by them.

Ms Sue gave special thanks for the staff of Genesis Farm for their staying late and giving so much time to show the participants around the farm.

Ms Sue concluded by thanking all the participants for their time and contributions and looked forward to meeting them in the future as the Ethiopian organic movement developed.



The Organizing Committee
Ms Azeb Worku, Mr Addisu Alemayehu, Mr Tsegaye Kassa
Ms Sue Edwards, Ms Haike Rieks

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Programme

Thursday, 24 May 2007

7.00 – 9.00	Presenters to put up their displays
8.00 - 8.50	Registration
8.50 – 9.00	Introduction to the aims of the workshop (Sue Edwards, ISD)
9.00 – 9.10	Opening by Guest of honour, Dr Bateno Kabeto, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
9.10 – 9.30	Keynote address: The Future of Organic Agriculture in Ethiopia, Dr Tewolde Berhan Gebre Egziabher, Environmental Protection Authority
9.30 – 9.50	The policy environment for organic agriculture in Ethiopia, Merid Kumsa of the Organic Task Force, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development
9.50 – 10.10	An overview of the organic sector in Ethiopia, Haike Rieks, AgroEco
10.10 – 10.30	Break
10.30 – 12.00	Panel discussion “Experiences of organic producers” Vegetables and Dairy – Genesis Farms Coffee – Ato Tadesse Meskela Sesame – Dr Mussie Yacob Honey and Teff – Dr Amare Getahun, Apinec
12.00 – 13.30	Visiting displays, networking, informal discussions, etc
13.30 – 14.30	Lunch
14.30	Field visit to Genesis Farm

Friday, 25 May 07

8.30 – 8.50	Sustainable Agriculture for combating poverty, Sue Edwards, ISD
8.50 – 9.10	Research for Organic Agriculture, Dr Girma Tegegne, Institute of Agricultural Research, Melkassa Research Station
9.10 – 10.15	Panel Discussion on approaches to organic certification The contribution of the Participatory Guarantee System. Eva Mattsson, Grolink Group Certification through an Internal Control System, Bo van Elzakker, Agro Eco Challenges of organic certification in Ethiopia, Dr Hassen Jemal, IMO
10.15 – 10.45	Break
10.45 – 11.05	Social Corporate Responsibility and Fair Trade Initiatives, Haike Rieks, Agro Eco
11.05 – 11.25	Ecological Products of Ethiopia (ECOPIA) “The Pure Joy of Nature” (Dr Mitslal Kifleyesus-Matschie, ECOPIA, Ethiopia)
11.25 – 11.45	Developing market chains for organic produce, Victoria Burke, AgroEco, Uganda
11.45 – 12.00	Introduction to working groups (Organizers)
13.30 – 14.30	Lunch
14.30 – 16.00	Working Sessions: Working Session 1: Certification Systems for National and International markets (Eva Mattsson and Dr Hassen Jemal) Working Session 2: Organic sector development in Ethiopia: needs and gaps (Sue Edwards and Tsegaye Kassa) Working Session 3: Marketing challenges and building market chains (Addisu Alemayehu and Bo van Elzakker)
16.00 – 17.30	Presentations and general discussion of group working sessions.
17.30 – 17.45	The way forward – the international perspective, Bo van Elzakker, Agro Eco
17.45 – 18.00	The way forward – the Ethiopian perspective, Addisu Alemayehu,
18.00 – 18.20	Observations and comments from participants
18.20 – 18.30	Closing remarks
19.00	Cultural evening

Annex 2: List of Participants

<i>Name</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Product(s)</i>	<i>Country / City</i>	<i>Tel:Fax</i>	<i>e-mail</i>
Abate Lemu	BCS	certification	organic products	AA	0115-546872 / 0911-425835	bc.ethio@ethionet.et
Abebe G/Markos	IBC	Gov	genetic resources	AA	0911-207968	
Abeiy Alemneh	Social Welfare Dev. Association	CBO	vegs	AA	0116-467266 / 0911-403631	sweda@ethionet.et
Addisu Alemayehu	EIAR	Res	agronomist	AA	011-2370300 / 0911-807523	alfrd05@yahoo.com
Addisu Shume	Genesis Farms	Business	dairy, poultry, vegs	Debre Zeit	0911-667913	
Asfaw Tulu	Agri-Service	NGO	bio-pesticides	AA	0911-360508	ase@ethionet.et
Ashenafi Mindiye	Nib Youth		vegs, compost	AA	0912-127427 / 0912-067786	nibenvironmental@yahoo.com
Asnake Gelaw	APINEC Agro-indust	producer / marketing	honey, coffee, spices	AA	0911-977568	asnakegelaw2@yahoo.com
Azeb Worku	ISD	NGO	training	AA		azworku@yahoo.com
Bart Jan van Beuzekom	HoA-REN/C	NGO	environment	AA	0911-813298	bjvanbeuzekom@gmail.com
Berhanu Rabo	SWDA	CBO	vegs, poultry	AA	0911-408338	sweda@ethionet.et
Betseit Sissay	ENDA	NGO	vegs	AA	0114-168895	sбетseit@yahoo.com
Birzaf Tekle	IBC	Gov	genetic resources	AA	0911-207968	birzaft@yahoo.com
Boudewijn van Elzakker	Agro Eco	INGO	Trainers	Netherlands	0031-318-420405	b.vanelzakker@agroeco.nl
Cheru Tessema	SAC-ethiopia	INGO			0116-477233 / 34	cherutessema@yahoo.com
Degu Assefa	Ambassen Enterprises PLC	producer / marketing		AA	0114-167221	ambassen@ethionet.et

<i>Name</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Product(s)</i>	<i>Country / City</i>	<i>Tel:Fax</i>	<i>e-mail</i>
Demissew Dugassa	Agri-Service	NGO	crops, compost	AA	0114-651212	ase@ethionet.et
Deres Abdulkadir	Helvetas Ethiopia	NGO	Cactus	AA	0911-606698 / 0114-672934	deres.abdulkadir@helvetas.org
Emawaysh Zewdu	Panos	environmental journalism	media	AA	0911-602607	emuz2005@yahoo.com
Engida Mekonon	JBCS	NGO		Jimma		
Ephraim Zaude	Tebets	Marketing		AA	0911-221023 / 0116-620317	ephraim@ethionet.et
Eshetu Demissie	EOSA	NGO/CBO	field crops	AA	0115-502785 / 88 / 0911-663546	eosa1@ethionet.et
Eva Mattsson	Grolink	INGO	PGS	Sweden		eva@grolink.se
Fekadu Marama	EIAR	Research		Naz	0221-112186 / 0911-384739	fekadumarama@yahoo.com
Frehiwot Kidane	BCS	Certification	organic products	AA	0115-54-6872 / 0911-727638	bcs.ethio@ethionet.et
Genene Gezu	EOSA	NGO / CBO	field crops	AA	0115-502285 / 88 / 0911-795622	genenegezu@yahoo.com
Gezachew Abate	BoARD	Gov	?	Bahir Dar	0911-503052	gezachewabate@yahoo.com
Girma Tegegne	EIAR	Research	crop protection	Naz	0911-466532	gir-zg@yahoo.com
Gudeta Banti	Cooperative Promotion	Business		AA	0911-366148	
Haike Rieks	Agro Eco	INGO	Trainers	Netherlands	0031-318-420405	h.rieks@agroeco.nl
Hailu Araya	ISD	NGO	training	AA		hailuara@yahoo.com
Hassen Jemal Muktar	IMO (Inst.for Market Ecology)	INGO	certification	AA	0911-616379	hassenjm@yahoo.ca
Kefale Gebreyes	BoARD	Gov		Oromiya	0911-180894	
Kefyalew Assefa	BoARD	Gov		Oromiya -	0115-533873	
Lakew Belaineh	Control Union	certification	certification	AA	0912-087309	lbelaineh@controlunion.com

<i>Name</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Product(s)</i>	<i>Country / City</i>	<i>Tel:Fax</i>	<i>e-mail</i>
Melaku Jirata	FMoARD	Gov		AA	0912-183612	melakujc@yahoo.com
Merid Kumsa	FMoARD	crop protection	Organic Task Force	AA	0911-602513	
Mesay Arage	Nib Youth	CBO	vegs, compost		0912-127427 / 0912-067786	nibenvironmental@yahoo.com
Mesay Yared	ENDA	NGO	vegs	AA	0114-168895	mesayyared@yahoo.com
Mohammed Kiyar	EIAR	Research	biopesticides	Holetta / AA	011-2370300 / 0911-300087	mohammedkiyar@yahoo.co.uk
Moti Jaleta	Hawassa Univ	Research		Awassa	0911-773219 / 046-2205421 f	
Mulisa Urga	Cooperative	Gov		Oromiya - AA	0115-533873	
Mulufird Ashagrie	SOS Sahel	INGO	honey, coffee, spices	Bahir Dar	0912-038353	mlfrdashagrie@yahoo.co.uk
Mussie Yacob	Mandura Ethiopia	producer / marketing	sesame, honey, etc	AA	0911-202338	mandura@ethionet.et
Nadachew Ayehu	Dejen Agro-business	Business		AA	0911-634237 / 0116-297059	nayehu@yahoo.com
Nega Adefris	BoARD	Gov		Addis Alem	0112-830272	
Piet Visser	SNV	INGO	marketing	AA		
Sahle Tesfai	Network for ecofarms in Africa	INGO	ecological farming	Germany	05542/5029173	
Sheila Taylor	Kulika-Uganda	INGO	Trainers	Uganda	00256-772- 485273 /	nltaylor@utlonline.co.ug
Solomon H/Mariam	ISD	NGO	AV	AA		ksolham@yahoo.com
Sue Edwards	ISD	NGO	training	AA	0911-200834	sustaindeveth@ethionet.et
Surafel Eshetu	Friends Youth	CBO	vegs, compost, tree seedlings	AA	011-1228684	
Tadele Worku	Ethio Agri CEFT	NGO	aromatic plants	AA	0116-631576	tadeleworku@yahoo.com

<i>Name</i>	<i>Organization</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Product(s)</i>	<i>Country / City</i>	<i>Tel:Fax</i>	<i>e-mail</i>
Tadesse Meskela	Oromo Coffee Union	Marketing	coffee	AA	0911-226744	tadessemeskela@yahoo.com / cofunion@ethionet.et
Tesfaye Tekle Haimanot	Kaleb Service	Business		AA	0911-203360	skaleb@ethionet.et
Tigist Mengistu	ECOPIA	Business	organic products	AA	0911-799980	tm@ecopia.de
Tilahun Worku	BoARD	Gov	fruits	Awassa	046-220-1077 / 046-2210575	tilahun-worku2006@yahoo.com
Tsegaye Kassa	Dir	NGO	marketing	AA		tsegayekassa@yahoo.com
Victoria Burke	Agro Eco	INGO	marketing	Uganda	00256-78949922	victoria@agroeco.ug / victoriaburke@gmail.com
Wendwesen Negash	Friends Youth	CBO	vegs, compost, tree seedlings	AA	0912-026515 / 011-1220023	wondnegash@yahoo.com
Yisehak Dea	BoARD	Gov		Awassa	046-2201067 / 0911-713813	
Yonas Alemu	Common vision	NGO	urban agric	AA	0911-337499	commonvision@ethionet.et
Yonas Menamo	FMoARD	Gov		AA	0911-384137	

Annex 3

Opening Speech by Dr Bateno Kabeto Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development

Mr. Chairman,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me a great pleasure to speak to this important workshop on the future of organic agriculture in Ethiopia.

The Agricultural Sample Survey for Ethiopia for the 2005-2006 cropping season shows that only 14,247 farmers had land holdings larger than the 10 ha each. The land they held added up to only 190,625 ha out of a total land holding of 14,243,412 ha. This means that only 1.3% of the agricultural land is held by persons who cultivate 10 ha. or more each. The average size of land holding was in fact, only 1.2 ha, and the average cultivated land was 0.98 ha/holder. This makes Ethiopia truly a country of small holder farmers.

That is why the government's focus for improving food production and, in general agriculture, has been on helping the smallholder farmer intensify production. The intensification of agricultural production is needed because Ethiopia must use its obvious potential to feed itself to actually feed itself. Agriculture is also the sector that contributes the most to export. This age of globalization requires that Ethiopia builds on its position of advantage to compete globally. This competition will become even more critical when Ethiopia has joined the World Trade Organization. It is currently negotiating its entry into the World Trade Organization.

The fact that Ethiopian agriculture is based essentially on smallholder farmers means that it is already labour intensive. That is why agriculture uses most of the labour force in the country. Organic agriculture is, by its nature, more labour intensive than industrial agriculture. Therefore, it makes economic sense for Ethiopia to compete globally in the organic rather than in the industrial agriculture sector. Of course, this does not mean that Ethiopia has to give up industrial agriculture altogether. It may find that, with further industrialization, more labour will be attracted away from the land and Ethiopia will need to continue intensifying its agricultural production also under reducing rural labour availability. But, that is something for the future.

Currently, much of Ethiopia's smallholder farmer agriculture is essentially organic, though not much of it is as yet certified as organic. Ethiopia's agriculture is, therefore, largely what has come to be known as organic agriculture by default.

Looking at the global development of agricultural production, the certified organic agriculture sector is growing fast. Therefore, if it develops an internationally recognized organic produce certification system, it means that Ethiopia can benefit from this growing niche market. Ethiopia's strategy for industrialization, stated in its Agriculture Led Industrialization Policy, aims to develop agriculture as the basis for its industrialization. Enabling Ethiopian agricultural production to benefit from this growing niche market of organic agricultural produce is thus an obvious step that must be taken to implement its Agriculture Led Industrialization Policy.

The certification of organic agricultural products has already started in a small scale with coffee produced by some cooperatives in the Southern Peoples, Nationalities and Nations Region and the Oromiya Region. The benefits that these cooperatives are deriving are substantial. Therefore, it is obvious that the smallholder farmers in Ethiopia, and the Ethiopian economy in general, would benefit from an extensive globally recognized system of certifying agricultural products to cover not only coffee, but also pulses, oilseeds, cereals, fruits and vegetables, all of which are important items of Ethiopian export. Failing to do that could end up in losing markets as the global organic agriculture niche market expands. It should be noted that this niche market is growing globally at a fast rate and may soon become the main market.

What happens globally sooner or later happens also locally. Though the niche market for certified organic agricultural products is as yet extremely small in Ethiopia, it can therefore, be expected to grow with time.

It should also be pointed out that virtually all agrochemicals used in industrial agriculture in Ethiopia are imported. Since they are made from petrochemicals, and since the cost of petroleum is rising fast, basing the intensification of agricultural production on agrochemicals would be a growing economic drain on Ethiopia's already meager export earnings. In contrast, the raw materials for making agricultural inputs in organic agriculture are locally available to the smallholder farmer. All that is needed is the knowledge and skills to prepare these inputs from local materials. Fortunately, thanks to the conscious government policy on education, literacy is extending very fast in Ethiopia. In the areas of crop cultivation, more than 90% of children of school age are now going to school. This means that intensifying the knowledge base for the intensification of organic agriculture in Ethiopia is going to be easy since the farmers will become literate.

It is, therefore, my pleasure to state to this workshop that the objective conditions in Ethiopia will make it easy to promote formally certified organic agriculture. It is also my pleasure to state that existing government policy is supportive of such development. Last year, the government issued its policy on organic agriculture.

But just as organic agriculture itself is labour intensive, promoting it is also labour intensive. That is why we hope that international organizations, national, regional and local associations, non-governmental organizations and community based organizations will help promote organic agricultural production and certification in Ethiopia. It is in this context that I thank the cooperation among Agro Eco and Dir Foundation, both of which are international non-governmental organizations, and Safe Environment Association and Institute for Sustainable Development, both of which are national associations, for organizing this timely workshop.

I now declare this workshop open. I wish you all a fruitful discussion that will prepare the way for bringing nearer the formal certification of all organic agricultural products in Ethiopia.

Thank you all.

Annex 4

The Future for Organic Agriculture in Ethiopia by Tewolde Berhan Gebre Egziabher

1. Introduction

I feel honoured to be delivering to you a keynote address on the future for organic agriculture in Ethiopia. I thank the organizers for this honour. I accept this honour with the greatest pleasure because I love organic agriculture. I grew up in a smallholder farming family. Obviously, our mixed agriculture was organic since we knew no other kind of agriculture. I am referring to the 1940s when, strange as it might sound now, agriculture was organic even in the industrialized democracies and proletarian dictatorships of the time. Ethiopia was then under an archaic totalitarian feudal regime fighting off a colonial aggression from a racist Italian government. They were bleak times for us. Nevertheless, I remember them with pleasure because childhood, however difficult it might have been for parents, is always the rosier of times. And it should be, since childhood is the time in a person's life that is closest to the source of life itself – and heaven help those who do not love the source of life; for, life is all that the living have!

Agriculture, by satisfying our need for food, which is our sole source of physiological energy, links us all to life throughout our existence. It should, therefore, not surprise anyone to note that many of us feel emotional about organic agriculture, which is kind to living things. For the same reason, many of us object to industrial agriculture, which we see as distancing us from life. Hence my pleasure with my reminiscences of the organic agriculture of my childhood. But, as you can see, I am no longer a child and I should have developed a hard enough head to make me embrace industrial agriculture if it were indeed a better option for Ethiopia's future. However, I now find that it is not. I find that the organic agriculture about which I feel sentimental is indeed, even when I am most hard-headed, the better prospect for my country and my people. That is why now both sense and sensibility combine in me to redirect my full attention to organic agriculture for the future of my children, and for the future of their children into the foreseeable future.

2. The Principles Underlying Organic Agriculture

The human species, together with all animals and many other forms of life, obtains its food from plants. Even the lion and the nouveau-riche Addis Ababite, who eat nothing but meat, obtain that meat from animals that feed on plants, or, in the case of the lion, at most from animals that feed on animals that themselves feed on plants. That is why the old English adage that all flesh is grass is true. Animals feeding on animals feeding on other animals eventually feed on plants, to produce physiological waste or themselves to die and become waste to feed other animals or micro-organisms that feed other micro-organisms that eventually feed plants, to start all over again feeding the first set of animals. What a long sentence! But how it fails to describe the intricacy of the process of green plants being eaten to feed all life and themselves! Themselves? You may ask. Yes, themselves. If we and other animals and micro-organisms did not feed on plants, then plants themselves would become unable to feed themselves, and they would die out. Am I saying that, in all life, it is necessary to be eaten in order to eat – that it is necessary to die in order to live? Precisely! But, of course I am not telling you anything that you do not know. We all know that, however we love life it is inseparable from death; that, if death did not exist, neither would life exist.

What has this got to do with organic or industrial agriculture? You may ask. I will try to tell you now.

3. Industrial Agriculture, Organic Agriculture and the Biosphere

Organic agriculture leaves the whole process of eating and being eaten, which is the most characteristic feature of life, intact, as it naturally stands. It only tries to maximize the availability of what we, humans, can eat at the point in time and space in which we find ourselves. In contrast, industrial agriculture accepts to disregard the intricacies of eating and being eaten and uses industrial products to substitute for the failures that our process of maximizing our food imposes on the natural processes of life that produce that food. This disregard disturbs the balance between living and dying.

In the biosphere, the amount of matter that circulates in the living at a particular point in time is limited. Most of what is on the Earth's crust, in the bodies of water and in the atmosphere stays outside of the cycle of living and dying. When this cycle is disrupted, more and more matter gets out of it and joins the inert mass, and life gradually thins away, and parts of it risk elimination. How is industrial agriculture disrupting life?

Agriculture, as I have already pointed out, is a process that we use for maximizing what we, the human species, need primarily as food. Agriculture produces biomass for other uses as well, e.g. fuel wood or charcoal for cooking or heating, wood for furniture and implements, feed for domestic animals, fibre for clothing or industrial purposes, biodegradable plastic for furniture, containers and other industrial purposes. When we remove biomass from the top of the soil, we deprive that soil of the source of its humus. We then deprive the soil organisms of their food, and the plants that grow in and on that soil of their nutrients. If we obey the rules of organic agriculture, we put back into the soil the waste that we derive from the biomass that we take away from it to begin with. And we can easily do so since, basically, it is only the energy contained in food that we use up. This restoring of nutrients into the soil can be achieved by composting all organic waste and using the compost as fertilizer. Compost replenishes the humus content of the soil. The soil organic matter or humus slowly and steadily releases plant nutrients. The crops that we grow take up the released plant nutrients equally slowly and steadily.

In industrial agriculture, we put on the deprived soil the same plant nutrients, but having made them from petrochemicals. We put the nutrients on or in the soil in one go. Therefore, most of them are washed or leached away by rain or irrigation water. This reduces the usefulness of the nutrients. Equally importantly, both the ground water and the water that flows from our fields into streams then become polluted.

Soil organic matter also feeds soil organisms. If we depend on industrially produced nutrients for our crops, therefore, the soil organisms lack food and reduce in species numbers and in population size per species. These organisms and the humus in the soil maintain not only steadily-high soil fertility, but also good soil structure. A well structured soil resists erosion by water in the rainy season and by wind in the dry season. Therefore, by maintaining high humus content in the soil, organic agriculture reduces the rate of soil erosion. In contrast, by destroying soil structure, dependence on agrochemical inputs for maintaining fertility predisposes the soil to erosion by both water and wind. And, as we know, because the topography is mountainous, soil erosion is a serious threat in Ethiopian soils even under organic agriculture. Therefore, with industrial agriculture, we exacerbate a major problem from which Ethiopia naturally suffers.

By maintaining better soil structure, organic agriculture is more effective at regulating the hydrological cycle than industrial agriculture. When the soil structure is well formed, rain water percolates easily and recharges ground water. This reduces the risks of flooding in the rainy season and of the drying up of springs and streams in the dry season.

Humus holds and slowly releases for crop use not only chemicals that are plant nutrients, but also water. Organic agriculture, therefore, adapts crops to more arid areas and more erratic rainfall regimes than does industrial agriculture. For example, Ethiopian farmers who use compost maintain that the fields where they have applied compost remain green for two weeks longer after the dry season has set in than the fields where they have applied chemical fertilizer.

In industrial agriculture, the plant nutrients that are added to the soil are usually the major ones only, i.e. nitrogen, phosphorus, and to a lesser extent potassium. The micro-nutrients, e.g. boron, or even magnesium, are usually ignored. It is likely, therefore, that the nutritive value of food produced through industrial agriculture is not as good as that produced through organic agriculture. Housewives in Ethiopia, especially the rural ones, usually state that food produced with chemical fertilizer is not as tasty as food produced organically. My palate is not as well refined as all that, but I would not be surprised if they are right. In any case, I feel more certain that food that has a higher content of all the micro-nutrients is better for health, e.g. in preventing anaemia.

The process of maximizing through agriculture the biomass that we, humans, can use directly in the biosphere obviously takes place at the expense of what other inhabitants of the biosphere would have used. Industrial agriculture exacerbates this reduction in other kinds of biomass compared to organic agriculture. If we want to minimize biodiversity loss, therefore, we must opt for maximizing the biomass that we, as a species, need through organic rather than through industrial agriculture. The consequent reduction in loss is to both agricultural and non-agricultural biodiversity.

Biological diversity's current most serious threat is climate change. At last, the threat of climate change to human societies and to biodiversity, and possibly to the survival of the human species, has been realized. Talking of climate change is, in fact, now almost fashionable even if what is being done to reverse it is woefully inadequate. Climate change is caused by global warming, which is itself caused by atmospheric pollutants that trap the sun's heat in the biosphere and keep it from being reradiated back into outer space. The main atmospheric pollutant responsible for global warming is carbon dioxide. This pollutant has increased in the atmosphere because of the burning of fossil fuels. The increase in this atmospheric pollutant, like the increase in agrochemicals, has been caused by industrialization. Of course industrialization can proceed by harnessing renewable energy, including solar, wind, hydro and geothermal power without increasing the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. I am, therefore, not saying that we should stop industrializing. While we are shifting our strategy of industrialization, however, any human activity that sequesters carbon dioxide will help us stave off the threat of climate change. Industrial agriculture, by deriving agrochemicals from petrochemicals, contributes to climate change. By increasing the presence of agrochemicals, it pollutes soil and water. By reducing agricultural biodiversity, it decreases the adaptability of agriculture to climate change.

Organic agriculture starkly contrasts with industrial agriculture in all these. By using only organic waste as fertilizer, organic agriculture refrains from increasing atmospheric pollution and global warming. It also sequesters carbon in the soil and helps to reduce

the rate of climate change. By increasing humus in the soil, it improves soil structure and cushions the land from both excessive and limiting water conditions. By strengthening the hydrological cycle, it reduces the impact of climate change. By fostering agricultural biodiversity, it increases the adaptability of agriculture to climate change. By eliminating the use of agrochemicals, it prevents soil and water pollution and thus fosters biodiversity and human health. All in all, though organic agriculture alone is unlikely to save us from the looming catastrophe of climate change, it will play a major role in helping us save ourselves.

4. Ethiopia and the Future of Organic Agriculture

Ethiopia is a country of mostly smallholder farmers. Its population is mostly rural. Its agricultural systems mix animal and crop production. It is one of the 12 major Vavilov centres of crop genetic diversity in the world. Because of these strengths, it has suffered relatively insignificant crop genetic erosion. This makes it easy to intensify agricultural production in Ethiopia without resorting to industrial agriculture. This option for the intensification of agricultural production is indeed an economic advantage because agrochemicals are already expensive and are going to continue getting even more expensive. I am saying this because I do not think that petroleum prices are going to fall.

The large crop genetic diversity will also enable Ethiopia to adapt to climate change more easily than most other countries in the world.

Ethiopia has an abundance of hydro, geothermal, solar and wind power. It can thus industrialize by harnessing its wealth of renewable energy resources without polluting the atmosphere. Strengthening its existing organic agriculture with needed scientific inputs will, therefore, give Ethiopia a globally competitive edge in agriculture. Developing a formal system of certification of organic agricultural products will then also give it a globally competitive edge in trade in this era of climate change. That is why I see organic agriculture, the erstwhile symbol of Ethiopia's underdevelopment, becoming its effective lever in shifting to an adapted and adaptive modernity. Ethiopia should, therefore, reorganize its agricultural research capacity away from supporting a mistakenly expected growth in industrial agriculture to supporting the strengthening and fine-tuning of its widespread but mistakenly sidelined organic agriculture. Not only Ethiopian, but also the global need requires that it does so. It will be easy for Ethiopia to manoeuvre this global need to a national advantage in development.

5. Concluding Remarks

In short, organic agriculture can ensure that my children, my grandchildren and their following generations into the future are healthily fed in a hospitable biosphere. I am an environmentalist pre-occupied with the wellbeing of the biosphere. I see organic agriculture as a continuing pillar of this biospheric wellbeing. I am an Ethiopian, one of the first few with a modern scientific education. I see organic agriculture, the old pillar of Ethiopian culture strengthened with new scientific knowledge, as my country's advantageous propeller into the globalizing future. Therefore, I would like to finish by savouring my love of organic agriculture not only because of a senile reminiscence of an childhood highlighted by decades of the drudgery of living, but also by a sure sense that my past love of life is going to continue as the assured way into the future of my loved ones and of our miraculous biosphere of harmony and love.

Thank you all very much for hearing me through.

Annex 5

List of Power Point Presentations

Task Force Paper – Merid Kumsa

Organic Overview – Haike Rieks

Bio-ecoland – Mandura Ethiopia

Biocontrol – Girma Tegegne

Participatory Control System – Eva Mattsson

Grower Group Certification – Bo van Elzakker

Fair Trade Initiatives – Haike Rieks

ECOPIA Presentation – Mitslal K Yesus

Organic Chain Development – Victoria Burke

Annex 6:

The Organizations that put on displays

In the Organic Chain Development Participation Networking Workshop the following 14 Organizations took part in the display.

AGRO ECO

This is a Dutch-based company. They displayed pamphlets showing their different areas of work. Agro Eco is involving in:

- ✦ Sustainable and organic beekeeping
- ✦ Training on organic agriculture and related topics
- ✦ Counselling for fair trade and ethical coffee production for group certification
- ✦ Feasibility studies
- ✦ Experience in organic cotton production and marketing
- ✦ Market scans and market studies



APINEC Agro Industry

This company works on the production, processing and marketing of organic honey, wax and other bee products, organic (forest) coffee and selected non-timber forest products, (i.e. wild pepper and Ethiopian cardamom).

The products displayed during the workshop were honey, coffee and Ethiopian cardamom. Brochures on Apinec Agro Industry and other sister companies were available. Pictures of the company area of work were also part of their display.



ECOPIA - Ecological Products of Ethiopia

They are processing vegetables, fruits and dairy products from organically grown produce to make syrups and jams, samples of which were displayed.



Ethiopian Organic Seed Action (EOSA)

EOSA promotes an integrated agro-biodiversity management and seed security program. The organization is mainstreaming the management of agro-biodiversity for sustainable agricultural development. It follows a strategy of system management similar to that under which crop genetic resources evolved with farmers' management in order to produce agro-enhancement of farmer's varieties. This involves on-farm conservation, restoration and enhancement of farmer's (landraces) varieties of crops, particularly sorghum, durum wheat and different legumes. These enhanced forms of farmer's varieties are currently conserved on farms, multiplied and integrated into the community seed network system that includes Community Seed Banks (CSB). It is operating in Eastern Showa, Western Showa, South Wello, Bale and Arsi Zones of Oromiya Region.



EOSA displayed varieties of sorghum, durum wheat and different legumes representing the different forms of enhanced farmer's varieties that are currently being used by farmers and are integrated into the informal seed scheme. Moreover, these enhanced forms of farmer's varieties are of low-input character that enables them to be grown at an input level applicable for organic products.

Institute for Sustainable Development (ISD)

ISD is a local non-governmental organization working with rural communities', environmental clubs in the schools, and local youth groups to teach ecological farming. ISD also disseminates information on developmental issues of concern and publishes technical information for development workers and educators at all levels.

ISD displayed its different publications: Natural Fertilizer, The Tigray Experience - a success story in sustainable agriculture, Sokke Tree and Natural Resources of Arba Minch, Cultural Biodiversity guide book, Cultural Biodiversity Resources in the eyes of schools, Farmers perceptions of soil fertility change and management ,etc. Posters and brochures were available for participants.



Institute of Biodiversity Conservation (IBC)

The Institute is mandated to collect, conserve and maintain the plant genetic resources of Ethiopia. Ethiopia is one of the 11 areas in the world where crop plants were originally domesticated from wild species. Ethiopia is also now one of the most heterogeneous areas of the world in terms of genetic diversity of farmer's varieties.

Crops and genetic diversity displayed in the workshop were:

Crop type	Genetic diversity	Crop type	Genetic diversity
Sorghum	24	Chickpea	4
Teff	12	Faba bean	2
Wheat	12	Field pea	3
Barley	18	Grass pea	1
Finger millet	8	Noug – Niger seed	11
Oats	2	Linseed	2
Maize	7	Suf – Safflower	2
Haricot beans	22	Castor bean	10
Cowpea	2	Sesame	8
Fenugreek	3	Ethiopian Kale	1
Lentil	1	'Feto' Cress	2



The importance of farmers' varieties over improved crops is that improved varieties are normally adapted to high inputs in terms of chemical fertilizer. They also need chemicals for disease and pest control.

On the other hand, farmers' varieties are adapted to low or no inputs of chemical fertilizer and pesticides. They have had a long adaptation with the environment to develop resistance to pests, diseases and competition with weeds. They have a high

genetic diversity. This makes farmers' varieties appropriate inputs for organic farming.

Melkasa Agricultural Research Center / Ethiopian Institute of Agricultural Research

Four named varieties of Mango (Apple mango, Kent, Tommy Atkins and local mango) and five of Avocado (Pinkerton, Furerte, Chequate, Ettenger and Simmonds) were displayed as fresh fruits. These varieties are pest and disease resistance. They have been tested in Melkasa, Awasa and Areka research centres. Farmers can produce them without any external inputs and still gets high yield. A dried mango paste was also part of the display with a photo of processing of drying mango flesh.





Mandura Ethiopia

Mandura is a private organization involved in the production and marketing of Sesame. Sesame grown in Welga and Humera areas were displayed.

Oromia Coffee Union

This is a Union representing the farmers who grow coffee in south, south west and east parts of the country. During the workshop, washed coffee from different well known coffee growing areas of the country, (Nekemet, Sidamo and Harare, were displayed.



Organic Vegetable Producers in Addis Ababa

Common Vision for Development Association

This is a group of people working on urban agriculture. They displayed various vegetables like Swiss chard, cabbage, cauliflower, carrot, etc which had been grown organically.



ENDA-Ethiopia (Environment and Development Action)

Women working on vegetable gardening participated in the display. They displayed Swiss chard, beetroot, lettuce, Rosemary, etc. The organization also had a poster display on basket compost making and bio-intensive vegetable gardening methods.



Friends PLC

This is also a youth group working on urban agriculture. They displayed vegetables grown organically: tomato, carrot, onion, head cabbage, Swiss chard, and Ethiopian basil). Photos were also part of the display.



Nib Environmental Protection Association

This is a youth group working on urban agriculture using organic principle. They displayed organically grown vegetables: Swiss chard, spinach, lettuce, beetroot, leek, cauliflower and Ethiopian basil. Photos and brochures of their work were also displayed.

Social Welfare Development Association (SWEDA)

They are working on urban agriculture. They displayed vegetables (Swiss chard, lettuce, cabbage, etc) grown organically. Photo display was part of it.

