

Guideline to Proposed Road Map of Sri Lanka National Program for Organic Agriculture (SLNPOA)

Proposed International
Advisory Group for the
Implementation of Sri Lanka
National Program for Organic
Agriculture



Prepared by Lanka Organic Agricultural Movement
with the consultation of different
stakeholders of Organic Sector and LOAM members

International Support and Advisory Group

Name	Affiliation and Specific area of interest/support
André Leu	International Director, Regeneration International Ambassador, IFOAM- Organics International Author; Poisoning our Children, The Myth of Safe Pesticides
Dr. Hans R. Herren	President Millennium Institute (Washington, DC USA) and Biovision Foundation (Zurich, Switzerland)
Dr. Vandana Shiva	Founder of Navdanya Author of more than 300 papers in leading scientific and technical journals
Louise Lutikholt	IFOAM - Organics International, executive director
Jennifer Chang	Vice President, IFOAM Organics International Executive Director, Asian Local Governments for Organic Agriculture (ALGOA)
Jostein Hertwig	Coordinator Organic Food System Programme (OFSP) Executive Director Global Alliance for Organic Districts (GAOD) EU “Green Deal” and Action Plan for Organic Agriculture Organic Districts/Rural areas
Karen Mapusua	Manager Operations, Programming, Performance and Systems, Land Resources Division Pacific Community Vice President, IFOAM Organics International
Michele Maccari	Organic / Sustainable Tourism Consultant
Dr. Richard Thongton Smith	Demeter / Bio Dynamic Trainer
Ong Kung Wai	Certification Alliance Coordinator Organic Certification trainer
Vitoon Punyakal	Greenet / ACT- Trainer of Rice chain Asia program
Dr. Zhou Zejiang	President IFOAM Asia

Helmy Abouleish	CEO of SEKEM Bio Dynamic Association
Christoph Sympfendorfer	Bio Dynamic Association
Dr. Sheik Tanveer Hosain	Ambassador, IFOAM- Organics International and ALGOA Former Vice-President, IFOAM Asia Recipient, Organic Farming innovation Award (OFIA) 2011 Senior Program Officer, APO, Japan Organic agriculture research and innovation; Government organic policy
Gerald Herrmann	Organic Services
Bernward Geier	COLABORA - Let's work together & IFOAM Ambassador.
Shamaka Mune	President of INOFO
Dr. Chito –	Masipag- Philippine based Rice farmer group
Prof. Dr. Gerold Rahmann	Director of the Thuenen-Institute of Organic Farming Prof. at the Faculty of Organic Agrucultural Science, University of Kassel, Germany President of ISOFAR (International Society of Organic Farming Research) IFOAM world board member
Joe Daniel	Executive Director of the IIRD/ PGS council/ Consultant
Mathew John	Last Forest / Indian PGS council / NTFP expert/ Former IFOAM world board member
Bablu Ganguly	Timbaktu Collective / World Board member of IFOAM - Organics International. He is a founder member of PGS Organic Council that has been spearheading the PGS movement in India

1st International Webinar

“THE COMMITMENT OF THE SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT TO GO ORGANIC!”

June 9th, 2021

1400 - 1600 Sri Lanka
Time (UTC +5:30)

Zoom Details

Meeting ID: 826 1229 9669

Passcode: 989223

Or click / copy and paste
link:

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82612299669?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82612299669?pwd=YjByMUhaQnFRRWdwbnRkSUZrLzU5Zz09)

[pwd=YjByMUhaQnFRRWdw
bnRkSUZrLzU5Zz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82612299669?pwd=YjByMUhaQnFRRWdwbnRkSUZrLzU5Zz09)

Join us on Facebook Live



PROGRAM

I. Opening Remarks



Jostein Hertwig

Executive Director

Global Alliance for Organic Districts (GAOD)

II. Welcoming Message



Hon. Shashindra Rajapaksa, M.P.

State Minister

Paddy and Grains, Organic Food, Vegetables, Fruits,
Chilies, Onion and Potato Cultivation Promotion, Seed
Production and Advanced Technology Agriculture

III. Keynote Speeches



Dr. Hans Herren

President, Millennium Institute
Founder, Biovision Foundation



Dr. Vandana Shiva

Chair, Navdanya

Recipient, Right Livelihood Award



Dr. Ranil Senanayake

Founder

International Analog Forestry Network



Andre Leu

Director, Regeneration International
Author, Myths of Safe Pesticides

Co-organized by:



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PROGRAM

IV. Solidarity Messages from the International Organic Community

- IFOAM-Organics International / Germany
- IFOAM-Organics Asia / South Korea
- Intercontinental Network of Organic Farming Organizations (INOFO) / Germany
- Global Alliance of Organic Districts (GAOD) / Italy
- Regeneration International / USA
- International Society of Organic Farming Research (ISOFAR)
- Asian Local Governments for Organic Agriculture (ALGOA) / South Korea
- And more!

V. Closing

Vote of Thanks



Thilak Kariyawasam

President

Lanka Organic Agriculture Movement



Zhou Zejiang

President

IFOAM-Organics Asia

Co-organized by:



June 4, 2021

Hon. Gotabaya Rajapaksa
President of Sri Lanka
Presidential Secretariat, Galle Face, Colombo 1, Sri Lanka

Your Excellency,

Allow me to convey, on behalf of IFOAM – Organics International, our warmest congratulations for your decision to transition Sri Lanka from chemical farming to natural farming.

We, as the global agent of change for organic farming, welcome this wise decision as a clear indication of Sri Lanka's intention to make its food systems fully sustainable and inclusive in order to meet the Sustainable Development Goals and the commitment of the Paris Agreement on climate change. Inclusivity means taking care of all stakeholders of these food systems, and first and foremost farmers, who produce the food Sri Lankan people eat every day and whose livelihoods are fully dependent on these food systems.

We have been advising governments on such transformational policies for decades and gathered much experience through this. Please allow us to share some of our thoughts on what steps are necessary, in our opinion, to bring your great initiative to a success.

While such a transition is very timely for any country, the period during which the whole sector can adapt to knowledge intensive techniques used e.g., in organic farming might take 2-3 years, based on our experience. We are closely following the progress made in Bhutan, the Indian state of Sikkim, the Nepali province of Karnali and Juancavelica in Peru, which are all following the route of converting to 100% organic. The pace of their development clearly tells us the need for a careful planning in order for none of the farming families to be left behind. After all, your decision implies nothing less than a major transition with a comprehensive, holistic approach!

We operate a [platform for policy makers](#) around the world to find a safe space to share and have an exchange on transformative policies. Your government officials are highly welcome to join [here](#).

This transition time will allow not only for farmers to build up critical microbial life of their soils, but also to put all the other necessary measures in place to establish the academic basis for natural farming and vocational training at all levels. This includes universities, extension services being capacitated to advise on sustainable management techniques, and funding for

research on locally adapted solutions specific to the main crops produced in the country, as well as subsidies available for farmers to convert to organic agriculture.

Such a stepwise approach would also allow sufficient time for the gradual reduction in the use of synthetic fertilizers and making available and subsidizing the purchase of knowledge, skills and inputs necessary to start chemical free, organic agriculture.

Once again, let us express our admiration towards your courageous decision. Together with experts in Sri Lanka and particularly the Lanka Organic Agriculture Movement, we remain at your disposal to provide you with our experience and further thoughts. We would also be delighted to have experts in your Government join a series of workshops we organize, wherein the Road Map will be discussed and world-known experts will express their support and further suggestions for the transition Sri Lanka is going through. We will send you the details on these in the coming days.

Yours sincerely,



Peggy Miars
President
IFOAM – Organics International
p.miars@ifoam.bio

Copies

Hon Mahinda Rajapaksa MP
Prime Minister of Sri Lanka
Prime Minister's Office
No: 58, Sir Ernest De Silva Mawatha, Colombo 07., Sri Lanka

All 46 members of Presidential Task Force for the creation of a Green Socio- economy with Sustainable Solutions for Climate Changes, (Through President Secretariat - Please send copy of this letter to all members)

Dr. P. B. Jayasundera,
Secretary to the President
Presidential Secretariat, Galle Face, Colombo 1, Sri Lanka

Mr M.B Rohana Pushpakumara
Secretary
Ministry of Agriculture

Mr. Ravindra Hewavirana
Secretary
Ministry of Plantation

Dr. W.M.W. Werakoon
Director General
Department of Agriculture

Thilak Kariyawasam
President
Lanka Organic Agricultural Movement – LOAM



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His Excellency Gotabaya Rajapaksa,
President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
Presidential Secretariat, Galle Face, Colombo 1, Sri Lanka
ps@presidentsoffice.lk

Your Excellency,
Regeneration International fully supports your Presidential Directive on May 10, 2021 to form the Presidential Task Force for the creation of a Green Sri Lanka with sustainable Solutions for Climate Change.

We congratulate Your Excellency for showing global leadership and strongly support the stated aim of: "whereas, Sri Lanka's access to a green socio-economic pattern providing sustainable solutions needs to be prioritized so as to make people adapt themselves to an eco-friendly socio-economic pattern in order for the country to reap benefits from prevailing highly favourable conditions in the global economy in the context of the emerging global economic trends."

We will be submitting a report to the Presidential Task Force for the creation of a Green Sri Lanka with sustainable Solutions for Climate Change with good evidence referenced to published scientific literature to show that your Presidential Directive is achievable and will increase Sri Lanka's agricultural production, income, balance of trade, biodiversity and climate change resilience.

Introduction to Regeneration International

Regeneration International is an international network of more than 360 partner organizations in 70 countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America, Oceania, North America and Europe. Our Mission aligns with Your Excellency's Presidential Directive. We would be pleased to put the Presidential Task Force in contact with world leading experts to assist and enable the achievement of your directive.

Yours Faithfully,

André Leu, International Director, June 7, 2021

Copies

1 Hon Mahinda Rajapaksa MP
Prime Minister of Sri Lanka
Prime Minister's Office
No: 58, Sir Ernest De Silva Mawatha,
Colombo 07. Sri Lanka.
info@pmoffice.gov.lk



GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR ORGANIC DISTRICTS
www.gaod.online

GAOD
39, Serre Street
84052 Ceraso (Salerno)
Italy - Europe

To:

His Excellency Gotabaya Rajapaksa
President of the Democratic Republic of Sri Lanka

With copy to:

The Honorable Members of the "Presidential Task Force for the creation of a Green Sri Lanka with sustainable Solutions for Climate Changes"

Thilak Kariyawasam, President Lanka Organic Agricultural Movement – LOAM

SUPPORT LETTER

Ceraso, Italy 8th June 2021

Your Excellency,

With reference to the Presidential Directive given at Colombo under the Seal of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka on the 10th day of May, Two Thousand and Twenty One we have the honor and pleasure to present to you this Support Letter from the Global Alliance for Organic Districts (GAOD).

Your decision is of major importance both for the health of the people and nature of Sri Lanka. We also acknowledge that this important step taken from Your country is leading the way for us all and for the future we want. This brings forward the important dual purpose of our enthusiastic engagement: Our full support to the transition, sharing with You our knowledge and aspirations and the opportunity to learn from You and the process You have promoted.

In particular we would like to express our sincere and deeply felt appreciation of the decision made by Your Excellency for a full transition from chemical farming to natural farming and will respectfully ask you to consider our support flowing from the below short presentation of GAOD.

GAOD – Global Alliance for Organic Districts
European secretariat
39, Serre Street – 84052 Ceraso (Salerno) – Italy
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GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR ORGANIC DISTRICTS

www.gaod.online

The founding parties of GAOD are Asian Local Governments for Organic Agriculture (ALGOA), International Network of Eco-Regions (IN.N.E.R.), Regeneration International (RI) and League of Organic Agriculture Municipalities, Cities and Provinces of the Philippines (LOAMCP-PH) with the participation and support of IFOAM-Organics International, IFOAM Asia, IFOAM Organics Europe, Baltic Foundation of Lithuania and Organic Food System Programme.

The vision of GAOD is to co-create a global network able to support the local development of Organic Districts in different territorial contexts and scaling up examples of practical solutions; the transformation of global food and farming systems as key towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in general and Sustainable Food Systems in particular. The Organic Districts experience shows they can create important synergies between farmers, food producers, touristic operators, local communities and the Government. The great potential for a sustainable integrated development of Your wonderful country, gifted by great natural as well as human resources, could hence really come to fruition.

Your Excellency,

We will respectfully ask Your Excellency to consider the following proposals from GAOD as a support to the transition and for the work of the “Presidential Task Force for the creation of a Green Sri Lanka with sustainable Solutions for Climate Changes” and in drawing up a Road Map:

1. The establishment, following up and monitoring of Organic Districts

Organic Districts represents an inclusive interactive process at local level and involving all actors from the food chain, policy makers/authorities, research, education and civil society – a food system approach. The scale of an Organic District is dependent on the conditions in each country. It could be at community level, region or for a province.

- In Europe there are 50 Organic Districts
- The first Organic District was established 17 years ago in Cilento, southern Italy

What we may offer:

- i. Experience from Organic Districts in Europe
- ii. Guidelines for establishing an Organic District
- iii. Monitoring tool for evaluating the performance of an Organic District
- iv. Participation in the dynamic process of GAOD

2. The European Green Deal, Farm to Fork strategy and Action Plan for Organic Agriculture

The “European Green Deal” was adopted in December 2019, as a roadmap aiming to set Europe on



GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR ORGANIC DISTRICTS
www.gaod.online

the path of transformation to a climate-neutral, fair and prosperous society. The Green Deal includes the "The Farm to Fork" strategy, targeting 25% of agricultural land in Europe by 2030. It also calls for a reduction by 50% of the use of chemical pesticides by 2030. An "Action Plan for Organic Agriculture" was adopted in April 2021. This plan has three Axis: Demand and consumer trust; Conversion and value chain and Organic leading by example and 23 concrete actions.

In Action 14 of the plan the European Commission Encourage Member States to support the development and implementation of "Bio-districts" (Organic Districts)

What we may offer:

- i. Monitoring and sharing knowledge, actions and achievements from the European Green Deal and in particular related to organic agriculture
- ii. A specific follow up of the development in EU of Bio-districts (Organic Districts)

The above are just some examples of potential synergies in our concerted actions and as a contribution to transform Sri Lanka into a Green Socio-economy with Sustainable Solutions for Climate Changes.

Respectfully Yours,

Cesare Zanasi

Director Science and
Policy Development

Salvatore Basile

Co-President

Jostein Hertwig

Executive Director



2F, Chungbuk Organic Agriculture Institute, Imgeokjung-ro 108, Goesan County, Chungbuk Province, South Korea.
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His Excellency Hon. Gotabaya Rajapaksa
President of Sri Lanka
Presidential Secretariat
Galle Face, Colombo 1,
Sri Lanka

June 7th, 2021

Your Excellency,

On behalf of three hundred member organizations from 16 countries and territories in Asia, IFOAM Asia, deeply welcomes the recent and very opportune decision of your esteemed government to adopt more regenerative organic farming practices "to transform Sri Lanka into a Green Socio-Economy with Sustainable Solutions for Climate Changes".

As of December 2020, more than 110 countries in the world have come up with national strategies of achieving carbon neutrality by the year 2050 and transformations into more sustainable and organic agriculture are now taken into consideration as one of the pathways to achieving this goal and to deliver on the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

As an example, the "European Green Deal" was published in December 2019 as a roadmap to achieving zero carbon. It includes the "European Organic Action Plan" which aspires that 25% of agricultural land in Europe to be organic by the year 2030. It also calls for a reduction by 50% of both the use of chemical pesticides and the use of more hazardous pesticides by 2030.

There are any similar action plans in Asia where national governments are taking measures to achieve zero carbon. In Asia, the Japanese and South Korean governments have unveiled their strategies of decarbonization achievable within twenty years. The State of Sikkim became the first state in the world to become 100% organic and Bhutan is on its way to becoming fully organic.

IFOAM Asia as the leading regional organic organization in the continent has assisted many central and local governments in formulating organic policies and implementing action plans in the field. The recent launch of the Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) of the Philippines as part of its national organic regulations is such an example of working in long-term partnership with a central government; and through the Asian Local governments for Organic Agriculture (ALGOA), IFOAM Asia has worked closely with local governments to implement central government policies and to link up with the organic farmers and other stakeholders in the organic sector through capacity-building, technology assistance and building up of local markets.

In addition, IFOAM Asia has positioned **the role of our smallholder farmers** as vital in the transformation to regenerative organic agriculture as our smallholder farmers are the backbone of our society - as providers of the food we consume, as caretakers of our health and as the stewards of Mother Earth.

Our smallholder farmers are often the poorest of the poor, disadvantaged with little or no access to their own land. They also have limited access to public services such as education, health and other social benefits and uneven access to market opportunities. This becomes more severe within indigenous populations and other marginalized groups.



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Globally, 90% of farms worldwide are less than two hectares and more than 2 billion people depend on them for their livelihoods. There are some 500 million smallholder farms worldwide and these small farms produce about 80 per cent of the food consumed in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

This means that smallholder farmers can be part of the solution to global food security, helping to feed the world by improving productivity and crop diversity. But they cannot do it alone.

Your Excellency,

Nothing is important in this era of the COVID-19 than health and immunity of the people. The world has been united to protect the lives and health of humanity and the concept of "One Health" and "One Planet" has gained prominence. This can be seen in the increased sales of organic food in many countries, and it is local and organic food that has been the key in maintaining health, immunity, and nutritional balance of the people, and the sustainability of our world.

And that has been only possible due to our smallholder farmers. It is now time to recognize fully the role of the smallholder farmers

IFOAM Asia urges your esteemed government to recognize the multi-functional roles of our smallholder farmers and to implement policies and support measures to facilitate the transformations into regenerative organic agriculture.

As an experienced and leading organic organization in Asia, IFOAM Asia is aware of the challenges involved in the transitioning from chemical to a more sustainable and organic agriculture in a country level.

IFOAM Asia and its members, sub-organizations and sector groups pledge full support to the Presidential Taskforce "for the creation of a Green Socio-economy with Sustainable Solutions for Climate Change. We will always be on standby to provide assistance in regional and international networking, policy development capacity-building, technology supports, regional trainings, etc. to assist your esteemed government in achieving your goals in sustainability.

Respectfully Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Zhou Zejiang", written in a cursive style.

Zhou Zejiang,
President, IFOAM Asia



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His Excellency Hon. Gotabaya Rajapaksa
President of Sri Lanka
Presidential Secretariat
Galle Face, Colombo 1,
Sri Lanka

June 7th, 2021

Your Excellency,

We, the Young Organics-Global Network (YOGN), representing the global youth in organic agriculture, express our sincere respect and gratitude to your esteemed government in making such a momentous decision for the transition into organic agriculture.

We, together with the young people in Sri Lanka, heartily applaud your decision and pledge our full support in your endeavors.

We believe that we as the future generation are responsible to ensure a food secured future and for the preservation of the biodiversity and sustainability of Mother Earth. As such, the **role of the youth** must be recognized and valued by the decision-makers in our communities and governments.

We urge your esteemed government to **engage youth as equal partners, or at least, support their ability to lead**. This will lead to more ownership in the discussions within Sri Lanka for the transformation to organic agriculture. Actively involving young people and giving opportunities on programs impacting youth is more effective as opposed to others working on their behalf. This is also a shift away from working with young people as beneficiaries, to engaging youth as partners, and supporting them to be leaders in social and political discussions and processes.

We humbly call upon your esteemed government:

- to restore the pride of our organic farmers – our superheroes! - the artisans, doctors and stewards of our health and the planet. They are not just the producers of our food but the protectors of human health and our Mother Earth.



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- To include organic agriculture in the curricula of primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of education which will enhance understanding of organic farming and the need to eat healthier and nutritious food. As stated in the President's Gazette, we need to improve the education of young people in order to inculcate an environmental knowledge
- To attract the young people to organic farming through the provision of incentives such as free land, training opportunities, as also mentioned in the President's Gazette
- To create organic demonstration farms to train young farmers in organic farming practices to increase understanding of organic farming practices, innovations, etc. to enhance productivity
- To assist young farmers to gain more opportunities for market access

We, Young Organics Global Network, believe in the transformation of the current food systems into a system which is more sustainable and organic, which prioritizes the well-being of the ecosystems and the health of life on Earth. We also recognise agricultural practices that respect all forms of life based on the Principles of Organic Agriculture - as the truly sustainable solution to create a more sustainable and carbon-neutral future.

We, Young Organics Global Network, pledge full support of Sri Lanka transitioning into a more sustainable organic agriculture.

Yours Respectfully,

Julia Lernord

Co-Chairperson

Li Feng

Co-Chairperson



Support Letter from the President of ALGOA and Mayor of Goesan County,
Lee Cha Young

Support Letter to the Government of Sri Lanka into Transition from
Conventional Farming to Organic and Sustainable Farming

His Excellency Hon. Gotabaya Rajapaksa
President of Sri Lanka
Presidential Secretariat
Galle Face, Colombo 1,
Sri Lanka

June 7th, 2021

Your Excellency,

On behalf of the 250 local governments who are members of the Asian Local Governments for Organic Agriculture (ALGOA) in 18 countries in Asia and Central Asia, I would like to convey my most sincere congratulations on your decision to transition from chemical farming to sustainable and organic agriculture.

ALGOA (www.organicgovts.com) was launched in 2015 and is an alliance of local governments in partnership with the private sector and civil society groups, with the purpose of making the transitions into organic agriculture. Almost all ALGOA members have adopted legislation banning pesticides and implementing aggressive organic policies and action plans. Many have seen great successes in their organic policy implementations and due to the resilience of the organic farming systems and well-established local markets, have fared better than most in the COVID-19 pandemic.

Your Excellency,

I would like to share some amazing success stories when central and local governments make the decisions to adopt organic farming.

First is the incredible success story of Dumingag Municipality in Mindanao Island, Philippines which decided to adopt organic agriculture as its centrepiece and managed to bring down the rate of poverty from 96% to less than 30% in the space of 4 years and eliminated hunger.

Second, in the case of the Municipality of Kauswagan, Philippines, the "Arms to Farms" organic farming program turned rebels into exemplary organic farmers and brought much needed peace and prosperity to the war-torn and hunger-stricken municipality.

Third, in East Asia, pro-organic mayors worked with local organic farmers to provide organic vegetables and rice to school lunch programs. An initiative that was first started by New Taipei City, expanded to all schools in Taiwan to provide organic vegetables in school lunches and greatly increased organic vegetable production in the country. In Japan and South Korea, mayors linked up with organic rice farmers for the provision of organic rice to school lunches.

Fourth, an interesting program that was initiated by the South Korean government was the pilot "Pregnant and New Mothers' Organic Food Scheme" as part of the COVID-19 recovery package. The project started from 1st January 2020 and targeted 80,000 pregnant women and new mothers. The idea was to provide access to organic food from inception to birth and through all the school years.

The examples in the above are just but few of the success stories I have encountered when central and local governments undertake aggressive pro-organic policy implementations and specific action plans.

Your Excellency,

The decision of your esteemed government to transition into more sustainable and organic agriculture would have wide impacts on the lives of your people, the economy, on the environment and in the global organic sector.

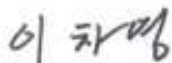
The decision has galvanized the global organic movements into action to support in every way your country's goal "to transform Sri Lanka into a Green Socio-Economy with Sustainable Solutions for Climate Changes". This will also make Sri Lanka one step closer in achieving its goals of carbon neutrality and delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals.

As I close, in all humility, I would like to extend an invitation to Your Excellency to grace the 7th ALGOA Summit to be held from Oct 12th to 16th, 2021, under the theme "Regenerating More Resilient, Sustainable Local Food Systems". This Summit will be held in conjunction with the Global Alliance of Organic Districts (GAOD) based in Italy.

Once again, ALGOA pledges its full support to Sri Lanka for transitioning into organic agriculture!

May I wish Your Excellency good health and happiness!

Yours Respectfully,



Mayor Lee Cha Young
President, ALGOA