

The East African Organic sector steams ahead

The OSEA project and the East African organic movement was well represented at the 2nd African Organic Conference in Lusaka 2-4 May 2012. In conjunction with that there was a management committee meeting as well as a review by Sida.

► The 2nd African Organic Conference successfully concluded

“Organic agriculture is one of the best practices in ensuring environmental sustainability. It sustains the fertility of soils, ecosystems and sustains the health of people. It relies on locally adapted improved ecological processes and cycles, and natural biodiversity rather than the use of synthetic inputs and genetically modified materials. It is therefore, important that our farmers are encouraged to practice organic farming[...]. I have no doubt that organic agriculture has potential to contribute to food security, increased incomes and generation of employment for our people.”

Said the Honourable Emmanuel T. Chenda, MP, Minister of agriculture and livestock at the official launch of the second African organic conference in Lusaka 2-4 May 2012.



The conference, organized by OPPAZ, Grow Organic Africa, the Ministry of agriculture and livestock, IFOAM, FAO and UNCTAD, was a real milestone towards mainstreaming organic agriculture in Africa. Almost 300 participants, among them representatives of the can Union, FAO, UNCTAD, the EU and national organic movements participated. The OSEA project supported the participation of a few policy makers as well as a journalists from Burundi, Kenya and Rwanda. Martha Nyambura from

Kenya made a comprehensive report for the International Press Service, see it at:

<http://www.ips.org/africa/library/organicslide.wmv>

The conference declaration concluded that:

“We agree that organic agriculture plays a key role in sustainable development, food security, poverty reduction, environmental security, climate change adaptation, human health, preservation of indigenous knowledge, plant varieties and animal breeds as well as socio-cultural development[...]. We call upon the AU to mainstream organic agriculture into all areas of its work, including the Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and to take the lead in implementation of the African Organic Action Plan (and its associated Pillars), in close collaboration with AfroNet and other partners.”

For more information: <http://africanorganicconference.com/>

► 1st Annual Review meeting successfully concluded

In conjunction with the 2nd African Organic Conference in Lusaka the OSEA project had its first annual review meeting with the donor, Sida. The meeting concluded that the

project was well on track. It was agreed to adjust some indicators. Sida emphasized the need for the regional dimension of the project.

► **PGS training in Kenya and Rwanda**



Participants in PGS training Kenya

The OSEA project organized two trainings in Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) in Kenya and Rwanda. The workshop in Kenya was held in English from May 10 to 11. It was facilitated by Konrad Hauptfleisch and Hervé Bouagnimbeck and brought together eight participants from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The workshop in Rwanda was facilitated by Hervé Bouagnimbeck in French from May 14 to 16. Seven participants from Rwanda and Burundi got a mix of theory, group works and field visits. The courses covered development of PGS around

the world, the basic elements and key characteristics of PGS, examples of how different PGS have evolved to fit with their local situations, interrelationships between PGS and Internal Control Systems, and many other topics. The participants appreciated the workshops and agreed that they will build their capacities beyond PGS and contribute to the further development of organic agriculture in East Africa.

The PGS component in the OSEA project aims at bringing some 15 farmer groups in East Africa into fully operational PGS systems that can be approved for use of the East African Organic Mark. For more information about PGS, please see

http://www.ifoam.org/about_ifoam/standards/pgs.html

► **OSEA to sponsor the development of Organic Aquaculture standards within the framework of the East African Organic Products Standards**

The OSEA Management Committee decided to initiate a process for development of organic aquaculture standards. It will be done under the leadership of the Uganda Bureau of Standards and, once approved, become a part of the East African Organic Products Standards.

The OSEA II Project is implemented by [IFOAM](#) and the National Organic Agriculture Movements in Burundi (BOAM), Kenya ([KOAN](#)), Rwanda (ROAM), Tanzania ([TOAM](#)) and Uganda ([NOGAMU](#)) in close cooperation with the organic stakeholders and governments in the East African countries. It is financed by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, [Sida](#). The project started 1 November 2010 and will run up to 31 December 2013.

► [Link to IFOAM page for more information about the project](#)