

Global Alliance for Organic Districts (GAOD) as models and living laboratories  
for the process of transformation towards sustainable food systems



Asian Local Governments for Organic Agriculture

**GAOD Book Series**

**Book 1**

**Introductory Phase: Pathways to Cooperation**

Published in Conjunction with the  
the 6<sup>th</sup> ALGOA Summit on "Building Alliances Beyond Asia"  
& Inaugural GAOD Summit  
12<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> October 2020, Goesan County, South Korea

ISBN 978-88-944564-2-4



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The **GAOD Book Series** is published in November 2020 as part of the 1st GAOD Summit, successfully hosted under the generous financial support of Goesan County, South Korea. The Founding Partners of GAOD such as the Asian Local Governments for Organic Agriculture (ALGOA), International Network of Eco-Regions (IN.N.E.R.), Regeneration International, the Organic Food Systems Programme (OFSP), etc have worked together to make the 6th ALGOA Summit “Build Alliances Beyond Asia” and the Inaugural GAOD Summit, a successful and rewarding event, with the support and assist from their global partners.

The **GAOD Book Series** contains all the exchanges on the latest research, experiences, and best practices during the event. Five books are created to allow these valuable inputs during the Summit go beyond the 6th ALGOA Summit and the Inaugural GAOD Summit to benefit more people.



### The GAOD Book Series

**Book 1**    **Introductory Phase - Pathways for Cooperation**  
**Best Practices of ALGOA Members**

**Book 2**    **Covid-19 and Organic Agriculture**  
**Organic food consumption - a step forward for sustainability**

**Book 3**    **Work Group Reports**  
 - Organic Districts’ Integrated Management  
 - Communication  
 - Youth in Organic Agriculture

**Book 4**    **Work Group Reports**  
 - Tourism & Gastronomy  
 - Food Processing  
**Best Practices of Organic Food Systems**

**Book 5**    **Work Group Reports**  
 - Regenerative/Organic Farming  
 - Social Issues  
**Best Practices from the Five Continents**

**Global Alliance for Organic Districts (GAOD) as models and living laboratories for the process of transformation towards sustainable food systems**



### GAOD Book Series

#### Book 1

#### Introductory Phase: Pathways to Cooperation

## Table of Contents

### About Book 1

**Book 1** of the **GAOD Book Series** gives a short story on the development of the Asian Local Governments for Organic Agriculture (ALGOA) and the initiative to form a global alliance with international likeminded organizations such as the International Network of Eco-regions (IN.N.E.R.).

Book 1 reflects the ideas and solutions collected at the “**ALGOA+4 International Summit on Organic Agriculture Policy**” held in Goesan County\*, South Korea in 2019, the signing of a Memorandum of **Understanding** in Rome 6 February 2020, the meetings following this historic event.

The process of developing **the Global Alliance for Organic Districts (GAOD)** is an integrated part of the work of Organic Food System Programme as a Core initiative of **United Nations One Planet Network** as an example of a global food system.

GAOD has been launched with the participation of diverse stakeholders in the organic sector from all the major five continents on September 18th, 2020. It is supported by IFOAM-Organics International and its regional bodies, IFOAM-Organics Europe, and IFOAM-Organics Asia.

GAOD would like to express its heartfelt gratitude to Goesan County for its loyal support for the establishment of the Alliance and for the publication of all **Five Books** published in November 2020.

\* Goesan County is located in the middle of South Korea and is one of the birthplaces of organic farming in Asia. It is the current holder of the Presidency of ALGOA (Asian Local Governments for Organic Agriculture, [www.organicgovts.com](http://www.organicgovts.com)). It is also well-known for the 2015 “Organic 3.0 Goesan Declaration” of IFOAM-Organic International.

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## Special Presentation

### • Pathways to Cooperation

The Global Agricultural Heritage Systems” (GIAHS) and the Sustainable Development Goals

By Francisco Sarmento, ESP in FAO - Senior Rural Development Officer

### • Introduction



The world is not on track to achieve Zero Hunger by 2030 and the COVID-19 pandemic will make things worse, putting millions of people at risk of suffering acute hunger and malnutrition in the next years. More than ever, a profound change of the global food and agriculture system is needed at all levels. Territorial strategies to promote sustainable food systems and healthy diets are crucial to increase food resilience, livelihoods and access to healthier food to millions

of people.

To promote these strategies, it would be important to strengthen partnerships to develop and pilot appropriated territorial methodologies to promote sustainable territorial food systems. Increased cooperation between FAO and Bio-districts can be part of a broader effort to make it thus contributing to Zero Hunger, poverty reduction and the achievement of SDGs 1 and 2.

### • Territorial approaches to sustainable food systems

A number of lessons learnt with the implementation of territorial development approaches are abundant in FAO's work in different continents. FAO partners are also developing a number of “place based” development initiatives across the world. In some cases, territorial approaches were adopted by regional bodies and national governments and informed the implementation of development programs aiming to eradicate hunger and malnutrition.

However, there's still need to further develop and pilot an integrated and coherent methodology to make the necessary participatory diagnosis, promote local-national actions plans and adjusted policies and programs governed and monitored by lasting multi-stakeholder platforms.



Some regions and countries are moving into this direction. This is the case of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP). CPLP's Food and Nutrition Council approved in June 2018, a plan of activities which includes the promotion of sustainable territorial food systems with pilots involving possible GIAHS and Eco-regions territories.

FAO is supporting this process in São Tomé e Príncipe and Cape Verde through the Inclusive Rural Transformation and Gender Equity unit (ESP) and the Food and Nutrition Division (ESN).

### • GIAHS and Bio-districts

As defined by FAO in 2002, GIAHS are remarkable land use systems and landscapes “which are rich in globally significant biological diversity evolving from the co-adaptation of a community with its environment and its needs and aspirations for sustainable development”. The overall goal of the global initiative is to identify and safeguard Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems and their associated landscapes, agricultural biodiversity and knowledge systems. By other words, GIAHS sites can be a fundamental component in several sustainable territorial food systems.

A Bio-district is the result of an integrated territorial approach to territorial sustainable development based on the differentiated quality of its agro- food productions and related services, including tourism. The Bio-districts can be, therefore, an important mobilization and marketing strategy to GIAHS sites and their related food systems.

GIAHS sites and Bio-districts are expected to aim at development not only of agricultural production and resource management, but also of social and economic territorial aspects necessary to make traditional food systems to overcome the threats and challenges they are facing while developing appropriate mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation. Therefore, the identification of threats and challenges, including socio-economic pressures and environmental changes to the continuity of the existence, sustainability and viability of traditional food systems; the proposed policies, strategies and actions that will contribute to its dynamic conservation and how multi-stakeholders will be

empowered to develop appropriated marketing strategies for local products and services translated in to concrete multi-stakeholders action plans, can be better addressed through increased cooperation between both initiatives. The same applies for related territorial policies, governance, and monitoring platforms at territorial level.

- **Pathways for Cooperation**

Increased cooperation between FAO and Bio-districts can contribute for the systematization of lessons learnt involving different regions, countries, and territories. The development of pilot projects in mountain areas in Asia, for example, will allow knowledge exchanges with ongoing pilots in Africa, thus contributing for FAO's strategy for the promotion of sustainable territorial food systems. This will contribute to the eradication of poverty and hunger as specified in SDG 1 and SDG 2.

## Keynote Speech

***The Establishment of the Global Alliance of Organic Districts (GAOD) and Future Activities***  
***By Salvatore Basile, President of I.N.N.E.R. (International Network of Eco Regions)***

- **Introduction**



Movements urging governments to change decisively towards the ecological transition - often led by young people - are quickly spreading around the world. This happens in a global context of climate change, biodiversity loss and overexploitation of natural resources, with serious consequences for environment, society and health.

More and more rural communities have organized themselves to respond in a concrete and effective way to these requests, promoting alternative, sustainable food systems, such as those created in the organic districts (or eco-regions). These experiences have shown a capacity of facing the global challenges of the 21st century, starting from an integrated, multidimensional, participatory, inclusive and territorial approach.

Organic districts are based on the IFOAM principles of organic agriculture of health, ecology, fairness and care, facilitating interactions between all the actors (producers, public administrators, consumers, etc.). Each territory is unique, following its local nature, lifestyle, human relations and food culture. They are concrete examples of how "Organic 3.0" can be realized in practice.

However, it is necessary to put together and coordinate all the experiences already developed, in order to involve other governments, other organizations, other territories, to build together an example of a global sustainable organic food system. This is the main goal of GAOD.

- **The establishment of the Global Alliance of Organic Districts (GAOD)**

Many organic organizations, international agencies, governments -coming from all continents - met at the "ALGOA + 4 International Summit on Organic Farming Policy" held last year in Goesan County, in South Korea.

Following all the works, I had the opportunity to compare the experiences of the organic districts (eco-regions), developed for the first time in Cilento – Italy, with territorial organic initiatives carried out in other countries and continents. There were many aspects in common and it was “natural” to talk about common strategies and building new alliances.

A first important attempt to create a link between these experiences has already been started by one of the main actors of the Summit: the OFSP - Organic Food System Program, the United Nations Core initiative with the main aim to use the Organic food systems as models and living laboratories for transformation processes, towards sustainable food systems. Jostein Hertwig, one of the OFSP coordinators, will also become a leading part of the GAOD coordination team. So, there will be closer cooperation on certain points.

At the end of the Summit 2019 in Goesan County, the proposal to create a common platform between all the initiatives was launched.

In the following months an intensive work has done to put the agreement into practice and on Feb 6th, 2020, at the Italian Ministry of Agriculture in Rome, ALGOA signed a first Memorandum of Understanding with the International Network of Eco-Regions (IN.N.E.R.), supported by IFOAM-Organics International, IFOAM Asia, IFOAM EU, the Baltic Foundation of Lithuania and the Organic Food System Program, for future cooperation.



(Photo Credit: Goesan County / Feb 6th, 2020 - Rome, Italy, Ministry of Agriculture: MOU signing ceremony)

Following the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic, world public opinion was reminded how the world is interconnected and how environmental and health issues required a global ecological transition to be adequately addressed.

The organic districts, with their complex, multisectoral and international approach, are gaining an increasing importance as concrete experiences able to tackle these challenges and give answers to the new demands coming from the civil society and governments.

Many on-line conferences were held to discuss strategic issues (e.g. organic and regenerative agriculture, soil fertility, carbon reduction, ecological economy, organic procurement by public administration, food quality and health and sustainable diets, Tool kit and Monitoring tool developed by IN.N.E.R. for the creation and the management of the organic districts); steps were also taken to expand the Alliance.

On April 15th, the signers of the MoU in Rome invited other organizations such as Regeneration International and League of Organic Municipalities, Cities and Provinces of the Philippines (LOAMCP-PH). Further to these events, the Global Alliance of Organic Districts (GAOD) was born!

#### • Future activities

GAOD intends to develop and strengthen a coherent strategic framework for the development of the organic districts.



(Photo Credit: Goesan County / Feb 6th, 2020 - Rome, Italy, Ministry of Agriculture: MOU signing ceremony)

These strategies will be devoted to:

- improve the quality of life of the citizens, especially the ones resident in rural areas;
- increase the employment opportunities and the quality of jobs, especially for young people and women;
- increase the power of attraction of rural areas, boosting the connections between strategies of sustainable development of the rural and urban areas;
- fight climate change, biodiversity loss and its impacts, starting from the development of good local practices, and to be globally interconnected;
- promote and improve transnational cooperation.

The GAOD aim will be to become the “global space of change” for the exchange of knowledge, ideas, resources, projects between peoples of all continents, who have decided to act for an ecological worldview, with a clear and shared vision. GAOD is open and accessible to all, with equal rights.

To this end, GAOD has worked from the beginning to widen the Alliance as much as possible and has organized in working groups, which have the task of providing good practices and supporting local activities with clear guidelines.

The results of the meetings of the seven working groups, which will take place during this Summit, will also be of great importance.

Let's work together, with positive energy, for One Planet and One Health!

#### • Sources

Web site of the International Network of Eco Regions, <https://www.ecoregion.info/>

Basile S., Nicoletti D., Paladino A., Adesso R., Lužnik J., Davidović D., Vovk Korže A., Cohen S., Capitaine C., Vareille G., Boutroux, Dietrich P., Freyer B., Dias I., Rodrigo S. I. What are local and sustainable food systems (LSFSS), EducLocalFood Project, Rambouillet, France, 2019

<https://www.educlocalfood.eu/medias/files/comparative-analysis-about-lsfs.pdf>

Contact: [presidente@ecoregions.eu](mailto:presidente@ecoregions.eu)

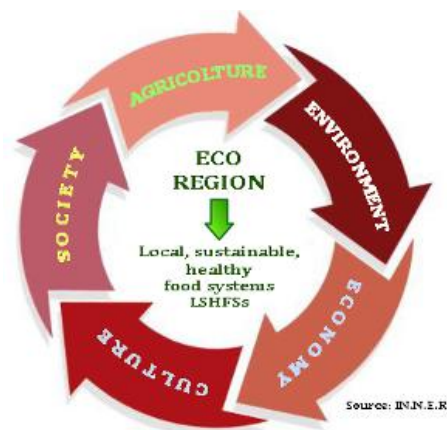
## The Eco-Regions

**By Salvatore BASILE, President of IN.N.E.R. – International Network of Eco Regions, Co-President GAOD**

The Eco-Regions are innovative territories where farmers, citizens, public authorities and other local actors realize a formal agreement aimed at the sustainable management of local resources, based on the principles of organic farming and agroecology, in order to boost the economic and socio-cultural development of their territory.

The Eco-Region, with all the local actors involved, acts on the territory adopting a bottom-up development model where the local communities decide to shift towards a real local, sustainable and healthy food system.

The 5 components of an Eco-Region (agriculture, environment, economy, culture, society) are interrelated in a complex system, producing the innovative outcome of a virtuous circle, where the 5 dimensions lead toward a local, sustainable and healthy food system.



Source: IN.N.E.R.

IN.N.E.R., the International Network of Eco-Regions, was established in 2014 in Italy, where the Cilento Eco-Region model was implemented in 2004; from then on, they grew in number and spread worldwide. The Eco-Regions are characterized by the implementation of concrete activities, carried out by private and public Institutions, rural and touristic operators. It has, as a matter of fact, created an effective permanent laboratory with high cultural profile initiatives, aiming at an ethical and socially-oriented development of a territory, based on the organic agriculture model.

Each Eco-Region is marked by a peculiar lifestyle, nutrition, human relations and natural environment. These transfer into agricultural products which are very diversified, hence more appreciated by the market. Food in these areas are influenced by the cultural heritage showing a local identity mark: local economic and social actors become more responsible in the management of natural and environmental resources, which are common to several sectors (agriculture, tourism, commerce, etc.). This awareness has made the mobilization and the protection of local resources easier, most of all those related to agricultural systems and to agri-food industry.



An integrated approach to sustainable development is adopted by the Eco-Regions. The different actors involved share the same purposes: the improvement of the quality of life, the employment of local population and the reduction of population's decrease in rural areas, the increase in the employment of young people and women, and of the quality of agri-food productions and of local livestock premises.

Also the Eco-Regions aim at ensuring the consumers safety, traceable and healthy food, the increasing and seasonal regulation of tourist flows, through multiple eco-tourism and local culture related initiatives, the protection of biodiversity, the enhancement of the landscape and of natural resources.

The Eco-Regions are therefore a concrete answer to the present trend in the economic development, causing massive phenomenon of abandonment of rural areas and the increasing urbanization of people in search of better condition of life and higher incomes. The process affects both the most industrialized countries and the developing countries, causing the degradation and the progressive impoverishment of the local resources, the loss of biodiversity and of the local cultures' traditional knowledge.

The practices of Eco-Regions are characterized by the multifunctional farm and other agri-food businesses. These involve a set of activities increasing the Eco-Regions' social as well as economic value added: renewable energy production (solar and bio-mass), teaching-farms, agri-schools for children, leisure activities as gardening, cooking courses in the countryside, social agriculture for disabled people, former convicted and drug addicts, direct and farmer markets, the maintenance of parks, gardens and the landscape preservation.

The multifunctional agriculture demonstrates that agri-farmers, in addition to ensure food production, increasingly important in the future, patrol and protect the territory, the biodiversity, the hydro geological balance, the landscape, natural resources, first of all water and land, local culture and traditions. It is an overall approach to the farm management involving the agri-food production, adopting a combination of best environmental practices, the increase of biodiversity, the preservation of natural resources and the application of high-level animal welfare standards. These and other production methods also meet the increasing consumers' preferences for natural and local food.

The development processes in the Eco-Regions' territories focus therefore on these specific features, latent factors of development and topics of great significance, also linked to the considerable potential of the hidden resources existing in these areas.

In this way it is possible to make our territories enjoyable and attractive, improving the local agri-food productions and other sectors of the local economy, supporting more sustainable transports, the use of renewable energies, enhancing the local culture and know-how; the resources obtained can be invested in education at all levels, health services of good quality for all, the support to circulating information, giving everybody access to the new Information and Communication Technologies and, most of all, promoting a long lasting and pro-active dialogue between institutions, associations and private sector.



This last issue is perhaps the most significant: agriculture and food production made through a social dialogue, direct commercialization, by giving concrete answers to responsive consumers, can create growth and new employment, at the same time enriching the community. This practice of economy of development puts together sustainability, ethic labor and social cohesion.

At present more than 40 Eco-Regions are operating in Italy. Other countries where the Eco-Regions have been implemented are Portugal, France, Austria, Switzerland, Spain. In other countries the constitution process has just started. In 2019, following the agreement signed between IN.N.E.R., ACTUAR (Associação para a Cooperação e o Desenvolvimento) and FAO, on the occasion of the first World Congress of Eco-Regions held in Idanha in Nova (PT), projects to establish new eco-regions were launched in Portuguese-speaking countries: Brazil, Cape Verde, Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe.



IN.N.E.R. has started in 2020 a close collaboration with ALGOA, the League of Organic Agriculture Municipalities, Cities and Provinces of the Philippines (LOAMCP-PH), Regeneration International, IFOAM Organics International, IFOAM Asia, IFOAM EU Group, Baltic Foundation and OFSP - Organic Food System Programme. The intention is to subsequently extend cooperation from Asia and Europe to Africa, the Americas, Oceania and the Pacific Islands.

On 2020, April 15th the Global Alliance of Organic Districts (GAOD) was born and on October was held in Goesan, South Korea, the Inaugural GAOD Inaugural Summit together the 6th ALGOA Summit “Building Alliances beyond Asia”, followed on-line by more than 400 registrants in 46 countries and areas from all over the world and more than 1,000 viewers saw Facebook as well as YouTube live broadcast.

The future objective will be to coordinate and enhance the thousands already existing organic territories in 5 continents and promote the creation of new Organic-Districts, capable of contributing to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals and the global ecological transition.

• Map of Members and Partner of the Global Alliances of the Organic Districts (GAOD)



THE FULL MAP IS AVAILABLE ON THE WEBSITE  
WWW.GAOD.ONLINE

- 1 ALGOA - GAOD ASIA SECRETARIAT - IFOAM ASIA
- 2 LOAMCP-PH
- 3 IN.N.E.R. - INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF ECO-REGIONS
- 4 REGENERATION INTERNATIONAL

----- BEST PRACTICES -----

GAOD SUPPORTERS

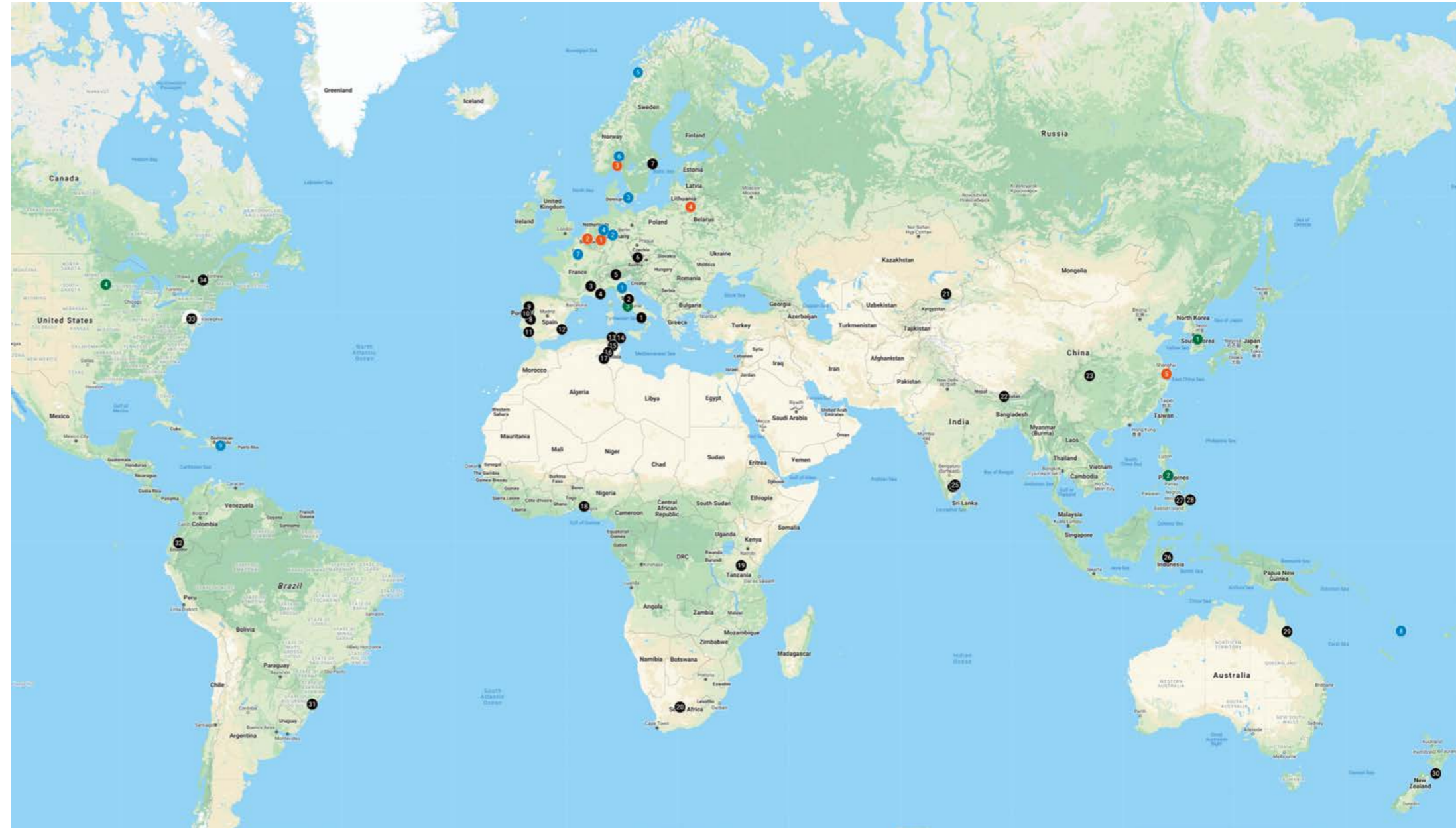
- 1 IFOAM Organics International
- 2 IFOAM Organics Europe
- 3 Organic Food System Program
- 4 Baltic Foundation
- 5 IFOAM ASIA - China Office

- 1 Organic District Cilento
- 2 Organic District DIBIUM
- 3 Organic District BioVallée
- 4 Mouans-Sartoux
- 5 Valposchiavo
- 6 Mühlviertel
- 7 Södertälje
- 18 Lagos Metropolitan Area
- 19 Manyara Organic Farming Initiative (MOFI)
- 20 RegenAG SA
- 21 ODAK Alliance
- 22 Sikkim Bio
- 23 Xichong County
- 24 Inba Seva Sangam (ISS)

SCIENTIFIC SUPPORT

- 1 Bologna University
- 2 Kassel University
- 3 Copenhagen University
- 4 Münster University
- 5 Nord University
- 6 Nordic Bio Group AS
- 7 CRESS Sorbonne University
- 8 Pacific Community
- 9 UNEV

- 8 Bio-Região Idanha-A-Nova
- 9 Bio-Região Alto Tâmega
- 10 Bio-Região São Pedro do Sul
- 11 Bio Região da Margem Esquerda do Guadiana
- 12 Eco-Distrit Vinalopó Mitjã i Alt
- 13 Bio-territoire Bizete - Sejnène
- 14 Bio-territoire Nabel - Haouaria
- 15 Bio-territoire Siliana - Kesra
- 16 Bio-territoire Kasserine - Majel Bel Abbas
- 17 Bio-territoire Tozeur - Hazoua
- 25 Local Learning Center THE NILGIRIS
- 26 Indonesia-1000 Organic Villages Program
- 27 Kauswagan
- 28 Bislig
- 29 RegenAG - Australia
- 30 Wellington Region
- 31 "Ecovida Agroecology"-network in Vale do Cai
- 32 Quito Municipality
- 33 Chester County
- 34 Regeneration Canada



## Organization of Global Alliance for Organic Districts (GAOD)

*By Cesare Zanasi*

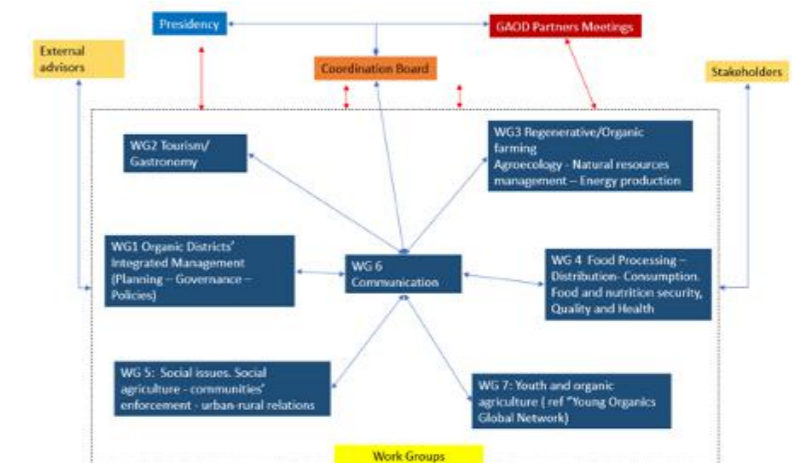
Department of Agricultural and Food Sciences - DISTAL, University of Bologna, Bologna, Italy and the International Network of Eco-Regions (IN.N.ER)

GAOD involves activities supporting the sustainable environmental, social and economic development of Organic Districts at a global level. Different interrelated topics are involved, as well as various areas of activity related to knowledge production, dissemination, and implementation. A range of very different skills are therefore required to support the Organic Districts development. A large number of people with sometimes very different backgrounds should therefore be involved in GAOD.

The management of GAOD activities can be effectively supported by setting up different Work Groups (WGs) reflecting the topics involved in Organic Districts management (see Scheme 1).

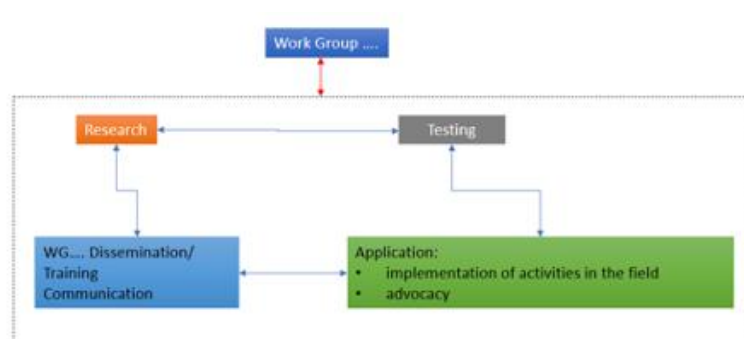
- **Scheme 1 GAOD Organization**

Within each Work Group the participants will develop initiatives focused on different stages of knowledge production, dissemination and application (see scheme 2). Representatives are nominated for each WG. Each Work Group shall report on their activities in the GAOD Partner Meetings and,



if need be, contact the Coordination Board. The Presidency will provide its support by representing GAOD in relevant public events and contributing to GAOD strategic development thanks to the high-profile network of relations and the prestige of the members of GAOD Presidency.

- **Scheme 2 GAOD stages of Knowledge production, dissemination, and activities' application**



Given the systemic nature of the Organic Districts the different activities discussed and developed within each Work Group could benefit from the contribution of other work groups; this will avoid overlapping activities and possibly create synergies.

The flow of information within the GAOD workgroups, the communication of GAOD initiatives to other Organic Districts and other private and public stakeholders, will be managed by the Work Group Communication. This will support the knowledge sharing among Organic Districts and in general strengthen the contribution of GAOD to the global organic food system development.

Occasionally GAOD could need a specific support from specialized advisors in relation to the different topics and activities. For this reason, an Advisory Board will be implemented (see Scheme 1).

Periodically, GAOD Partner Meetings are held where the results of the activity and proposals for future strategies will be presented and discussed.

GAOD is a flexible organization and its strategies, organizational structure and governance, can be adjusted to adapt to possible changes in the global context as well as in response to an assessment of the GAOD performances. E.g. changes in the main focus of GAOD activities reflecting in the Work Groups number and topics.

## Global Alliance for Organic Districts – Work Groups General Description

*By Cesare Zanasi*

Setting up different Work Groups (WGs) reflecting the topics involved in Organic Districts management is GAOD's core organizational measure to facilitate and support concrete actions.

Each WG involves participants from the GAOD Partner Meetings. It is also recommended that, when possible, similar WGs are established at the level of each Organic District for local involvement and actions. Hence the organization structure includes two levels: GAOD General Work Groups and GAOD Local Work Groups.

- **Seven Work Groups (WGs) have been defined.**

Within each Work Group the participants will develop initiatives focused on different stages of knowledge production, dissemination, and application.

Information will be available for each WG members and will be collected and organized by the WG communication.

The GAOD coordination group will discuss with the WG representatives' possible joint actions to reinforce each WG initiative and avoid overlapping actions.

- **WG 1: Organic Districts' Integrated Management, Planning, Governance and Policies**

Objectives of the Work Group: Support the Organic Districts in all the start-up, management and organization related activities involving the integration of the different dimensions of the Organic District (technical, environmental, social, and economic). Focus areas are Organic Districts vision, organization structure, planning strategies, performance monitoring, private and public policies.

- **WG 2: Tourism – Gastronomy**

Objectives of the Work Group: Support the Organic Districts in the development of activities related to the start-up, management, and organization of activities of promotion of the territory in terms of its natural, historical, and cultural heritage, including gastronomy. An efficient integration of tourism and gastronomy within the Organic Districts provides a much-needed support to valorize the multifunctional dimension of the farming activity and its integration with different actors of the community (touristic agencies, cultural associations, restaurant owners). This can provide an important contribution to the overall Organic Districts sustainable development, provide a better understanding and value of the work, quality, and lifestyle in rural areas, and inspire the re-population of these areas.

- **WG 3: Regenerative/Organic farming - Agroecology - Natural resources management and Energy production**

Objectives of the Work Group: Support the Organic Districts in the development of activities related to the start-up, management and organization of different sustainable production models where the Regenerative/Organic farming – Agroecology go hand in hand with the strictly related Natural resources management and Energy production. This will provide a strong support for the Organic Districts in the sustainable supply of food, fiber and ecosystem services which represent the core of the activities.

- **WG 4: Food: Processing – Distribution- Consumption. Food and nutrition security quality and health**

Objectives of the Work Group: Support the Organic Districts in the development of activities related to the start-up, management and organization of activities supporting the different stages following the farming activity. The differentiation of the Organic District economic system, by adding sustainable and locally based Food Processing – Distribution- Consumption activities will contribute to the territorial economic development; the support to a sustainable model of agriculture and food production, provided by this WG, will also involve social and environmental benefits in terms of food quality and

health for the communities and other external actors such as tourists, consumers, etc., outside the Organic District.

- **WG 5: Social issues. Social agriculture - communities' enforcement - urban-rural relations**

Objectives of the Work Group: Support the Organic Districts in the development of activities related to the start-up, management and organization of activities related to the improvement of the social conditions of the Eco-region Communities. This involves the strengthening of the community bonds, the creation of a virtuous cycle linking the urban and rural areas where the Eco-Region insist. By facilitating exchanges of ideas, experiences and simply increasing the level of mutual knowledge among people living in urban and rural areas, a mutual benefit for the communities will be provided. Integrating socially fragile and marginalized people within inclusive Eco-Region communities is also another area of intervention this WG will consider in its activities.

Generally, Organic Districts are in rural areas and their main activities are related to agriculture. They supply the local population but also to the population living in cities. Seen in the perspective of the need for an integrated food system approach for healthy and environmentally friendly dietary patterns, this opens up for developing new rural-urban linkages to provide more and better jobs for youth in agriculture and food systems and in general, a potential for the revitalization of rural areas.

- **WG 6: Communication**

Objectives of the Work Group: Collect, organize and distribute all the relevant information related to the Organic Districts activity with the aim of promoting their development in relation to the relevant stakeholders (public, private and civil society organizations) including the general public.

Another relevant aspect related to this WG is the communication among the members of Organic Districts not only supporting the management but increasing the awareness and pride of being part of an Organic Districts. This plays an important role in increasing trust, collaboration, and commitment within and Between the Organic Districts communities. The WG communication plays a strategic role for the GAOD success.

- **WG 7: Youth and organic agriculture (ref “Young Organics Global Network)**

Objectives of the Work Group: valorize the role of Young members as carriers of innovative ideas ensuring a sustainable and food-secure future. Provides GAOD updated info on new trends and available innovations.

## Formal Documents of GAOD



### MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (April 2020 Updated Version)

This **Memorandum of Understanding** between 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 EU, Baltic Foundation of Lithuania and Organic Food System Programme (collectively referred to as the Parties) has been signed at the place and date specified below.

**The Asian Local Governments for Organic Agriculture (ALGOA)** is an integrated body of IFOAM Asia (a regional body of IFOAM-Organics International) and was established on the 19th of September 2015, in the Republic of Korea, to promote a model of public and private partnership and a model of bottom up approach of policy planning from local to national policy development for the promotion of organic agriculture.

**ALGOA** consists of an Annual ALGOA Summit of local government leaders and the ALGOA Organic Foundation Course (OFC), participated by government officials from more than 14 countries in Asia. The purpose for the establishment of ALGOA is to facilitate the full adoption of organic agriculture in Asia. Examples of its activities are: Policy Support, Information Exchange, Mutual Exchanges, Capacity-Building and the meeting of the local government representatives at the annual ALGOA Summit. In 2019, the annual ALGOA Summit became global through the “ALGOA+4 International Summit on Organic Agriculture Policy” and aims to cooperate with other similar groups and like-minded organizations outside Asia to further enhance the growth of organic agriculture in the world.

Since its establishment in 2015, the ALGOA Presidency has been held by **Goesan County**, an organic county in the Republic of Korea. It is one of the birthplaces of organic farming and has become an organic hub in Asia with the hosting of the 2015 International Organic Expo and the “Organic 3.0 International Conference.”

**The International Network of Eco Regions “IN.N.E.R.”** was officially established as International Association on the 14th of December 2014 in Italy, where the Cilento eco-region model was implemented in 2004 and successively disseminated worldwide. At present about 40 bio-districts/eco-regions are operating in Italy. Other countries where the eco-regions have been implemented are: Portugal, France, Austria, Switzerland, Spain. An interest for establishing Eco-Regions has been shown also from North Africa and Portuguese Speaking Countries (CPLP) such as Brazil, Angola, Mozambique, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Sao Tome and Principe and Equatorial Guinea. Eco-Regions acts based on the principles of organic agriculture of health, ecology, fairness and care and are applying a food system approach facilitating interactions between all actors. Each Eco-Region is unique following nature, lifestyle, human relations and food culture.

**Regeneration International (RI)** was formed in 2015 with the mission to promote, facilitate and accelerate the global transition to regenerative food, farming and land management for the purpose of restoring climate stability, ending world hunger and rebuilding deteriorated social, ecological and economic systems.

Our vision is a healthy global ecosystem in which practitioners of regenerative agriculture and land use, in concert with consumers, educators, business leaders and policymakers, cool the planet, feed the world and restore public health, prosperity and peace on a global scale.

We work with multiple stakeholders in key regions of the world who are committed to building alternative food and farming systems on a regional or national level. We are a global network of 284 partner groups on every arable continent.

We are currently assisting in the building of numerous Regeneration Alliances, including those in Southern Africa, India, Myanmar, Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, Canada, regional U.S.A. Chile, Brazil, Australia and New Zealand.

### **The League of Organic Agriculture Municipalities, Cities and Provinces of the Philippines**

**(LOAMCP-PH)** is the only national organization of the Local Chief Executives (LCEs) or Mayors and Governors in the Philippines and was established in 2012 as an outcome of the 2012 Gold One World Award (OWA) of Dumingag municipality in Zamboanga del Sur and intensively replicated in family farms, municipalities and cities territories all over the Philippines after the 2016 Bogota, Columbia Gold Peace Prize of UCLG (United Cities and Local Governments) awarded to the previously in heavy conflict and war torn municipality of Kauswagan with entry of “From Arms to Farms” anchored in municipal-wide local policy framework of programs in sustainable organic agriculture.

The principal aims of LOAMCP-PH is to liberate the family farms and citizens from poverty, hunger (food secured with high nutrition) and sickness anchored on the best examples of local self-organized initiatives and innovations of functional participatory governance and development processes in Family Farms Climate-resilient Investment Master Plans and thereafter upscaled to legal policy framework in Municipal/City/Provincial-wide Climate-resilient Investment Master Plans covering at least 1,200,000 hectares into organic conversion by 2022 through Inner Conditioning and mobilization of its societal three folds of government, business and cultural organizations at the context of Organic 3.0 as societal transformations mindset to sustainable organic food and consumption and healthy lifestyle development agenda.

Globally, LOAMCP-PH aims to significantly contribute to the achievement of interdependent SDGs 2030 specifically in Goal 1, Goal 2 and Goal 17. In the Philippines’ context, LOAMCP-PH on the ground initiatives are parallel implementation of the Philippine’s Republic Act 10068 or Organic Agriculture Law of 2010.

#### • INTRODUCTION

Sustainable food production and consumption are key to increasing both human and ecological capacities to cope with major challenges such as health, food and nutrition security, climate change and loss of biodiversity. The transformation of global food and farming systems is also key towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to this end, building effective partnerships and scaling up examples of practical solutions is highly

important.

Climate Change is one of the greatest existential threats to all communities on this planet, especially small holder farmers who are the vast majority of the world’s farmers and produce the overwhelming majority of food that is eaten by people. Agricultural systems that regenerate soil organic matter by drawing down carbon dioxide via photosynthesis are more resilient to weather extremes caused by climate change. These systems can also make a considerable contribution to reversing climate change by drawing carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere.

ALGOA, IN.N.E.R. , RI and LOAMCP-PH have established working models and living laboratories for transformation processes towards sustainable food and farming systems based on actions from local and sub national governments.

Many of the municipalities and regions of ALGOA, IN.N.E.R., RI and LOAMCP-PH are in rural areas and main activities are related to agriculture. As such, they produce food from the land with the supply also to the population living in cities and represent a cultural heritage with nature and landscape in living vital ecosystems. Seen in the perspective of the need for an integrated food system approach for healthy and environmental friendly dietary patterns, this opens up for developing new rural-urban linkages to provide more and better jobs for youth in agriculture and food systems and in general, a potential for the revitalization of rural areas.

Reference is also made to the Memorandum of Understanding signed 6 February 2020 in Rome between Asian Local Governments for Organic Agriculture (ALGOA) and International Network of Eco-Regions (IN.N.E.R.) with the participation and support of IFOAM–Organics International, IFOAM Asia, IFOAM EU, Baltic Foundation of Lithuania and Organic Food System Programme has been signed by the aforesaid Parties at the place and date specified below.

Furthermore, with the cooperation initiated we will also be working to support key initiatives at national and pan national level such as the European Green Deal and the Green New Deal in the US and in particular their focus to combat climate change and biodiversity losses and to build a new economic system that is more environmental friendly, supporting health and social fairness globally.

## OBJECTIVES OF THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

### The main objectives of this MoU are:

- I. To facilitate the sharing of the experience from processes, examples and knowledge from the Parties
- and
- II. To invite other local governments of the World (Africa, Americas, and countries in Oceania and the PICT - Pacific Islander Countries and Territories) into the cooperation network and to form an example of a dynamic global organic food system.

### Examples of issues to be dealt with are:

- i. Partnerships, resources available, institutions and working groups
- ii. Youth engagement including Out of School Youth, training and employment in organic agriculture and food systems
- iii. Practical achievements for organic farming, agroecology and regenerative agriculture in food and farming systems
- iv. Policies and policy – making processes including needed structural economic, cultural, social and spatial transformations
- v. Innovation, new technologies and common research framework
- vi. Preparing for a “new deal” between rural and urban (cities) areas
- vii. Prepare a declaration to be presented during the next Organic World Congress in Rennes, France inviting other local governments of the world (Africa, Americas, and countries in Oceania and the PICT (Pacific Islander Countries and Territories) in the cooperation
- viii. Expansion of cooperation to other similar groups, like-minded groups and civil society organizations

- ix. Advocating the cooperation work in the international fora, UN agencies, and on regional and national levels

## WORKING GROUP

The Parties to this MoU agree to establish a working group for the fulfillment of the objectives and each of the Parties is encouraged to nominate a representative to this working group for the implementation of the objectives and activities of this MoU.



(Photo Credit: Goesan County)



## Introduction to the Main Partners and Supporters of GAOD

### • Asian Local Governments for Organic Agriculture (ALGOA)



Established on 19 Sept 2015 by IFOAM Asia, ALGOA works with more than two hundred local governments all over Asia to promote the expansion of Organic Agriculture. Under the full sponsorship of Goesan County, South Korea since 2016, the annual ALGOA events have become one of the largest organic events – the largest gathering of the organic movements and local governments with a common objective.

The **ALGOA Summit** is an annual gathering of local governments, IFOAM Asia members and other stakeholders in the region to exchange best practice and to discuss ways to enhance government action, support, and policy to foster growth in the organic sector. The ALGOA Summit has grown tremendously over the years, with the 5th ALGOA+4 Summit in 2018 going global, bringing in more than 100 foreign delegates from around the world.

Currently, ALGOA has over 220 members in 16 countries in Asia and Central Asia. Annual events include the Organic Foundation Course (OFC) for local government officers and organic stakeholders as well as the ALGOA Summit which bring together local government leaders and organic stakeholders to discuss and share best practices and find common solutions for the progress of the organic sector.



Photo Credit: Goesan County /5th ALGOA+4 Summit, with more than 100 delegates from all over the world

### • International Network of Eco-regions (INNER)



IN.N.E.R. is the International Umbrella Organisation of the Bio-Districts/Eco-Regions: Territories naturally devoted to organic, where farmers, citizens, public authorities, realize an agreement aimed at the sustainable management of local resources, based on the principles of organic farming and agro-ecology. IN.N.E.R. gives assistance to stakeholders or organic and agro-ecology sector and provides services to build shared strategy of Bio-districts development; it offers training, research and documentation services. Bio-districts are promoted and sustained in their territorial governance processes, thanks to European partnerships and international cooperation projects.

### • Regeneration International (RI)



In June 2015, about 60 people from 21 nations, representing businesses, the farming and scientific communities, educational institutions, policymakers and NGOs, convened in Costa Rica to draw up a blueprint for an international movement united around a common goal: to reverse global warming and end world hunger by facilitating and accelerating the global transition to regenerative agriculture and land management.

In January 2017, Regeneration International (RI) achieved 501(c)(3) nonprofit status. Today, RI engages with a network of more than 250 international partners and a growing number of Regeneration Alliances throughout the world, including in the U.S., South Africa, India, Canada, Belize, Mexico and Guatemala.

### • League of Organic Municipalities, Cities & Provinces in the Philippines (LOAMCP-PH)



LOAMCP-Ph is an alliance of 168 mayors and governors in the Philippines with the aim to accelerate the implementation and promotion of sustainable organic agriculture in the Philippines. LOAMCP-Ph recognizes that the local government units, through the implementation of local policies is one of the fastest ways to spread organic agriculture in the country. What makes this organization unique from other organic organizations is that membership is limited to mayors and governors only. These local leaders spearhead the implementation of policies in their communities. They, with the assistance of the rest of local government units see to it that their communities strictly adhere to the principles of organic agriculture. Implementation varies from municipality to municipality, with some mayors completely banning the use of synthetic chemicals in their domain.

- **IFOAM-Organics International**



Based in Bonn, Germany, IFOAM Organics International has been leading, uniting and assisting the Global Organic Movement since 1972. It has occupied an unchallenged position as the only international umbrella organization of the organic world, i.e. all stakeholders contributing to the organic vision. This allows IFOAM to unite, lead and assist the organic movement - all IFOAM Affiliates - in its full diversity, while providing a common voice on relevant organic issues. IFOAM implements the will of its broad-based constituency, with Affiliates in more than 100 countries and is governed by a World Board originating from all continents. The IFOAM Action Network comprises self-organized IFOAM regional and sector groups and daughter organizations.

- **IFOAM Asia**



IFOAM Asia is one of the regional bodies of IFOAM Organics International which consists of more than 270 members in 22 countries. IFOAM Asia aims to improve the life and conditions of its members while restoring nature's balance and working with different stakeholders by organizing different events and projects in Asia including ALGOA, the Organic Youth Forum, and Organic Asia Congress. IFOAM Asia aims to develop and promote regional and domestic organic markets as well as increase consumer awareness of organic food and its benefits. IFOAM Asia also recognizes the need for scientific research, education, and development in relation to organic production, processing, and marketing to benefit organic farmers/producers in Asia and networking for different stakeholders.

- **IFOAM Organics Europe**



IFOAM Organics Europe is the European umbrella organization for organic food and farming and advocates for the adoption of ecologically, socially, and economically sound systems based on the four principles of organic agriculture – health, ecology, fairness, and care.

With more than 200 member organizations, the work of IFOAM Organics Europe spans the entire organic food chain and beyond, from farmers and processors, retailers, certifiers, consultants, traders and researchers to environmental and consumer advocacy bodies.

- **Organic Food System Programme (OFSP)**



The OFSP aims to further the development of the organic food system as a pilot model and living laboratory for sustainable food systems. We use the organic food system as a model to understand drivers of sustainable food consumption and to link this to real-world examples of sustainable production and consumption. It is important to understand that the OFSP will use the organic food system as a kind of window for exploration but not as the exclusive solution. There are many commonalities between healthy and sustainable diets; organic agriculture is not necessarily a component of achieving either of these goals, but can contribute to enhancing both and may act as a model to bridge human and planet sustainability.

- **Baltic Charity Foundation**



Since 2005, the Baltic Charity Foundation provides services to the rural population, which is necessary for the versatile support and assistance, starting with the presentation of information and consultation, as well as material aid in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

The Baltic Foundation has many years of experience in working with the rural population, constantly improving its services, it seeks innovative means by which rural community members are being motivated and encouraged to develop and improve themselves and the surrounding environment, be socially responsible and participate in community life. Organic farming is an integral part of all the Foundation's activities, be it large-scale transnational projects or local community training.

## Manifesto of the Global Alliance of Organic Districts (GAOD)

### • FOUNDING PARTIES



The founding parties of the Global Alliance for Organic Districts (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 FUTURE WE WANT AND THE NEED FOR ACTION NOW!

Sustainable food production and consumption are the keys to increasing both human and ecological capacities to cope with major challenges such as health, food and nutrition security, climate change and loss of biodiversity. The transformation of global food and farming systems is also crucial achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to this end, building effective partnerships and scaling up examples of practical solutions is highly important.

Climate Change is one of the greatest existential threats to all communities on this planet. Agricultural systems that regenerate soil organic matter by drawing down carbon dioxide via photosynthesis are more resilient to weather extremes caused by climate change. These systems can also make a considerable contribution to reversing climate change by drawing carbon dioxide out of the atmosphere and store it in the soil.

The founding parties have established working models and living laboratories for transformation processes towards sustainable food and farming systems based on actions from local and sub national governments and integrating public and private institutions, civil society, farmers, small and medium enterprises.

With the cooperation established and reaching out to all continents we will also be working to support initiatives at national and pan national level and in particular their focus to combat climate change and biodiversity losses and to build a new economic system that is more environmental friendly, supporting health and social fairness globally.

More than ever, amidst the current Coronavirus situation, the Global Alliance for Organic Districts together with other likeminded organizations must lead the way making definite impact in the local, national and global levels – and action is needed NOW!

### • VISION

The vision of the Global Alliance for Organic Districts (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.

## GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR ORGANIC DISTRICTS



Supported by:



## Organic Food Systems in Organic Districts

By Carola Strassner<sup>1)</sup> and David Gould<sup>2)</sup>

### • Where have we come from

From the first observations of the organic pioneers more than one hundred years ago, organic has come a long way. Those observations were essentially about how to grow food in farming, culminating in organic agriculture as a production system governed by four Principles: Health, Ecology, Fairness and Care. Farms as a unit of consideration are guided by the central principle to strive towards a closed nutrient cycle, underlining the ecosystem or the characteristics of organisms.

### • Taking a systems approach

There is increasing evidence that organic agriculture and food lead to increased human health, ecological sustainability, and improved livelihoods. Organic systems based on the four Principles are both practical and aspirational. These practices and aspirations however exist within a dominant global paradigm that adheres much less to these Principles. The organic movement has adapted accordingly, with organic regulations and certifications requiring key production practices that support the attainment of the Principles, but do not by themselves assure that they realize their full potential. Organic certification and similar assurance schemes (such as participatory guarantee systems) focus on the practices of individual actors. Each actor is a link in one or more value chains, but interdependence across chains is otherwise generally not mandated. Their cultural and geopolitical contexts are beyond the existing organic rules, a situation which undervalues how much organic systems can contribute to human wellbeing and sustainability.

In contrast to organic regulations, the Principles envision a systemic integration of agriculture and food chains into society. Bridging the gap between the promise of the Principles and the behaviors of current markets requires a more holistic, institutional, and society-wide approach to supporting supply chains. Taking a systems approach to sustainable production and consumption entails looking at the dynamics and interactions of human activities related to farming, food processing, distribution, and

dietary patterns. It involves consideration of the health of the eater, the resilience of the ecosystem, and stability of communities as interdependent. The organic movement has described this approach as its newest phase of evolution, Organic 3.0.

Real examples of organic food systems - those originating largely or wholly in organic production systems - are coming into being around the world and are valuable models as “living laboratories” for sustainable food systems in general. Accelerating transformation toward sustainable food systems warrants further discussion of how and why organic principles and practices should become integrated into all kinds of food systems.

### • How to recognise an organic food system

Agriculture, whether organic or other, exists not in and of itself but serves a purpose – or should serve as a primary purpose - namely, to feed us. The purpose of an organic food system is to feed us organically. However, agriculture is practiced neither without humans nor technology (whether simple or advanced) and agricultural produce is often the raw material for processing into foodstuffs. Both enter a distribution and trading system before they reach our meals and mouths. Hence an organic food system is, like all food systems, a mix of biological, social, and mechanical systems and any food system consideration must contain both the production and the consumption, and therefore the humans involved. In an organic food system, all these must be contained together with organic principles and practices.

Organic food systems can be characterised by a number of attributes – if you see these, you may be looking at an organic food system. Three essential attributes are the following. Organic Food Systems are “Intentional”. Organic food systems form out of a deliberate intention, even a conscious decision or choice, to prefer and prioritize organic practices. The people involved organize themselves, the community, and the supply chain according to the drivers that inform and motivate their agendas. They are able to communicate these motivations to all involved. Organic Food Systems know all their “connections”.

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<sup>2)</sup> Global Head, Sustainability Programs at FoodChain ID

For anyone of us looking into and trying to recognise an organic food system, perhaps entering by way of a farm or artisanal processor or retailer or restaurant, these entry points need to know specifically whom they are connected to in order to achieve their aims. An organic farm where farmers grow organic food and sell this organic food into a community known to them, a community that eats the organic food, such as a community supported agriculture venture, can be considered as an organic food system. Except in rare cases, human diets in organic food systems are “plant-centred”.

Translating organic farming parameters through the plant and animal output into a food basket means linking the land and its organic farm ecosystem with the diet. Such a translation naturally results in a diet with much more plant-based components than animal-based components and with a large amount of local foods.

- **When is an organic district an organic food system?**

An organic district is a territory wherein organic production and processing are dominant, and wherein organic consumption and human lives take place. People in their various capacities as citizens, teachers, tourist operators, public servants and much more, contribute in their own ways to facilitating sustainable management. Governance, especially government, is part of the organic district food system. Municipalities and other local government forms actively co-create conditions to support organic food system development, for example, through policies relating to agriculture or public procurement. An organic district food system can follow material and information flows within itself.

- **What next?**

It is time now to include ourselves in these systems, and to consciously work together to bring about sustainable organic food systems.



- **The Organic Food System Programme (OFSP)**

The Organic Food System Program (OFSP) was conceived in response to the United Nations’ initiative for a Sustainable Food System Program as part of its 10-year Framework on Sustainable Production and Consumption, which later evolved into the One Planet Network. Recognised/Endorsed as one of eight core initiatives, the OFSP focuses on the organic option as one path to accelerate the shift towards more sustainable food systems. Drawing on science and practice, continued learning from the path is shared by OFSP, particularly around eight deliverables.



**Best Practices of  
ALGOA Members**

## (Case Study of Philippines) PGS in the National Organic Regulations

By *LOAMCP-PH (Philippines)*

The Organic Agriculture Policy Framework in the Philippines was institutionalized upon the signing of Philippines' Republic Act 10068 of 2010 (Organic Agriculture Law of 2010) by the President of the Republic of the Philippines. The organic agriculture law was the outcome of the challenging significant journey of the national CSOs/NGOs from the mid-1980s.

In the local geographic areas, the CSOs/NGOs with Farmer Organizations were directly working for the implementation of sustainable/organic agriculture in the farming households. In the historical accounts of MISSAS (Mindanao and Solo Social Action Secretariat) of the Mindanao Catholic Church e entire organic value chain based on the principles of Organic Agriculture.

### • The Participatory Guarantee System

The success of institutionalizing the national organic agriculture policy through the RA 10068 was entirely not a success of CSOs/NGOs/FOs due to the provision of the law or the rule that only recognized the expensive commodity-based Third Party Organic Certification (TPOC) . With the CSOs/NGOs support on small family farms organic diversifications, the TPOC is not appropriate and does not support the ground initiatives and practices of small holders which constitute the majority in the Philippines.

In fact, the law strongly marginalized the accessibility of small organic farmers to the economic benefits of the law. Hence, CSOs/NGOs continued the advocacy of a genuine organic agriculture law – a law that encompasses the principle of fairness through group certification and/or through Participatory Guarantee System (PGS).

In the strictest sense, the small organic family farm practitioners are deprived of their rights to affordable organic certification. As early as 2011, the PGS Pilipinas strongly advocated the amendment of the National Organic Agriculture Policy Framework or the Republic Act 10068 for the inclusion and recognition of PGS. The network submitted the position paper in 2013 to National Organic Agriculture Board with the support of the IFOAM-Organics International for the recognition of PGS.



(Photo Credit: LOAMCP-Ph / Members of LOAMCP-Ph and IFOAM Asia with Senator Cynthia Villars)

The advocacy is directly targeted at the members of the legislative chambers of the Senate and Congress especially to members of the Committee Chairs of Agriculture and Food and Agrarian Reform. From the beginning of 2017, the League of Organic Municipalities, Cities and Provinces (LOAMCP-PH) intensified its direct engagements with the various congressmen and senators and the respective Chairs of the Senate and Congress Committees on Agriculture and Food and Agrarian Reform including the Senate hearings of the amendment of the law.

As part of the strategic engagements, LOAMCP-PH invited the IFOAM Asia for the direct negotiations with Senator Cynthia Villar (current Chairperson of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Food and Agrarian Reform) on PGS and NOAB memberships expansions in the amendment of the law. Senator Villar formally announced the PGS inclusion in the amendment of the Organic Agriculture Law during the IFOAM Asia 3rd Organic Asia Conference in Bislig City, Surigao del Sur on September 18-21, 2018.

The amendment of the Organic Agriculture Law was approved by the Senate on June 1, 2020. To complete the legislative proceedings, the approval of the PGS amendment in the law shall be completed with the approval in the Bicameral Conference (Senate and Congress Conference) and for final RA 10068 Amendment approval to be signed by the President of the Philippines.

#### • The Post Republic Act 10068 Amendments

Clearly, the success in the policy advocacy in amending the Organic Agriculture Law with emphasis on PGS is a parallel engagement strategy of CSOs/NGOs/FOs led by PGS Pilipinas and the hybrid CSO/NGO led by the League of Organic Agriculture Municipalities, Cities and Provinces of the Philippines (LOAMCP-PH). Due to the organizational nature of LOAMCP-PH with memberships from the local governments, the inclusion of PGS in the RA 10068 (Organic Agriculture Law) can be officially integrated in the development processes of organic agriculture in the respective local governments.

The recognition of PGS is the best gift of the Philippine government to the small farmers in general and small organic farmers/family farms in particular. However, one of the main challenges in the post amendment of the law is the participatory crafting of Internal Rules and Regulations (IRR) of the amended law.

Based on the organic agriculture development of the Philippines, the participation of key CSOs/NGOs/FOs and LOAMCP-PH are somewhat critical. With the increase in membership of representatives from the local governments in the National Organic Agriculture Board (NOAB) as part of the organic law amendments, it can be foreseen that the mainstreaming of organic agriculture would speed up and be more institutionalized including the annual significant budget shares from General Appropriation Act (GAA) of the Department of Agriculture.

Beyond PGS, the experiential-based Local Organic Policy Framework is the potential best strategy to effect the societal key mindsets from organic technology to sustainable organic food and descent livelihood systems to combat poverty, hunger and sickness in compliance to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

"Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) are locally focused quality assurance systems.

They certify producers based on active participation of stakeholders and are built on a foundation of trust, social networks and knowledge exchange." IFOAM 2008

## (Case Study of India) Asia Organic Youth Forum

### By Nagaland Organic Konnect

Nagaland, a small mountainous state in the north Eastern part of India is famous for its diversity in culture and tradition with many tribes, having a literacy rate of more than 80% with English as its official language. Agriculture is the main economy of the state with more than 80% contribution to the state economy. Organic Farming in the state is traditionally practiced, however, to become organic by design, the state has been striving over a decade and the organic policies are in the final stage of approval and implementation.

Nagaland Organic Konnect (NOK) is a society started on 26th November 2018, with the aim to bring together all stakeholders of organic farming in Nagaland. It comprises of a team of like-minded individuals who envisions to gradually transform Nagaland from a state that is "Organic by Default" to "Organic by Design" through organic movement with the youths of the state.

Ever since NOK came into existence, it has been creating mass awareness about organic farming through various events:

- Facilitated Mr Lanuakhum, NOK who got an award for best farmer JAIVIK INDIA Award during Organics & Millets 2018 at Delhi (Organised by ICCOA) in Dec.2018,
- Organised International Workshop on "Organic Farming and the Youth" (Jan 2019),
- Facilitated the participation of our Honourable Ministers during BIOFACH in Germany in February 2019 (Sponsored by Department of Agriculture, Government of Nagaland),
- Facilitated an exposure trip of 20 North East Spice growers to Kerala (Spice bowl of India), sponsored by Department of Horticulture, Government of Nagaland & All India Spice Export Forum (February 2019),
- Facilitated participation of 2 NOK members to the 4th IFOAM Asia Youth Forum (March 2019) at New Taipei City, Taiwan,
- Facilitated the participation of our NOK member in ALGOA Organic Foundation Course at Goesan County, South Korea (April 2019),
- Facilitated the participation of Hon'ble Chief Minister with his officials at ALGOA+4 International Summit on Organic Agriculture Policy, Goesan County, South Korea (September 2019),
- Organised training & capacity building program in collaboration with STINER- Nagaland University and Dept of Horticulture, Govt. of Nagaland (October & November 2019),



- Organised International Organic Open Forum on 29th November 2019, where international organic pioneers & experts (China, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and India) interacted with about 300 participants from State Govt. Officials, students from schools and colleges, farmers and youths. Hon'ble Chief minister of Nagaland graced the program,
- Organised Pineapple Fest on 30th November 2019 at Molvom Village (also known as pineapple village), first of its kind in the state. To commemorate this, a concrete pineapple structure was erected and unveiled by Hon'ble Adviser of Horticulture. Youths from different villages were given a platform to showcase their organic produce especially pineapples as well as their farms to promote rural entrepreneurship skills,

- Organised 5th Asia Organic Youth Forum on 26th to 28th Nov 2019. This event saw the participation of 35 trainees, both international (South Korea, Japan, Philippines, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Austria, Poland and Taiwan) and national (State Government officials, farmers and youths from all districts of Nagaland). The entire three days programme were divided into various sessions where worldwide information and experiences on Organic sector were elaborated by various experts from different Countries. Also, the current scenario and the scope that lies ahead under organic sector in the region were also discussed. The program was graced by honourable Agriculture minister of the State. This program was made possible due to full guidance and hand holding by IFOAM Asia & sponsored by Government of Nagaland.

NOK is continuing in its strive for organic movement in the state through various activities such as online webinars on important issues in organic sector and also facilitating the state government to finalise the draft of organic policies for the state.



(Photo Credits: NOK / Group Photo of the Youth Forum)



(Photo Credits: NOK / Pineapple Festival, Molvom Village)

## (Case Study of Indonesia) 4th Organic Asia Congress “Semarang Organic Asia 2021”

By Jennifer Chang (Executive Director, IFOAM Asia)

The 4th Organic Asia Congress organized by IFOAM Asia will be held in Semarang, Central Java Province, Indonesia in 2021 and will be hosted by the Indonesia Organic Alliance and Bina Swadaya Foundation. Other supporting partners include Arla Indofood, Bakrie University and the Kehati Foundation.

The components of the OAC are the main organic conference, ALGOA and Organic Youth Forums, food and trade exhibitions, cultural and organic tours, with other local events to create synergy with the international events, etc.

The location of the main events is Semarang, the capital and largest city of Central Java province in Indonesia. A major port during the Dutch colonial era, and still an important regional centre and port today. The city has been named as the cleanest tourist destination in Southeast Asia by the ASEAN Clean Tourist City Standard (ACTCS) for the year of 2020 to 2022. The population of the city is approximately 1.8 million people, making it

Indonesia’s seventh most populous city. Population of the city is predominantly Javanese with significant Chinese population.

Semarang is one of organic centers in the Central Java Province.



The **Organic Asia Congress (OAC)** is a gathering of IFOAM Asia affiliates, ALGOA members, likeminded organizations, and their partners in Asia to discuss and share the developments in the organic sector in the region. The gathering includes conferences, seminars, trade fairs, cultural events, etc. The main purpose of the OAC is to bring together the major stakeholders to discuss issues and challenges facing the organic sector and to come up with positive and pro-active solutions for the development of organic agriculture in the region.

The **Organic Asia Congress** has been held from 2016 and were hosted by Goesan County, South Korea, Xichong County, China and Bislig City, Philippines.



**Other objectives of the OAC include:**

- Uniting the organic sector to achieve the full adoption of organic practices in Asia
- Increase networking among IFOAM Organics Asia members
- Increase networking with local governments to promote organic agriculture
- Increasing Consumer Awareness of Organic Agriculture
- Disseminating Information on the Best Practices of Organic Agriculture
- Highlighting the Organic Pioneers from Asia and their Achievements

## (Case Study of South Korea) 2022 International Organic Expo

By Jack Choi, Goesan County

In 2015, the world saw the largest gathering of the organic community at the International Organic Expo held at Goesan County, Chungbuk Province, South Korea. The Expo under the heading “Organic Life – Science Meets the Public” was held for 21 days and brought a total of 1.06 million visitors to the events.



One of the major organic conferences held during the Expo was the “IFOAM Organic 3.0 Conference” which brought organic leaders, IFOAM members, local government representatives and other stakeholders to discuss the features and overall strategy outlined under Organic 3.0.

The resulting “Organic 3.0 Goesan Declaration” was a milestone in the organic movements and became one of the stepping-stones for organic agriculture related policy development in Goesan County – leading to the growth of the Asian Local Governments for Organic Agriculture (ALGOA), the Asian Organic Youth Forum, Young Organics Global Network (YOGN) and the Global Alliance of Organic Districts (GAOD).



(Photo Credit: Goesan County / Visit of IFOAM Head Office in Bonn, Germany, Feb 2020)

The next International Organic Expo is planned for the end of September 2022 for 17 days and will be composed of the following events:

- Various organic thematic exhibitions
- Organic trade expo and organic market
- International organic conferences
  - ALGOA-GAOD Summit
  - World Organic Youth Forum
  - 50th Anniversary of IFOAM-Organics International & Commemorative International Conference
  - 10th Anniversary of IFOAM-Organics Asia & Commemorative Conference
  - ISOFAR International Scientific Conference
- Organic Farm visits
- Various experiences and cultural performances

The highlights of the 2022 International Organic Expo will be the celebrations of the **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of IFOAM-Organics International** at the opening ceremony of the Expo and the 10th anniversary of IFOAM – Organics Asia at the closing ceremony. The new strategies and action plans of the global organic movements will be discussed and disseminated at these two major conferences.

## Annex 1. The Summit Declaration of 2020

### Declaration of the 6th ALGOA & Inaugural GAOD Summits

We, the participants from forty-six countries and areas from all over the world, have gathered virtually, under the banner of “Building Alliances Beyond Asia” at the 6th ALGOA and at the inaugural GAOD Summits, to share our experiences and best practices; and to find ways of making the transformations into organic and sustainable food systems in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Today we celebrate World Food Day, and we are faced with the glaring facts about world hunger and how famines and crop failures due to the climate crisis can threaten the lives of millions of people. We are reminded again on how eating nutritious balanced diets can benefit us all.

Food has never been more important. The pandemic has clearly brought to light the importance of local resilient food systems which have successfully provided food to their local communities and maintained the health and well-being of the people. The sales of organic food have increased more than twenty percent in many countries as people grew more aware of the benefits of safe, healthy, and nutritious organic food to combat the onslaught of COVID-19. The pandemic should not become a hunger pandemic.

Elsewhere, where farmers and consumers rely on intermediaries and complex distribution channels, the COVID-19 pandemic has led to widespread food shortages due to the disruption of international and domestic trade of food and the breakdown of logistics in food delivery. The poor and the marginalized have been severely affected and their health and immunity threatened, making them more vulnerable to the threat of the virus.

We welcomed the opportune decision of the Nobel Prize Committee to award the Peace Prize to the World Food Programme (WFP) “for its efforts to combat hunger, for its contribution to bettering conditions for peace in conflict-affected areas and for acting as a driving force in efforts to prevent the use of hunger as a weapon of war and conflict.” Also, we are happy to note the clear message from António Guterres, UN Secretary- General who said that “transforming food

systems is crucial for delivering all the Sustainable Development Goals.”

Based on the diverse representations at the Summit by notable persons from international organizations like the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and from local governments, and organic and likeminded groups, and from the in-depth discussions by seven GAOD Working Groups -

ALGOA and GAOD agree to undertake the following tasks:

- Collect and disseminate research, best practices, mindsets, and values in Organic Districts facilitating the shift into healthy, sustainable, and inclusive food systems,
- Develop a universally accessible platform on Organic Districts enabling interactions and knowledge sharing from different stakeholders,
- Encourage local governments and other stakeholders to make action plans to develop Organic Districts and to provide access to affordable organic, sustainable food,
- Recognize the multi-functionality of Organic Agriculture to restore relationships in the food system and revitalize local communities through responsible production and consumption,
- Encourage the active participation of young people in the decision-making processes and in global networking as they are the key drivers of innovation and stewards of our future,
- Raise the awareness of the role of women in farming and food systems as they are the protectors of the land and mothers of our future generations.

ALGOA and GOAD express their utmost commitment to the fulfilment of these tasks compiled from the discussions at the 6th ALGOA and the Inaugural GAOD Summits for delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

**Adopted on World Food Day, 16 October 2020**

**By the Participants of the 6th ALGOA Summit & the Inaugural Summit of GAOD**