

Results of the PGS Annual Survey 2014

By IFOAM PGS Team



Each year in autumn, IFOAM carries out its Global PGS study to collect the latest data from PGS initiatives around the world. The new figures from 2014 are now available. In total, 32 new initiatives from 21 countries were identified. Eight countries are new entries to our Global PGS Map: Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, Honduras, Kiribati, Laos, Myanmar and Togo. In total, IFOAM currently counts at least 70 operational PGS initiatives and a further 70 that are under development. In total, more than 50 countries worldwide work with PGS.

PGS WORLDWIDE IN FIGURES

- It is estimated that over 46,000 small operators are currently involved in PGS worldwide, out of which more than 17,000 are verified through PGS. This includes mostly small farmers and a few small processors.
- It is estimated that 38 countries worldwide have functional PGS initiatives in place. Additionally, PGS is currently under development in at least 17 more countries.
- The leading countries in terms of producers involved in PGS are the Philippines (10,620), Uganda (6,436) and India (5,977). Bolivia, Brazil and South Africa also play an important role with more than 3000 farmers involved in each country.

In total, 32 new initiatives from 21 countries were identified.

- Of the numbers of producers involved, only a certain percentage have already been verified: this shows the growth trend of the PGS movement, as more and more producers are getting involved and going through conversion or through a PGS establishment process. India counts for the most producers verified through PGS (5,191) followed by Brazil (2,771), Peru (2,000) and Bolivia (1,310).
- Asia leads with 19,094 producers, 7,234 of which are verified. Africa is a region of very recent and rapid PGS development: it is estimated that 13,079 producers are involved, 1,373 of whom are verified. In Latin America and the Caribbean, 12,485 producers are involved in PGS, 6,853 of them are verified.

- Due to unfavorable legal framework, PGS initiatives are less widespread in North America and Europe. In North America a total of 1,051 producers are involved in PGS, most of them in the United States (1,034). 832 producers are verified, 816 in the US and 16 in Canada. In Europe, France is the leading country with 708 producers verified. In 6 other European countries we find PGS initiatives with a small number of producers involved. The total number of producers involved in Europe is 816.

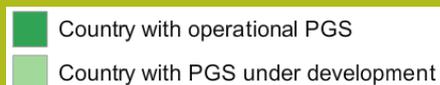


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- In Oceania, more than 350 producers are involved spread over 7 countries (including French territory). 278 are verified, most of them based in New Zealand.
- It is estimated that PGS verified producers are currently managing organically a total of at least

49,803 ha of agricultural land. The leading countries of where data is available are as follows: 23,022 in Namibia (most of it extensive grass land), 8,840 ha in the United States, 6,442 ha in India, 3,000 ha in Mexico, 2,460 ha in Bolivia, 2,200 ha in Australia and 1493 ha in Brazil.

PGS continues to gain ground in the Philippines

By Eloisa Frieda Bosito and Rowena Buena, MASIPAG



MASIPAG recently held its third conference on Participatory Guarantee System titled “Participatory Guarantee Systems: Building a Future for Organic Farmers and Consumers in the Philippines” which aimed to further expand the practice and implementation of PGS in the country. The conference, held in Davao City last August 12 - 13, 2014, was attended by more than 140 representatives from farmers’ groups, local government units (LGUs) and non-government organizations (NGOs), also served to launch the Davao City PGS.

MASIPAG has been lobbying for the recognition of PGS, since the current law, the Republic Act 10068 or the Organic Agriculture Act only allows organic labeling if the products are third party certified. The two-year leeway for those who are using first- and second-party certification and PGS ended in April of 2013, but the voluntary compliance to third party certification was further extended until April 2016 through the lobbying efforts of MASIPAG and PGS Pilipinas, with support from IFOAM.

Representatives from LGUs shared experiences on implementing PGS with the participants, including 32 LGU officials, municipal mayors, municipal and provincial agricultural officers and organic agriculture focal persons. The sharing of experiences served to



inspire these LGUs to likewise take up PGS in their localities to further support their organic farmers.

“The LGUs play an important role in seeking farmer-friendly solutions and approaches so we can ensure the advancement of organic agriculture,” said Mayor Leovegildo Ruzol of General Nakar, in Quezon province. Mayor Ruzol, who is also the Executive Vice-President of the League of Organic Agriculture Municipalities (LOAM), stated that the LOAM supports the call of MASIPAG to recognize PGS.

A workshop was also held during the conference to further discuss various strategies to mainstream PGS among farmers’ groups, LGUs, NGOs and for the academe to consider PGS as area for research. Participants later on signed a unity statement, which declares their support in calling the government to recognize PGS and a genuinely farmer-led organic agriculture.



An excerpt from the unity statement states that:

“PGS is an appropriate solution that compliments the needs and capacity of small scale farmers. It aims to give farmers a credible, yet inexpensive organic certification system as well as provide a quality assurance system to the consumers. PGS is most appropriate for small-scale farmers because it ensures market access of their organic produce. In PGS, the cost of certification is very minimal because it involves the collective work of the organization or the community. In addition, because the unit of certification is farm level, all the products in the verified farm are considered organic. In this way, small volume of a variety of products can still be marketed as organic, and farm diversification

is encouraged as a consequence.”

“It is also undeniable that majority of our OA stakeholders; mainly small scale farmers have been practicing OA and using 1st, 2nd party and Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) for the integrity of their produce even before the passage of OA Act of 2010. It is therefore unjust that the OA Act of 2010, specifically Section 17, tends to limit small-scale organic farmers economic initiatives and exclusively gave only 3rd Party certified produce to be labeled as “organic”.

The conference culminated in a fun ride dubbed as Green Ride, which aimed to promote organic agriculture to the riding populace of Davao City and an organic product fair where farmers were able to sell their fresh and processed organic produce to the consumers.

To date, there are five provinces, ten municipalities, three farmers’ federation/cooperative and two national networks of farmers’ organization in various stages of PGS development in the Philippines. Most of them are

organized together with the local government units and non-government organizations.

The PGS Pilipinas’ active awareness-raising work has also helped in establishing the credibility and popularity of local PGS logos at the local market. The MFGS, QPGS and Vizcaya Fresh logos are now recognized by consumers at the local market as quality mark for organic rice and vegetable products. The MASIPAG Farmers Guarantee System (MFGS) now involves 109 farmers’ organizations in the whole country while the organic market in Quezon province posted a gross sale of PhP 1.33 million (about 28,000 USD) in its first year and Vizcaya Fresh has verified a total of 31 farms (53.19hectares) in 2013.

The PGS Conference was co-organized by MASIPAG and Davao City PGS together with PGS Pilipinas (an alliance of PGS’ and advocates), Ateneo de Davao University School of Business and Governance and the Ateneo de Davao University Young Entrepreneurs Society.

First PGS national workshop in Myanmar

By Myat Thuzar Thein, National Secretariat Specialist-Myanmar, Asian Development Bank



The Myanmar National Workshop on Participatory Guarantee System (PGS) Capacity Building was held on 17 October 2014 at the Hotel Max in Nay Pyi Taw. A total of 37 attendees from the Ministry of Agriculture

and Irrigation (MOAI), Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development (MLFRD), International Non-government organizations (INGOs), Private Firms, Civil Society and Farming Communities participated in the workshop. Mr. Aye Tun and Mr. Naing Kyi Win, Deputy Directors General of Department of Agriculture (DOA), MOAI, Dr. Apichai Thirathon, WGA Secretariat Manager of Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Christopher John May, IFOAM PGS Committee and Dr. Theingi Myint, Associate Professor of Yezin Agriculture University (YAU), Dr. Khin Thanda Oo, Deputy Staff Officer from

DOA and Mr. Hla Min, Chairman of Myanmar Organic Grower and Producer Association (MOGPA) presided over the day’s activities.

The workshop began with an overview of PGS, its development, the possible issues and opportunities concerning adaptation of the system, and the available support from IFOAM, government sector, private sectors, INGOs, private sectors and the farming communities. Case success stories of how PGS and organic agriculture in Vietnam has helped smallholder farmers to participate in local markets were also presented. The participants showed strong interest in learning more about the PGS system and the possibilities of adopting the PGS in their operations.

At the end of the workshop, Mr. Naing Kyi Win expressed strong support for the development of a PGS system in Myanmar. The participants also showed their support by agreeing to facilitate the development



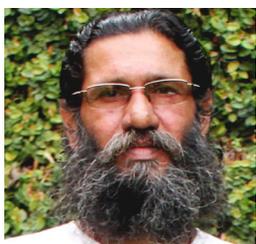
and implementation of PGS in the country. Furthermore, four agencies including DOA, ActionAid-Myanmar (INGOs), Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producer and Exporter Association (MFFVPEA) and MOGPA confirmed their commitment to introducing PGS in their operations initially altogether six pilot cases.

The day concluded with Mr. Naing Kyi Win's congratulating the participants for a successful workshop and for their willingness to learn and experiment with the PGS. Dr.

Apichai Thirathon added his appreciation and motivation to the participants especially the six agencies to initiate actions to start developing the PGS pilot activities in cooperation with the NSSU and technical support from IFOAM. With efforts to put the Participatory Guarantee System in place by MOAI, it is expected that organic agriculture will gain increased support, thus benefiting increase income and livelihood of smallholder farmers in Myanmar as a whole.

Report on a PGS workshop and training sessions in Nepal

By Samraj Thonthai Gowder, Keystone Foundation and Dr. Ujjal Tiwari, FORWARD Nepal



The advent of PGS in Nepal started during this November meeting organized by Forum for Rural Welfare and Agricultural Reform for Development (FORWARD Nepal) in the central district (Chitwan) in Nepal from 14 to 16 November 2014.

The two-day workshop and a half-day planning session were conducted by Samraj Thonthai Gowder, Keystone Foundation on behalf of PGSOC, India. Dr. Ujjal Tiwari from FORWARD Nepal coordinated the sessions in Nepali language with help from his colleagues and the participants. Thirty-two participants from NGOs, Government, Academicians, Research Institution, Cooperatives, Farmers, and Traders participated in the workshop. The first session started with the concept of organic farming, introduction and needs of PGS, the process and steps of PGS, introduction to PGS in India and its application as a tool for the farmers to get better market access.

After a series of questions and answers, the group came up with a suggestion to evolve a Basic Organic

Standard suited to Nepal and in line with the Organic Standards brought out by the Government of Nepal. The representative of FAO in Nepal (Dr. Krishna Prasad Pant) who participated in the workshop agreed to facilitate the process.

The next day was a visit to a village where farmers are practicing Organic Agriculture. A field trial of the Farm Appraisal format followed in India was tested with the farmers. The farmers were comfortable with the questions except a few regarding GMOs, antibiotics, and seeds. After the field visit, a discussion session was conducted in Chitwan for the participants to clarify the doubts arisen from the field trial. The decision to take PGS to the national level was taken by the group as they felt that more organizations need to get involved for the effective spread of PGS not only among farmers but also among consumers as well.

The final day of the workshop started with the decision to implement PGS in Nepal with support from the government. The representatives from the District Agriculture Development Office of Chitwan agreed to support Organic Agriculture both at field level and policy level. The participants decided among themselves to take responsibilities for various tasks of formulating Basic Organic Standards, farm appraisal mechanism, group formation and logo design for the certification. The Participatory Market Chain Analysis (PMCA) workshop at local levels can be an immediate step



to building the linkage among producers, traders and consumers of the organic products. The enthusiasm shown by the group was very encouraging, and PGSOC has assured them of continued support and guidance in making PGS certification a reality in Nepal. After a series of questions and answers, the group came up with a suggestion to evolve a Basic Organic Standard suited to Nepal and in line with the Organic Standards brought out by the Government of Nepal. The representative of FAO in Nepal (Dr. Krishna Prasad Pant) who participated in the workshop agreed to facilitate the process.

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“Building Food Communities” at the IFOAM OWC in Istanbul

By Cornelia Kirchner, IFOAM PGS Coordinator



PGS was a prominent topic at the 18th IFOAM Organic World Congress this October in Istanbul. Surely the highlight from a PGS perspective was the pre-conference “Building Food Communities”,

co-organized by Bugday Association, URGENCI, IFOAM and DBB (a PGS based in Ankara), attracting around 170 participants. All continents were represented to share and exchange experiences on PGS and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA).

IFOAM president Andre Leu opened the pre-conference stressing the importance of farmer empowerment and farmer ownership. He said: *“It is no one model that is right, and we will hear a lot of models today, all of them are needed and it is up to farmers to choose what is the*



best. Is it a CSA, a Teikei, a PGS? Is it a co-op or a farmers' market? There are lots of examples that we can use. But the critical point is that in each of them, we as farmers have to be active participants, we need to shorten the supply chains and bring our consumers in as part of it.”

Elizabeth Henderson gave the welcome speech on behalf of URGENCI. She emphasized the importance of solidarity and fairness including fair prices for the farmers.

Ahmed Berkay from Bugday Association in Turkey gave an inspiring overview of the diverse local food and of the organic initiatives in different parts of Turkey.

The pre-conference continued with a sharing of good practices and inspiring cases from all around the world. Joy Daniel from the Institute of Integrated Rural

Development in India talked about the multiple benefits of PGS in his region in terms of livelihood improvement and protection of biodiversity among others. Shi Yan, founder of Shared Harvest, shared her experience on how CSA contributes to bringing young people back to farm in rural areas of China. Lorena Senanayake from the Good Market in Sri Lanka explained how the popularity of the market has exceeded all their expectations. From Julie Matovu we learned that in the case of Uganda, PGS fills an important gap and brings organic knowledge to the farmers in the absence of a good extension system. Karen Mapusua and Stephen Hazemann from Fiji shared the experience from Cicia Island where export of PGS verified coconut oil is helping young farmers to earn an income. Marc-David Choukroun presented La Ruche Qui Dit Qui, an innovative software that helps to organize and simplify logistics for short-supply chain marketing. Last but not least Ceyhan Temürçü from DBB presented how Turkish initiatives are now looking into PGS and what challenges they face.

The second part of the day was assigned to fishbowl discussions. The topic that was controversially discussed during the PGS fishbowl was government recognition of PGS. On one hand, most stakeholders agreed that PGS recognition is important, and that not being recognized can be a major obstacle (for example in Europe and the USA). On the other hand, there are cases where governments are becoming too active and taking away control of the PGS from the actual stakeholders (for example in Latin America). There are

initiatives that deliberately choose to keep a distance to their government in order to protect their autonomy. Without doubt, the discussions about the relationship between PGS and governments have not yet come to an end. Some impressions from the audience:

“I am impressed by the high level to which PGS has developed in various parts of the world and how it has been used for the benefit of both, the producers and consumers.”: Charles Mubanga, Organic Producers & Processors Association of Zambia. “I am writing to thank you all for co-organizing this wonderful, mind opening event. It was very interesting and inspiring to see what other countries and communities are doing concerning PGS and astonishing to see some of their progress on the subject, especially Latin America where PGS is officially recognized and India where they have a sort of national council for it. Apparently there is a long road ahead and big potential but every community’s path is different in its size and form.”: Aysegul Cerci, consumer/co-producer of Ankara DBB group, Turkey.

PGS was discussed not only at the pre-conference, but also at the main conference and in many sessions. The impression of Joy Daniel, Institute of Integrated Rural Development, India: *“Having participated in IFOAM OWC a few times, I could see some positive changes towards inclusiveness and the understanding of food sovereignty. In this OWC, there was good participation in workshops/ discussions related to local markets, family farming and PGS. Moreover, there is greater representation from countries with large numbers of small and marginal farmers.”.*

Continental news: What’s new in...

AFRICA

East Africa: The continuation of IFOAM’s work to promote PGS in East Africa is confirmed. Recently, the four-year project Organic Trade and Value Chain Development in East Africa (OTEVA), funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation (SIDA) was approved. With the support of SIDA, IFOAM has been assisting organic development since 2006, including PGS work in 5 East African countries (Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda). More than 5000 farmers in the region are already verified through PGS, many more are involved. The newly approved OTEVA project gives the opportunity to continue this work and scale-up the achievements. For more information please send a message to the **IFOAM PGS team**.

Tanzania: In his thesis “Exploring potentials for payments for environmental services - Financial incentives and other drivers for organic small scale farmers in the Uluguru Mountains, Morogoro”, Alexander Wostry calls attention to payments for environmental services (PES), which have become more and more popular in developing countries during the last decade. He explains how oftentimes the PES timeframe of 3-5 years is too short to fully involve the farmers in the implementation phase, and concludes that PES will not bring any long-term improvement for the environment if not built on a vibrant participatory approach. For more details about PGS around PES please read the **full document** or send a message to **Alexander Wostry**.

EUROPE

Belgium: The Belgium CSA network GASAP (Groups d'Achat Solidaires de l'Agriculture Paysanne) is looking into establishing a PGS. Between 15 and 16 November they organized a PGS workshop with IFOAM PGS Committee Member Eva Torremocha. Representatives from Nature et Progrès and Grosses legumes, initiatives already working on PGS in Belgium were invited to share their experiences. More than 40 people from several regions in Belgium attended, and with a good representation of farmers (around 10) and processors (3). For more information please contact **GASAP**.

Spain: The University of Córdoba, the University of Granada and Arqueoandalusí Arqueología y Patrimonio S.L. organized a free seminar on organic certification and PGS on 15 November in Cáñar (Granada). Different certification systems were introduced and discussed, among them third-party certification, group certification and PGS. PGS stakeholders from Andalucía, where the Federación Andaluza de Consumidores y Productores Ecológicos (FACPE) acts as the main coordinator of PGS, were given the opportunity to share their PGS experience with the audience. Read more about the seminar **here** (in Spanish).

ASIA AND OCEANIA

Cambodia: A National PGS Workshop was held on 7 October, facilitated by Chris May. This workshop was held in the framework of an ADB funded project to build capacity of PGS in the Greater Mekong Sub-region. During the workshop 5 potential PGS pilots were identified. For more information please contact **Chris May**.

Fiji: A short video on PGS in Fiji was published by IFAD. The video explains how organic papaya production has improved the income of young farmers in Fiji and what role PGS plays for them. To view the video, please follow **this link**. *Note from the IFOAM PGS team:* the use of the term "self-certification" for PGS is not quite accurate and may be misleading, but otherwise, the video is nicely done.

India: Please find the latest issue (Vol.6 Iss.2) of the PGS Organic Council India Newsletter following **this link**. The topics covered in this issue include PGS certification for non-timber forest produce, facing challenges of agricultural entrepreneurship through PGS, evolving an organic lifestyle and many more.

Solomon Islands: A three-day workshop was held in September to prepare organic producers to implement a PGS. The PGS in Solomon Islands will be facilitated by **Kastom Gaden Association**. Initially, fruit and vegetables will be verified for local markets, and *Canarium* (ngali) nuts will be certified for export to an organic market in New Caledonia. This provides Solomon Islands organic farmers with new income earning opportunities. The workshop included theoretical and practical activities focusing on the core documents and structures necessary for the PGS to function.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Panama: In preparation for the climate change conference COP20, held in Lima in December 2015, PGS stakeholders came together on 20 November to discuss issues around PGS and adaptation to climate change. The objective was to promote the involvement of key politicians in PGS matters, especially in regards to supporting family farmers in their struggle against climate change challenges. For more details, please read the **full article** (in Spanish).

Peru: The Asociación Nacional de Productores Ecológicos of Peru - ANPE Peru - announced in October 2014 that there are now 2000 of farmers verified through their PGS. This is an increase of 300 compared to last year when 1700 farmers were counted. Several new regions started to implement PGS and there are a considerable number of farms currently under conversion. For more details, read the **full article** (in Spanish).

Bolivia: Achocalla is a small municipality with about 18 000 inhabitants in the department of La Paz in Bolivia. From fertilizer to fungicides, Achocallan farmers only use organic products to treat their crops. To institutionalize

agro- ecology, the inhabitants are stepping towards the development of an ecological village. They organized an ecological and social platform, in which representatives of each productive sector of the region contributed ideas for drafting the Municipal Charter of Achocalla, which will be approved at the latest in 2015. In Bolivia, there are already at least 17 ecological municipalities. Each year, more and more producers adopt PGS as an alternative certification system to ensure the Organic quality of their crops. For more details please read the **full article** in Spanish).



IMPRINT

The **Global PGS Newsletter** is published bimonthly. All PGS-related articles are welcome. Please send your articles for submission in English, French or Spanish to pgs@ifoam.org.

The Global PGS Newsletter is a free electronic publication. To receive the newsletter, please write to pgs@ifoam.org. The newsletter is published by IFOAM, the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements. You can find out more about PGS [here](#) on the IFOAM website.

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