

The Global PGS Newsletter

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Indonesia Organic Alliance officially launches PAMOR Indonesia

By Lidya Inawati



On January 26th, 2010, Indonesia Organic Alliance (IOA) officially launched the PGS system called PAMOR INDONESIA. The event was attended by many parties drawn from a wide group of stakeholders (producers, farmers' associations, NGO, certification body, consumers, traders and government agencies). The purpose of this event was to provide the public with an introduction to PAMOR that would enable them to understand what PAMOR is.

The growth of production and consumption of organic products in Indonesia in the last three years was quite rapid. The products labeled as organic are spreading on the market, however, not all of them truly organic. The question is: how can organic consumers avoid falsely labeled organic products?

The easiest way to avoid the counterfeit organic products is with organic certification. Certification

is required to ensure the authenticity, quality, and also the price of organic products on the market. Unfortunately, the formal certification is usually an expensive, complicated and inflexible process, not always suitable to small farmers.

PAMOR was established to address the challenge of the formal certification process creating serious barriers to smallholder and family farmers' access to organic certification, which is nevertheless demanded by the consumer. The PAMOR system provides a low-cost, simple and flexible process for the certification of small farmers.

Simplified procedures mean that farmers can understand the PAMOR concept and mechanisms. Low costs mean that the cost of PAMOR certification is affordable by the farmers. PAMOR guarantees both fresh and processed organic agricultural products for the local, regional and national markets in Indonesia, according to the Indonesian National Standards and to the Indonesia Organic Alliance standards.

PAMOR does not only aim to protect organic farmers in Indonesia but also consumers. For consumers, certification provides prestige to the quality assurance of the organic products which they buy. On the other side, through the certification process, consumers are also involved in determining their quality standards. This aims to build a close relationship and mutual trust between farmers and consumers.

During this launching event, PAMOR also handed PAMOR certificates to the first two farmer groups that successfully met the PAMOR certification requirements. These are the farmer groups from Mojokerto (East Java) and Bantul (central Java).

Learn more about PAMOR on the IFOAM PGS online database, under:

http://www.ifoam.org/about_ifoam/standards/pgs_projects/pgs_projects/index.php or by contacting Lidya Inawati (lidya@organicindonesia.org).



New improved CNG website up and running

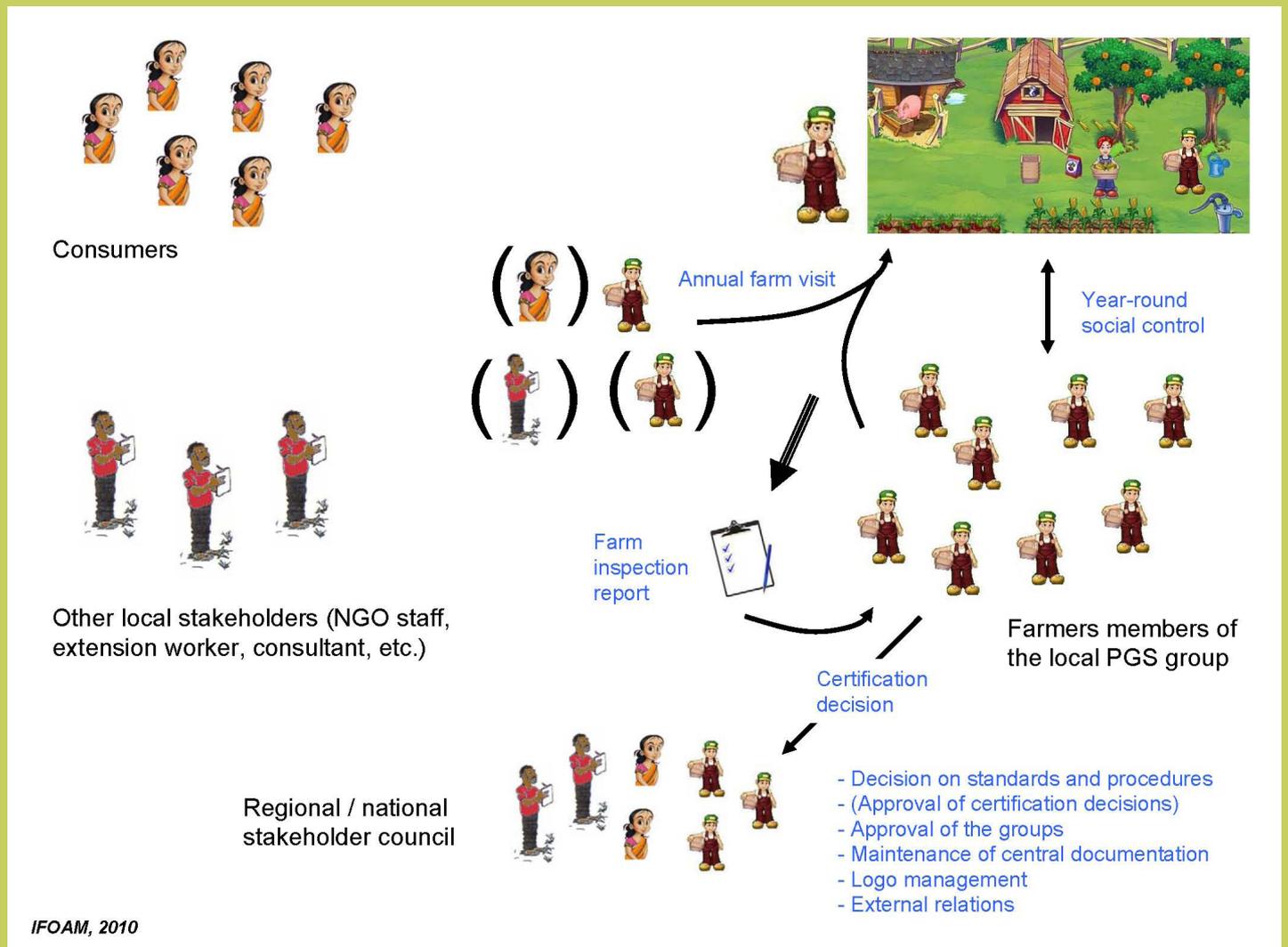


The new CNG website is a breathtaking example of how modern technology can help grassroots movements. Certified Naturally Grown, the biggest PGS in the US, is managed through an online system of farmer registration and information sharing. Administration of the entire system, encompassing about 800 farms, is currently handled by only 1 full time staff. Once registered, farmers appear automatically on the “zoomable” national Google map, so that consumers can quickly identify which farm is close to them. For each farm, approval status, grower declaration and summary of inspection reports, including who did the inspection and how long it took, are available online for all to see: a transparency never achieved yet in the formal third party certification system. Farmers can also upload detailed information about their farms and even pictures. Behind all this is a custom-built database software system which CNG developed in collaboration with a team of software developers.

Check the new website on <http://www.naturallygrown.org/> and contact info@naturallygrown.org if you would like to learn more about the software system.

PGS BASICS

How does a typical PGS work?



This “typical PGS” probably does not exist, as all PGS are locally adapted and therefore different. However, it can be useful to describe often encountered processes to explain the PGS idea to stakeholders who have never heard of the concept. A typical PGS involves organic farmers, consumers and possibly other stakeholders such as staff from supporting NGOs, extension services staff, consultants, government representatives, university staff, etc. Farmers are typically organized in local groups which are responsible for ensuring that all farmers of the group are following the PGS standards and processes. Each farmer receives an annual farm visit by at least one other farmer of the group, sometimes accompanied by another stakeholder (e.g. consumer). Results of the farm visits are documented and serve as a basis for the farmer group to take decisions on the certification status of each group member.

Documentation summaries and certification decisions are typically communicated to a higher level, e.g. a regional council or national council representing the PGS stakeholders. This council sometimes endorses certification decisions taken by the groups or more generally approves each local group and grants them the use of the PGS logo if any. The higher level also decides on organic standards to be followed and represents the PGS towards external actors such as the government, IFOAM, etc.

New IFOAM Organic Guarantee System open for last consultation

Since 2005, IFOAM, instructed by its membership, has been going through a process to revise its Organic Guarantee System (which currently includes the maintenance of the IFOAM Norms, and the IFOAM Accreditation Program for organic certifiers). Since the last IFOAM General Assembly (Modena, 2008), a thorough analysis by the OGS Task Force, an intensive consultation of stakeholders, and the active participation of the World Board, have enabled IFOAM to come up with a new OGS proposal, which is now being open for last consultation by the IFOAM members, ending 10th of March 2010. The results of this consultation will be the basis for the final OGS proposal to be put up to vote by IFOAM members later in 2010.

Of relevance to the PGS movement is the fact that under the newly proposed OGS scenario, PGS initiatives that have developed their own organic standards will be able to apply for the recognition of their standard as part of the IFOAM Family of organic standards.

If your organization is an IFOAM member, please feel encouraged to request access to the consultation materials by your colleagues (one person per organization usually receives IFOAM consultation materials) and to express your opinion on the future of the global organic guarantee system(s).

PGS in Peru: progresses and challenges



On February 4th, the Peruvian PGS stakeholders had their third meeting with the competent authority for organic agriculture in Peru (SENASA). The Board of Directors and Advisors of the association of ecological producers (ANPE), as well as NGO representatives (IDMA), shared their

progress, lessons learned and documentation of the development process of the Peruvian PGS. Pedro

Cussianovich (Responsible for the LA Ecological Agriculture Program IICA and Coordinator of the Network of Competent Authorities of Latin America), joined the meeting and shared PGS experiences from Latin America and Europe.

ANPE welcomes the recently more open attitude of the competent authority towards PGS, but also recognizes that PGS in Peru is still a work in progress, which needs to learn from other experiences and develop mechanisms suitable to the Peruvian context.

In its meeting with the authority, ANPE has reemphasized that PGS development will not threaten the application of Peru to obtain EU-equivalency status (“third country list”), an issue which had been often used to deny the opportunities for PGS development in Peru.

Meanwhile, significant developments have taken place at the regional level, with the Regional Ordinance No. 082-2010-CR-HRM in which the Huánuco Regional Government recognizes PGS as a viable and economic alternative to guarantee the organic production of small farmers in the region.

In January, ANPE presented all the PGS documentation to SENASA for feedback. Before that, the Ministry of Agriculture had provided no input or guidance on the documentation. The Technical Secretariat of the Peruvian PGS now hopes for a meeting with the Ministry of Agriculture and the competent authority to receive their insights, observations, criticisms and comments for the improvement of PGS in Peru. The PGS stakeholders are eager to share experiences and lessons learned, including suggestions from PGS stakeholders to the Third Party Certification system, such as the need to include food safety issues.

For the PGS stakeholders in Peru, the prospects of joint efforts between the State and Civil Society offer great opportunities to improve the system, for the benefit of small producers and consumers.

For more information, contact Jannet Villanueva at jvillanuevaescudero@speedy.com.pe.

Continental news: WHAT'S NEW IN...



...LATIN AMERICA

- **Ecuador and Bolivia:** The Andean PGS Project will hold a meeting in Ecuador the last week of February, in which the donor financing the project, Veco (Belgium), will participate in a first evaluation of the project progress. The third week of March, the project partners will meet once again, this time in Bolivia.
- **Peru:** The regional government of Huánuco just published the regional regulation N° 082-2010-CR-GRH that recognizes and legalizes Participatory Guarantee Systems as a viable technical, economical, social and environmental alternative to guarantee the organic production of small farmers in the region. This is in drastic divergence with the Peruvian national organic regulation which does not recognize PGS.



...EUROPE AND NORTH AMERICA

- **BioFach, Germany:** IFOAM staff Joelle Katto-Andrighetto held a presentation on the theme “Participatory Guarantee Systems – Empowering the small farmers” in a session of the BioFach Congress dedicated to smallholders and organized by IFOAM. The presentation was well received by the participants.
- **Ukraine:** In the context of the FiBL cooperation project “Organic Certification and Organic Market Development in Ukraine”, discussions have been held with local stakeholders on the setting-up of a PGS in Ukraine. The “Club of Organic Agriculture”, an Ukrainian association gathering about 66,000 organic gardeners or very small farmers, is interested to set-up a PGS pilot project within a subset of its membership in order to guarantee small surpluses that are sold on the local market. The FiBL project would like to support a national workshop in the coming months, with the participation of an international PGS expert, preferably speaking Russian. Please contact pgs@ifoam.org if you know such person.
- **USA:** Certified Naturally Grown (CNG) just launched an apiary certification program for beekeepers. With this program, beekeepers are asked to identify their local network (formal or informal) as part of the application process (either the name of a local beekeepers association, or the names of two or more nearby beekeepers committed to using natural practices who have agreed to offer mutual support and conduct inspections). More details in a next issue..



...ASIA AND OCEANIA

- **Indonesia:** Indonesia Organic Alliance launches the PAMOR PGS system (see detailed article).
- **Australia:** “Certified Naturally Farmed” (CNF) just launched its website. CNF is a new project aimed at providing a low-cost certification scheme for horticultural products suited to Australian small growers, hobby or lifestyle farmers who want to sell fresh produce in their local community. Learn more on <http://certifiednaturallyfarmed.org.au/> or in a next issue of The Global PGS Newsletter.



Proud to be Part!

Transform your passion for Organic Agriculture into meaningful action - join IFOAM today!

IFOAM represents the interests of the Organic sector on an international level and is the only worldwide umbrella organization responsible for the creation and revision of the basic standards for Organic Agriculture.

The tangible benefits of IFOAM membership are extensive. From discounts on publications, conferences and events, to exclusive advertising opportunities and the wealth of information you receive, your business or organization will get all the tools it needs to grow and develop internationally.

IFOAM also offers significant political and structural benefits, playing a leading role in the social and political development of Organic Agriculture worldwide. IFOAM has among others official status with ECOSOC, FAO, IFAD, UNCTAD, UNEP, Codex Alimentarius and ISO. For more information, contact: membership@ifoam.org

Or apply online via www.ifoam.org/application.

Be Part of the Solution!



Imprint

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