

**Ethiopian Organic Forum: Public Private Partnership
United Nation Economic Commission for Africa, Addis
Ababa Ethiopia, July8, 2009**



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Commissioned by United Nation Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and United Nation Environment programme (UNEP) joined Capacity Building Task Force (CBTF) for Trade, Environment and Development

Organised by Minister of Rural and Agriculture Development and Ethiopian Association of Organic Agriculture (EAOA)

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Report

Introduction

A one day Public Private Partnership Forum in Organic Agriculture to create awareness among policy makers, and other public-private stakeholders and tries to link them in order to strength the organic sector development was held in the United Nation Economic Commission for Africa, Addis Ababa, July 8, 2009. The Municipal Organisers of the Forum were Minister of Rural and Agriculture Development (MORAD), Ethiopian Association of Organic Agriculture (EAOA) with technical and financial support of United Nation Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and United Nation Environment programme (UNEP) joined capacity building task force(CBTF) for trade environment and development.

During the Organic Forum around thirty participants were participated and the forum has got high media coverage by Government and private media represented by four participants from Ethiopian Television, Herald and Reporter News papers. The participants include Honourable Guest His Excellency Dr. Abera Deressa State Minister of Minster of Rural and Agriculture Development, Dr. Berhe G/Egziabher Director of Animal and Plant Health Regulatory Body, Dr. Tewelde G/Egziabher General Director of the Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority, Dr. Sophia Twargo International Department Head of UNCTAD and UNEP-CBTF, Mr. Hamdou Raby Wane Economic Affairs Officers of UN ECA, Mr. Yishak Mengesha Advisor of the Ethiopian Commodity Exchange Authority, Mr. Alastair Taylor East African Leader of Agro Eco Louis Bolk Institute and representatives of the major stakeholders of the organic sectors from donors, farmers union, sectorial associations, NGOs, consumers association, organic exporters, business development service providers, consultants and researchers.

The main objectives of the forum were to create awareness among policy makers and public-private sectors and build partnership among the public and private sectors to enhance the organic sector development contribution for reducing food insecurity, mitigating climatic change and sustainable development of the country.

The Forum included both national and international guest speakers where the later gave bird eye view and share lessons on the experiences of different countries on organic sector development in Africa and Best Policy Practices for Organic Agriculture and the formers shared in country experiences and lessons in ecological and organic agriculture. The presentation were followed by lively and enthusiasm panel discussions where representatives from public and private sectors debated and dialogued with policy makers on organic agriculture and food security, GMOs, organic research and organic standard and regulations.

At the end of the forum, the way forwards and recommendations from national and international perspectives were presented followed by feedbacks from participants and closing remarks.

Opening Session

The Ethiopian organic Forum Public private Partnership was chaired throughout by Mr. Tsegaye Kassa, General Manager of Sanford International School and Board member of Ethiopian Association of Organic Agriculture (EAOA).



Left to right Dr. Sophia Twargo, H.E Dr. Abera Deressa, Mr. Tesfaye Tekele haimanot and Mr. Tsegaye Kassa

Mr. Tsegaye Kassa opened the forum by welcome all the participants and expressed his pleasure with the presence of H.E Dr. Abera Deressa, Dr. Tewolde G/Egziabher Dr. Sophia Twargo, Alastair Taylor and members of EAOA within short period of notice. He reminded our fortunate to have such forum due to the co-sponsorship of Minster of Rural and Agriculture Development and UNCTAD and UNEP-CBTF for trade, environment and development and EAOA. Then he called up on the President of EAOA Mr. Tesfaye Tekele haimanot to give his welcome remark.

Welcome Remarks

Mr. Tesfaye T/haimanot said he felt great pleasure and honour to welcome all of the participants and H.E Dr. Abera Deressa on behalf of the Ethiopian Association of Organic Agriculture. He reminded his remarks focused only the organic food business sector since he is representing the private sectors where the environmental and other issues would be dealt by others speakers. He recalled the concepts of organic agriculture came up first on the mind of Ethiopian exporters like Oromia Coffee Farmers Union (OCFU) and Kaleb Service Farmer House PLC during 2003 and that was the time where certified organic sesame and coffee export boosted and then in 2006 the Ethiopian organic proclamation were issued by the Minster of Rural and Agriculture Development. However, the organic export of these commodities weren't well organised and supervised as there was no implementation regulation and this lead the organic export wasn't according to the standards. He explained the issue of organic agriculture came on to the table for discussion due to the start of Ethiopian commodity exchange under the minster of Agriculture and hoped soon the organic regulation will be issued. He struck the mind of the participants by the global current growth of organic market by more than 25% and the turn over is around \$ 60 billion USD and particularly China and Indian organic sector development without mentioning the organic sector development in developed countries.

China and India is playing great role in the organic sector for instance India among the total food items exported 56% is organic and in china around 26% of the arable land is under healthy and organic farming. This showed us organic agriculture isn't only the question of developed countries rather it is becoming great opportunities for developing countries and it is also getting great attention. So, he reminded the Ethiopian government particularly the minister of agriculture to give attention for this fast growing sector and work to strength this sector development so that Ethiopian can play great role in the organic export market so that many of agricultural products penetrate in to the international market which is growing due to an easy conversion of the existing farming such as faba bean, chick pea, honey, beewax, gums and resins, coffee, sesame that are produced with no or few application of external inputs and agrochemicals.

Finally he recommended the minister of agriculture to create general awareness about organic agriculture and organic food products, the ministry to give out the organic regulation as soon as possible, demarcation of organic zones or area (GMO free zones), encourage organic farmers, exporters and cooperatives to participate on organic fair trade and Biofach and lastly he invited the minister of agriculture to take part in the board advisor or member of EAOA.

The welcome remarks also continued by the co sponsor: UNCTAD and UNEP-CBTF delegate Dr. Sophia Twargo by welcome the participants and forwarded great thank for the Austria government financial support for this forum. Organic Agriculture is unique in UN because it brings different agencies (FAO, ITC, UNEP and UNCTAD) brought in UN to work together as one which is to promote organic production and trade. Why? Because they believe in organic agriculture since it is a holistic approach based on active agro ecology and builds on traditional agriculture, scientific and indigenous knowledge. Both certified and non certified organic or ecological agriculture offers wide range of food security, environment and social benefits. These are the reasons why the UN engaged in this and Dr. Sophia Twargo elaborated these by mentioning that organic farming offer good food security and sustainable which is anticipated on the 140 case studies in Africa where conversion to organic agriculture increases the productivity by 160%, increases social, natural, capital and human resources. Besides, the IFAD studies showed that organic farmers earn more because of low cost of purchasing input, premium price for certified products and growing organic market. More over, organic agriculture is suit to small scale farmers in Africa in which organic farmers in Africa accounts 24% of the total farmers and Dr. Sophia also congratulated Ethiopia also to be part of this fact and become the leading countries in Africa.

The organic agriculture merits also extend to environment which never pollute soil, water bodies and natural resources and conserve the biodiversity on the farm and around the farm where more insects and birds exist in organic farming. It also improves the soil fertility and structure and resilience from pragmatic stress, good climatic change adaptation strategy and mitigation. For all of these reasons organic agriculture is a tool for reaching the Millennium Development Goals.

Mr. Tesfay T/haimanot invited H.E State Minister of Minister of Rural and Agriculture Development Dr. Aberra Deressa to give the official opening speech of the forum.

Opening Speech

H. E State Minister Dr. Aberra Deressa mentioned that he felt an honour and pleasure to be present at the opening of the first Ethiopian Organic Forum: Organic Sector Public Private Partnership and to be one of the municipal organising organisations in collaboration with Ethiopian Association of Organic Agriculture (EAOA), United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) joint task force for trade, environment and development.

H.E recalled the policy framework of development of the country since 1998 that is issued by the Government is pursuing Agricultural Development Lead Industrialisation (ADLI) as a major framework where Agriculture is found to be the starting point of initiating the structural transformation of the economy there by increasing productivity of the smallholder agriculture and industrialisation based on utilization of domestic raw materials via adopting labor-intensive technology.

Organic agriculture is, by its nature, more labour intensive than industrial agriculture and its concepts also encourage sustainable use of domestic raw materials. Therefore it makes sense for Ethiopia to also compete globally in organic agriculture sector where the market has been growing annually by more than 25%. Besides, the current global concern on climate change, greenhouse gas emission, degradation of the natural resource base and dramatic decline in soil productivity has created a favourable condition for organic agriculture to get focus in the country. In response to this in 2006 the government issued the Ethiopian Organic Agriculture System Proclamation (Proclamation No.488/2006) to support organic agriculture as a means of new market access, gives opportunities for better competence in the international market and easy conversion of Ethiopian agriculture at the same time it also conserves our non-renewable natural resource. The establishment of the Ethiopian Association of Organic Agriculture is also the outcome of this favourable policy.

Moreover, based on other countries' experiences in organic agriculture building the public private partnership and organic institutional development has brought indisputable economic development where we will also get bird-eye-view and more lessons from UNCTAD and UNEP case study about best policy practice for Organic agriculture which will be presented today. H.E also mentioned that soon or later Ethiopia will get the benefit from organic sector development and that will be achieved when all of us here are working together hand in hand. So, today Ethiopian Organic Forum: public private partnership is the start of our long journey to go through to achieve our common goal that is making our country to be a better place to live and work in the New Millennium and such kind of efforts has to be also continued.

Finally, H.E Dr. Abera concluded by wishing good progress in the course of the participants' deliberation and declared the First Ethiopian Organic Forum: Public Private Partnership officially opened.

The chairman invited Dr. Tewolde Gebre Egziabher General Director of Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority to give key note address

Keynote Address

Dr. Tewolde G/Egziabher mentioned the issue of organic or ecological farming is become detect of survival to note our impending doom and to do all that we can to contribute to its avoiding it. There is no doubt climatic change is our self inflict doom that is overshadowing terrify. These means that if we want to live we have to act to nuteralise it before devastating us and Dr. Tewolde shared his view how we can mitigate climatic change and adapt with and live as long as we can and not only climatic change but also all aspect of environmental deterioration. The contribution of Ethiopian to global green gas emission is limited to a few vehicles and almost all of the electricity source entirely from hydro powers and the house fuel consumption is from wood fire, Howe ever, virtually all our climatic change imposed on us from outside nevertheless climate combat is our own affairs. The ecological and sustainable agriculture experiences of ISD in the Tigray region stipulated the contribution of organic farming in regard to re -vegetation and reforestation and reverse land degradations.

Dr. Tewolde also extended his rich believes in ecological farming to solve the current global crises and climatic change and enhances sustainable development. Dr. Tewolde also explained about the possibilities of economic benefits that get from carbon trading and the Kyoto protocol. For full information please click

Then Mr. Tsegaye Kassa reminded the participants the importance of organic agriculture and this organic forum along with all the former speakers and invited Dr. Sophia Twargo to give the presentation on Best Policy Practices for Organic Agriculture.

UNCTAD and UNEP Joined Capacity Building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development

(Dr. Sophia Twargo, International Department Head UNCTAD and UNEP CBTF)

Dr. Sophia Twargo shared the 35 actionable recommendation of the UNEP-UNCTAD CBTF study based on case studies of 7 countries and other experiences and this presentation can be found on the website. The study showed that the importance of assigning focal person for organic in the minister of agriculture which is mentioned on the organic proclamation and meeting every month to discuss which means giving recognitions in addition to collecting data and monitoring which helps to make important decisions. The other most important points are speaking up about organic agriculture and create awareness in all levels and train staffs specially extension workers and offer organic foods and beverage (organic coffee) in major organic events like such conference and other meetings of minister of agriculture that are cost much but make big difference.

The joint national or regional organic standards can play important role regardless being governmental or private standards where the key issues is involve the stakeholders and it has to be applicable standards. The most important is the scope of the standard and it shall focus for domestic market based on the local ecology, traditional systems and this has huge potential for Ethiopia since there are many population in the country. However, for export market the standards has to be based on the rule of the importing countries or look for a possibility of equivalency but it takes a lot of resources for example from Africa, Tunisia has got the equivalency to the EU standard and be on the third country EU list after it took eight years. The standards go beyond trade and play important role in building organic network.

Dr. Sophia also emphasised the importance of domestic organic certification bodies which play great role for domestic market development but often it needs assistance and training of producers to go for certification which it is also has to be facilitated to access service by government. The compulsory regulation for domestic certification should be avoided at the initial stage because it kills the domestic market before it grow and better to look other kind of systems such Participatory guarantee System particularly for domestic market. Regulation mayn't boost the organic market growth for examples at the inception of the EU regulation the organic market rather than going up it went dawn. Dr. Sophia also gave the following bird I views on what the government can do for the participants and policy makes: the Government can:

- Give the public recognition in schools, hospitals and government offices
- Promote domestic market and market place for example one organic market day at Addis Ababa
- Promote one organic lable and it is also possible to use the EAOPS labels by only translate the term organic in to the local language.
- Facilitate the support famers and exporters in conversion and certification
- Give organic market information (organic market trend and price) systems and support participation of farmers to organic fair trade and biofach.
- Protect organic farms from GMO contamination and pesticides eg in Uganda the application of DDT for yellow fever by minister of health completely resulted in rejection of 15 thousands of organic farmers.
- Scaling up of good organic agriculture good practices like the ISD experiences
- Included organic agriculture in the curriculum of agricultural schools, primary and secondary schools and specialised training institutions.
- Strength and play great role in organic research development based on the demand of the stakeholders and has to be participatory
- Establish centre of excellence in organic research like the experience of Uganda

In addition the government can remove obstacles and disincentives in organic agriculture such as subsidies for GMOs and Agrochemicals. Regional and international collaboration in marketing, information, research, and standard development has also to be strengthened. Finally Dr. Sophia recommended that especially for domestic market development at initial stage there will be only limited organic products so it is important to import based on the international standard. Finally Dr. Sophia concluded with recommendation of the most important points about the equivalent tools manual of UNCTAD and the International requirement for organic certification bodies(IROCB) and these cab be used by the minister of agriculture to develop the requirement of setting up the domestic organic certification in Ethiopia and linking urban waste management to organic agriculture where urban waste used for composting in rural areas and organic products export to urban.

Mr. Tsegaye Kassa invited Mr. Mohammed Kiyar General Manager of ACo Ersha and Board Member of EAOA to give presentation on status of organic agriculture in Ethiopia which is made by Aco Ersha in collaboration with EAOA.

Status of Organic Agriculture in Ethiopia

Mr. Mohammed Kiyar reminded about the launching the conference of EAOA held on November 13, 2008 at Hilton Hotel Addis Ababa Ethiopia and forwarded his acknowledgement for Commission of Swedish Society of Nature Conservation (SSNC) for the baseline study of organic agriculture in Ethiopia

Mr. Mohammed Kiyar explained about the organic sector development in Ethiopia where most farmers in Ethiopia has a long history and still continue to practice low external input agriculture, otherwise known as traditional or subsistence farming, with a strong bias towards organic principles for at least 5000 years. Due to the fact that organic agriculture can increase productivity without reliance on chemical inputs, while at the same time conserving the natural resources, and the fact that the majority of the smallholder farmers lack cash for purchasing external inputs, organic intensification of agriculture is a viable option for farmers to improve their food security and incomes. These have been strengthened by the strong effort of local and international NGOs such as Institute of Sustainable Development (ISD) of the ecological farming project in the Tigray region and the Integrated Pest management of the UK projects are the prevalence once. From a commercial point of view, organic agriculture was started in 1996 by a private company called 'Mandura' Ethiopia in the north-western part of the country, where it focused on producing organic sesame. Then after, the role of the private sectors in the organic sector development has shown dramatic progress to where there are 23 private companies and 5 farmers' cooperatives currently involved in organic production and export mainly in Coffee, Sesame, table honey and Bee wax production.

These developments have contributed significantly to the current improvement of certified organic production in Ethiopia (Table 1), which includes the following products:

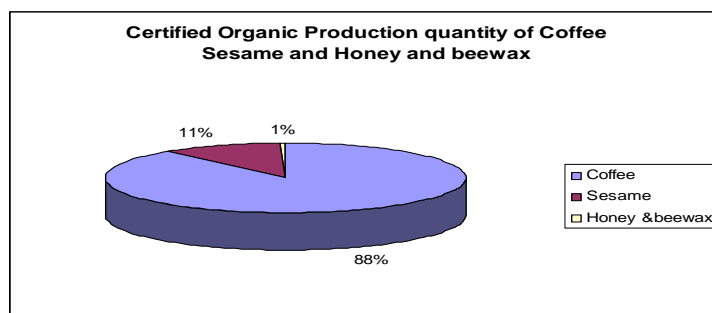
- I. Honey from SNNP region (Bonga and Sheka), Tigray, Oromia and Amhara Regional states;
- II. Coffee and cotton from Oromiya, and SNNP;
- III. Sesame from Tigray (Humera) and Oromiya (Wollega) Regions;
- IV. Essential oils and herbs from SNNP Region;
- V. Gums and resins from Somali, Afar and Amhara Regions; and
- VI. Cotton from Afar and SNNP Regions.

In 2003, the government of Ethiopia announced that it would support the development of organic agriculture and a taskforce was established to draw up an Ethiopian Organic Agriculture Regulation, which could become law, and regulations to describe how organic products should be defined. This was the period when most of the projects and/or businesses to produce certified organic products were started. The Ethiopian Organic Agriculture System proclamation (Proclamation No 488/2006) was issued and signed into law on 8 March 2006. The main reasons why the Ethiopian Government is supporting organic agriculture are organic agriculture is creating new market access which gives premium prices for Ethiopian agricultural products while at the same time it conserves the natural resources and easy conversion of the existing farming systems. Currently the Ethiopian government is in the process of setting up Ethiopian organic regulation and standard.

The enthusiastic support of different organizations, including 12 NGOs who are directly or indirectly supporting organic sector development in terms of delivering training, funding and advocacy; NGOs include: Institute for Sustainable Development in its project called "the Tigray project" and the Save the Children of the UK which initiated the organically-based Integrated Pest Management Programme in SNNP, Amhara and Tigray Regions and private companies, for the development of Ethiopia's organic sector resulted in the institutionalization and establishment of an organic movement called "Ethiopian Association of Organic Agriculture (EAOA)" in year 2007. The Ethiopian Association of Organic Agriculture (EAOA) is the umbrella organization for organic agriculture in Ethiopia.

In 2007, EAOA developed a strategic plan with five pillars to guide its future activities to enhance the organic sector development by creating networking among the various organic actors and operators in the country. Other organisations that are supporting organic sector development in Ethiopia are SNV, Agriservice Ethiopia GTZ and Fintrac USAID. Generally, the lack of recognized systems for collection of data on organic agriculture worldwide and the prevalence of uncertified organic farms presents an inherent weakness in terms of getting reliable information (FAO 2002). This situation is also true in Ethiopia. In Ethiopia there are certified and non-certified organic farms producing for export and local markets where the later are only for the local market. The types of products for non-certified organic include vegetables, fruits, spaghetti/pasta, wheat, pulses, spices, dairy products and some organic cosmetics where the main market outlets are supermarkets, farm gate market and Hotels. The main challenges observed in the development of a local market are that there is no special market place or supermarkets for organic products, there is no accreditation system to separate organic from non organic. Besides, there is lack of organic farming technologies and knowledge about ICS, PGS and marketing strategies.

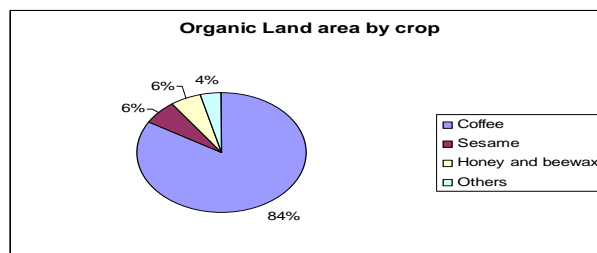
Figure 1: Total amount of organic production of coffee, sesame, and honey and beeswax in 2007/08



The organic baseline survey study in year 2008 revealed that there are currently over 137,822 hectares of land under organic certification for export markets which includes 110,861 certified organic farmers widespread through the country in which Oromia, SNNP, Amhara and Tigray Regions are the leading regions in terms of organic production area and products. This figure puts Ethiopia in the top 30 countries in the world in area under organic agriculture. There is also a significant farming area soon to be in conversion for wild harvested products.

The core certified organic products, which have already been brought into the export organic markets, are mainly coffee, sesame and honey. The total amount of certified organic production of the three main products was 5297.5 metric tons in year 2007/08, of which coffee accounted for 88% followed by sesame which shared 11% with honey and beeswax making 1 % (Figure 1). Among the core products, coffee is taking the largest share in terms of area covered accounting for 84% of the organic certified land area and certified farmers, followed by sesame sharing 6%, and various honeys accounting for 6%; the other products share 4%(Figure 2).

Figure 2: Share of Certified Organic Products by Organic Land Area



The Ethiopian total organic products export has been grown annually by 50% during the year 2005/08 and the Ethiopian organic small scale poor farmers have been enjoying the benefit of getting premium price in which in average it ranges from 0.5 USD to 1 USD/lb more than the conventional farmers.

Moreover, there are some certified organic wild products, such as frankincense, herbal tea, essential oils and mushrooms and there are possibilities for producing new certified organic products in Ethiopia, such as organic dried and fresh pineapple and mango fruits, herbal juices and jams. The only initiative in certified processed or value-added organic export products from Ethiopia comes from one Ethiopian company called Selet Hulling PLC in collaboration with a foreign company called Tradin, which is processing organic hulled sesame.

In Ethiopia, organic certification has taken place since the mid-1990s. The certification was started by Ecocert — an international company based in France. Currently there are four international organizations offering certification in Ethiopia: IMO, Ceres, BCS and Control Union. BCS has currently certified most of the organic producers in the country. Almost all certified organic production in Ethiopia is certified according to the EU regulation 2092/9. Increasingly, as producers target more distant markets, production is also certified according to the US National Organic Program (NOP), or the organic standards of Japan Agriculture Standards (JAS).

There are no local certification bodies and laboratory facility working in the country able to make residue analysis on crops and products in Ethiopia. But, since 2007, an initiative has taken from EAOA to lobby the government for Ethiopian local certification company and laboratory facility under the Ethiopian Standard and Quality Authority (ESQA) to be established in the country so that they could help the smallholder farmers which are afraid of the high cost of international certification. This could also help them in local market development. There are also other certification systems in Ethiopia, such as HACCP, Fair trade, Rainforest Alliance, EuroGap and ISO. Most of them are certifying the Floriculture industry, processed beverages and food, and coffee.

Even though agricultural research in Ethiopia has started more than forty years ago, organic agriculture research has yet got little attention to be the main stream in the research systems in the country. However, recently, a growing number of farmers, exporters, NGOs and politicians among others have realized that instead of the capital- and chemical input-intensive approach, Ethiopia should favour organic agriculture that emphasis's bio-diversity, recycling of nutrients, synergy among crops, animals, soils, and other biological components, as well as regeneration and conservation of natural resources. In response to these and recent growth of demand in organic research in the country and abroad a number of organic researches has been done by different organization, research institutes, Universities and others, which is trying to help the organic Agriculture systems in the past.

The survey found that there is neither any government nor non-government organization, nor private company dedicated to producing and marketing organic seed, but Traditionally, all smallholder farmers have systems to identify and harvest or propagate, if the planting material is not a botanical seed, the plants among their crops which they will save and use for seed in the following growing seasons (Hailu Araya, 2003). Despite the rapid increase in the area and number of farmers using 'improved varieties' developed by research, the majority of Ethiopia's smallholder farmers are still using seed that has been grown without the use of agro-chemicals, particularly pesticides. More over, there are some initiatives in organic seed production from some NGOs with other objectives such as for biodiversity conservation. The Ethiopian Organic Seed Action (EOSA) is the major NGO which is involved in supporting farmers to produce organic Wheat, Barley, Teff and lentil seed in Gembichu Wereda around the town and administrative centre of the Wereda, Chefe Donsa, also in Ejere in the neighbouring Wereda as well as parts of Bale Zone, all in Oromiya Region. These farmers have formed Crop Conservators Associations as well as worked with plant breeders from formal research to produce Elite Farmers' Varieties. These farmers produce their own organic seeds for themselves and sell some of their varieties to their neighbors. The farmers and breeders have developed gluten free organic bread wheat and durum wheat varieties. Developing an export market in organic wheat from these farmers could help them make their organic production systems more sustainable.

Globally, organic agriculture is a new sector, although many of its approaches and technologies were developed and used before the introduction of chemical inputs and mechanization typified by modern industrial agriculture. Globally, organic agriculture has many challenges and, at the same time, a lot of opportunities. These are true also for the development of the organic sector in Ethiopia. The main challenges of the organic sector development in Ethiopia are inadequate knowledge of organic techniques by farmers, exporters, processors, lack of Governmental and/or private extension service and training, lack of low cost of certification techniques, lack of high quality and consistency organic product supply, not well developed local market and specialized research and weak network in coordination and mobilization of human and financial resources.

Generally, the organic baseline survey study in year 2008 revealed the previously unknown fact that Ethiopia is among the leading countries in the world and Africa in area under recognized organic agriculture. In conclusion, there is still a lot of potential for the organic agriculture sector development further in Ethiopia if, and only if, a lot more effort is done regarding organic research, training, product diversification and marketing. This will improve the livelihood of millions of Ethiopia's poor farmers and maximize the country's benefits from the growing organic sector for sustainable economic development, food security and poverty reduction which also helps to mitigate the climatic change.

Mr. Tsegaye Kassa invited Mr. Tadesse Meskella to moderate the panel session and discussion on the paper presented by the two papers presented by Dr. Sophia Twargo and Mr. Mohammed Kiyar and opened the floor for discussions.

Discussion

The presentations were followed by a vigorous discussion with several important questions, comments and answers to questions raised.

What is the practice advice about what kind of subsidies can be in Ethiopian situation where there is no any kind of subsidies for any kind of sectors?

Generally UNCTAD is always fighting subsidies even though there is some kind of subsidies in organic farming but recommended to quite permanent subsidies in organic farming and in Ethiopian context there is a possibility of only give subsidies in the conversion period and setting up the ICS for small scale group certification. For examples in Ugandan setting up ICS for small scale farmers costs around \$ 20 thousands US which is very expensive and if the subsidies given to conventional farmers for Agro chemical or seeds the same kind of support has to be also given to organic farmers. But for Sustainability it is better not rely on any subsidies.

What can the policy makers give advice and their opinions about the GMO free zones in Ethiopia as a right of community as promoter of organic agriculture?

Whether organic or GMOs it is industry driven and the consumers can play great role in boosting the organic market by buying organic products. It is important to make GMO free zones or give compensation for the farmers in the case of GMO contamination (eg. in US).

What are the standard the certification bodies used to certify organic products without know how of the government of Ethiopia and do these products get export market?

There are around five certification bodies that are operating in Ethiopia based on the baseline survey study and these certification companies are working through their agents in Ethiopia and/or are registered company. They are certifying only for export market based on the importing countries organic standards and regulations mainly according to NOP, EU and JAS. Almost all the certified organic products are exported to the International Market.

What is the scope of the organic baseline survey and to what extent the term organic agriculture in the study consider based on the wide range of diverse traditional farming practices exist in Ethiopia?

This report from the baseline survey does not include the whole information about organic agriculture in the Ethiopia: it mainly focuses on the status of baseline data, organic research, education, training, and organic regulation. The survey report is compiled based on the information mainly collected from the four crop production geo-political regions: Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples (SNNP), Tigray, Oromia and Addis Ababa where organic agriculture is practiced. The term organic agriculture used for this study based on IFOAM's(International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) and the Codex Alimentarius of the FAO and WHO and mainly targeted to certified organic commercial farms and sustainable Agro farming. Generally, the lack of recognized systems for collection of data on organic agriculture worldwide and the prevalence of uncertified organic farms presents an inherent weakness in terms of getting reliable information (FAO 2002). This situation is also true in Ethiopia. So, the survey report isn't exhaustive as to the extent to be

demanded and such kind of data collection and monitoring is crucial for the organic sector development and for policy making.

There were also comments forwarded by the participants on the presentations

- Fraudulent certification systems or adulteration in organic sector greatly affect the organic private sector development in the country so that the organic standard and regulation which will be issued soon has to tackle this and the regulation has to be a means of supervision and monitoring rather than being a controlling.
- The organic baseline study isn't include the benefits of organic farming getting from yield increment which is mentioned the UNCTAD and IFAD studies. Other research experience in minimum tillage compare to conventional tillage in wheat, Barley and Teff and the resul showed the yield is increase double every year and the crop residue advantage in these crops also increased dramatically.
- The concept of organic farming in Ethiopia shall better to go beyond commercial certified and non certified organic farming where in country like Ethiopia which has wide range diverse agroecologies.

The Chair man invited Dr. Berhe G/Egziabher Director of the Animal and Plant Health Regulatory Body to present the status of organic policy development in Ethiopia.

Status of Organic Policy Development in Ethiopia

Dr. Berhe G/Egziabher Director of Animal and Plant Health Regulatory Body

Dr. Berhe G/Egziabher started the organic policy development in Ethiopian presentation by defining the Organic Agriculture production Standard Directives- it is standard directive which shall be prepared by the Ministry on how organic agricultural products are produced, Processed and distributed. The Term Organic agriculture products is a product which is produced, processed, or handled or distributed without the use of synthetic chemicals and GMOs. Currently based on the powers & duties of the Ministry vested in the proclamation No. 488/2006, the Ministry is working Details on:-

- I. Duration of accreditation of certification bodies
- II. Services charges for services rendered to certification bodies for accreditation
- III. define the duties and responsibilities of Certification bodies and Inspectors)
- IV. Requirements for certification of an operator
- V. Actions to be taken by certification body with respect to an applicant for certification
- VI. Grounds for the actions (in No.5 above) to be taken by a certification body
- VII. Record keeping & labeling
- VIII. Requirements for accreditation of certification body
- IX. Denial, suspension, and revocation of accreditation
- X. Actions and grounds for the actions, the Ministry may take with respect to an applicant for accreditation or an accredited certification body
- XI. Conditions for granting accreditation
- XII. Plant production standards includes
 - Land requirement
 - Organic production &
 - handling system plan
 - Conversion period
 - Soil fertility & plant nutrient management
 - Plant production management
 - pest, weed & disease management

- pest outbreak management
- Facility pest management
- contamination prevention
- Handling requirement

XIII. Livestock production standards includes

- Live stock living conditions
- Feed & feed supplement
- Origin of live stock
- Breeder stock
- Animal health care
- Bee keeping
- Conversion period

Dr. Berhe ended the presentation with the most strategic interventions required to further benefit from the existing opportunities in the organic market. Further development and implementation of organic standard is crucial, hence the following intervention has to be done:-

- Awareness creation at various levels is required
- Capacity building in the field of regulatory bodies, extension, education, and research is required
- Inclusion of organic Agriculture in curriculum of higher learning institutions and training centers
- Improving linkage between GO's & NGO's and strength public private partnership
- Strengthening the linkage among regulatory bodies, extension Services, research institution and learning institutions
- Support from International organizations & NGO's working in Ethiopia is required in the above intervention areas.

Mr. Chairman called up on the delegates from the MOARD Dr. Berhe G/Egzibaher and Mr. Fikre Markos from Animal and Plant Health Director to lead the panel session

The Panel Session

What the Government can do?

The presentation was followed by the panel session on what the Ethiopian Government and policy makers can do for the organic sector development in Ethiopia?

The panel session started with the concerns and dialogues raised by the representatives from the government and minister of agriculture and rural development.

What is the government is doing in supporting the organic sector development so far? And what are the main challenges of the Ministry?

The main concern of the ministry about the benefit of organic agriculture which is sustainable than Agro chemical intensive agriculture but that is after three or more years' conversion period and this makes difficult to coincide with the interest of the government fast and rapid agricultural economic development where this can be resolved based on research findings which expected from active participation and working closely together with all stakeholders. So, there is a need of strategies to resolve the catastrophe between

the two government interests. Even though, the effort of the government hasn't done much on promoting organic agriculture so far there are initiatives in main streaming organic agriculture to the main agriculture policies such as facilitates importing of organic inputs, recognition of effective micro organisms, Bio pesticides and biological control in floriculture and the sector is moving by itself.

Dr. Berhe G/Egziabher Director of Animal and Plant Health Regulatory Body also reflected the stand of the government policy which is accommodating different ideas whether pro organic or pro GMO which is the sign of democracy but bring it for discussion and again for discussion. At the same time the government also emphasised that food security should not be an expense of poisoning the community and the nations. Besides, the government has keen interest to develop the Ethiopian organic guidelines and standard but there is a need of capacity building of the minister of agriculture and invited the Ethiopian Association of Organic Agriculture to come up with the indigenous knowledge to work with the minister of agriculture and build the capacity of the Minister of Agriculture.

The main challenges of the minister of agriculture in setting up the organic regulation and guidelines is limited technical knowledge where the educational systems in high learning institution ignore or neglect organic agriculture and this needs a paradigm shift which isn't easy to make it happen within short period of time. Such kind of organic forum: public private partnership is crucial to be a plat form to set the organic agriculture system council and to develop the organic regulation and guidelines.

Can organic agriculture can be a solution for food insecurity in Ethiopia?

Dr. Amare Getahun General Manager of Apinc Agro processing PLC reported the research finding in East Africa on Agro chemicals farming verse organic farming showed that not any of the data of organic farming outsmarted by conventional farming interims of grain yield and crop residue. On other hand application of agro chemicals causes acidification in many highlands particularly in Ethiopia, requires more fertilization and required soil amendment. These facts are strengthened by Dr. Regassa Feyissa from Ethiopian Organic Seed Action experiences that there is a proof where low input agriculture outsmarted high inputs. All these facts anticipated the fact that there is no fear of promoting organic farming with the expense of any other kind of farming system in Ethiopia but the question is; is the policy advisors are ready to check the perception on organic agriculture and opened our doors to see all facts.

Can the conventional or modern breeding systems or research exist in Ethiopia helps the organic sector development or is there a need of new paradigm shift?

Starting in 1920 in Europe and US plant breeders developed a variety that responded to only NPK application. But, during in 1970's in East Asia the concern of these modern varieties requirement for more and more application of NPK become a big issue in the FAO. Besides, the fact is even modern varieties can't respond and give the same yield all the same time in different agro climatic conditions. Even, two twins of human being having similar genetic make up grow and become different personality. This means that it is not possible to compare a high yielding variety that developed for modern farming which responds to modern agriculture with organic farming. So there is a need of development of varieties that respond for holistic systems or organic systems. The Research on participatory organic breeding of the Ethiopian Organic Seed Action showed that elite varieties of durum wheat

outsmarted in grain yield to any of the varieties so far released by the Debre Zeit Research centre.

So, the minister of agriculture along with all stakeholders including research institutes should have to see different facts and realised wide range of experiences to analysis the benefit of organic and ecological farming before making policy suggestions.

Then the Chairman invited Mr. Alastair Taylor to share the East African experiences in organic sector development.

Organic Sector Development in East Africa

Alastair Taylor Regional Manager Agro Eco Louis Bolk Institute, East African Office

Agro Eco Louis Bolk institute has 14 years experience in Africa regardless limited to geographical locations and he served as the chairman for four year in the National Organic Movement of Uganda (NOGAMU). Generally he explained the organic domestic market in the East African is developing rapidly. For more information about the presentation visits the website.

Ecological Agriculture for Food Security and an end of Poverty

Mrs. Sue Edward General Manger of Institute of Sustainable Development (ISD)

Mrs Sue started the presentation with briefing the history of the Tigray project which was implemented in collaboration with Agricultural Offices with financial support of the TWN (Third World Network) and Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC).

The project is implemented in the most degraded part of the region where the major components of the project are

- by-law to help the local communities to restore local control and effective management of their natural resources,
- improving biological_and_physical_water and soil conservation through trench bunds and planting the multipurpose small tree *Sesbania sesban*, and other local biodiversity such as tall grasses, controlling, preferably stopping, free-range grazing to allow more grass, herbs and trees to grow,
- restoring soil fertility through making and using compost,
- helping farmers avoid debt paid for chemical fertilizer.

The on farm research of organic fertilizer (compost) verse with control and synthetic fertilizers on seven cereals crops showed that the composted farm gave better yield than any of the other treatments. The other finding that released by the farmers is application of compost once has residual effect which stay for three or four consecutive years. In addition it reduces invasion weed infestation, reduces prevalence of pests and reduces soil erosion.

Since 2003 the experience of this Tigray project has been scaling out and up to all regions of the county and in year 2008 cropping season the Central Statics Authority reported that 86% of farmers in the Tigray region applied compost or ash means of fertilizers. Moreover, the MoARD gathered data on the same year reported that 1.8 millions hectares of farmlands (16 % of the total cultivated area of the country), cultivated by around 2million farming families, were fertilised with compost.

Mrs Sue Edwards concluded that since a field needs compost only every other to every 4th year to maintain its fertility, the figure of 1.8 million hectares would indicate that around 1/3rd of the cultivated area of Ethiopia is being organically fertilized each year. Mrs Sue ended the presentation by mentioning on the opportunity for Ethiopia to avoid heavy debts for costly external inputs but continue to increase crop production for food security is very high through mainstreaming ecological or organic agriculture into its extension package with reminding this mayn't happen tomorrow.

The Way Forward from National Perspectives

Mr. Addisu Alemayehu, Deputy Manager of Aco Ersha promotion PLC and EAOA board member

Mr. Addisu Alemayehu recalled that even though the concept of organic agriculture introduced in Ethiopia by NGOs and private companies for food insecurity natural resource conservation and better income more than 14 years ago institutionalisation of the organic sector development through establishing an Ethiopian Organic movement call Ethiopian Association of Organic Agriculture was done in 2007. He outlined the most important points raised during the discussion and presentation and forwarded recommendation that has to be done in the near future for the organic sector development in Ethiopia and to achieve the main objectives of this forum.

All the issues that rose for the whole day were fitting to the five strategic plan of EAOA that already had and organising such kind of organic forum public private partnership where delegate from policy makers, private exporters, farmers organisations, NGOs and GOs where will meet to discuss, is put under the advocacy and lobby strategies. This forum was successful and will lead the organic sector development in Ethiopia one step a head and has to be done every year.

The second strategies in organic standard and certification on this forum and we got rich lessons from UNCTAD-UNEP CBTF case studies and East African experiences where what kind of certification systems and organic regulations and standards are vital for the organic sector development in Ethiopia. More over what kind of intervention that the minister of agriculture is need for the organic sector development.

Organic Market development the third strategic plan where globally the current organic market grow by more than 25% per annum and Ethiopia should have to exploit this highly growing the market through promotion of Ethiopian Organic products in to the international organic fair trade or Biofach and the government role in this regard is crucial as we saw to day from the best policy practice study presented in the morning. Besides, the Ethiopian organic sectors have to create and strength the regional collaboration in organic trade and information sharing without neglecting there is a need of promoting one labels. The domestic organic market has to be also developed through promoting organic market days so that sector has to be sustainably developed.

The forth strategy is capacity building through training, research and extension service. The East African experiences on organic education and training is give how much all the organic public private partnership have to work tremendous effort in this regard and soon or later these all service will develop.

The fifth strategic plan is Organic Networking through establishing organic information and resource centres. The organic research findings presented to day by different stakeholders

which all may be surprised on what kind of resourceful persons and information that had in the country and this has to be used and bring to the ministry of desk for discussions. Besides, one of the policy recommendations of the study of UNCTAD-UNEP CBTF the government has to develop market information sources in organic market and trends and this reminded to link this to the currently existing commodity exchange under the minister of agriculture to be source of the organic market information centre in Ethiopia.

Mr. Addisu concluded by forwarding the following important recommendations that has to be followed or implemented by the public private sectors in Ethiopia:-

- Organic Forum public private partnership has to be done once every one or two years
- The domestic organic market development has to be strengthened for sustainable organic sector development in Ethiopia
- The organic information resource centre on research and market has to be establishing in Ethiopia
- Organic agriculture promotion and recognition through public procurement is also crucial for the organic sector development
- The organic standard, guideline and regulation may be required for the current situations in the country but the development of these has to be through involvement and consultation of the entire organic stakeholder.
- The role of women in the organic sector development has also to be strengthened

The Way Forward from International Perspectives- Dr. Sophia Twargo of UNCTAD-UNEP CBTF for Trade, Environment and Development.

Dr. Sophia outlined shortly the most important action plan required for the organic sector development in Ethiopia and recalled the importance of local organic shops , supermarkets and restaurants for the organic domestic organic market and this involve the active role of consumer associations or EAOA in regard to creating awareness of consumers about organic foods. The Minister of Agriculture need to develop action plan and implement as quick as possible and role of EAOA is prominent for the organic sector development. Besides, the country should have to use efficiently human, animal capital, social and natural resources that have for organic sector development and poverty reductions in the country.

Feedbacks on the Organic Forum

Feedback from the Ethiopian consumer association

Mr. Gebremedhin Berga sarded the feed back by reminded the importance of organic consumption for Ethiopian consumers by only buying and eating organic and this is the right of all consumers. The consumer association is very happy to promote organic and eager to see the private sectors involvement in organic food and beverage investment. Finally whether we are producers and exporters all of us consumers so there is synergies among us to promote organic agriculture and consumption.

Finally, Mr. Hamdou Raby Wane delegate from the UN Economic Commission for Africa mentioned the future direction of ECA in the trade and development programme which is promote organic agriculture in Africa and develop regional level collaboration.

Then the president of EAOA invited Mr. Yisak Mengesha advisor and delegate of the Ethiopian Commodity Exchange Authority to give the closing remarks.

Closing Remarks

Mr. Yisak Menesha started by thanking the organizers of this important forum, particularly the Ethiopian Association of Organic Agriculture, the United Nation Conference for Trade and Development, and the United Nation Environment Programme, and others.

Indeed, this daylong workshop was highly interactive and stimulating. The presentations, study papers and panel discussions were quite informative for many of us, and touched upon the key issues pertinent not only to the agricultural producers but to all of us including to the consumers, exporters, suppliers, regulators, policy makers, and to the entire general public. Evidence highlighted by the papers presented and the panel discussions made suggest that the smallholder farmers stand to benefit (in terms of both sustainably higher yield and cash income) from the package of organic agriculture more than that from the continued application of chemical fertilizers. This is quite inspiring and heartening particularly at this time where prices of these industrial inputs reached beyond the means of most smallholders. Even for those who can currently afford, the financial returns from the continued use of the chemical fertilizer may turn out to be less obvious, their continued use may not be guaranteed, and sooner or later, these farmers may be excluded from using them if the price trend continues at the rate it did in the recent past. But the contribution of organic agriculture is beyond that. Its effects in terms of preserving and rejuvenating the natural resources and the environment at large, which are the basis for a sustained agricultural production and long term food security, have been well stressed by the presentations and discussions you made.

As we all know and well noted in this forum, the global demand for organic agricultural commodities is growing at a rate much higher than the demand for non-organic. Organic agricultural commodities are traded at a premium prices in this global market, suggesting that there is a growing market segment willing to pay higher prices for these products. And, it is also known that our agricultural produces and export commodities remained largely organic. However, by and large, our agricultural export commodities are not priced according to their intrinsic organic values in this global market. **If they were, income and livelihood of the very producers could have been a lot better even for the given current level of production and export.** You have rightly stressed the challenges along this: the institutional and related technical requirements for **certification**, standard settings, and regulation over certification and related issues. You have also raised a number of other issues including the gaps in research dedicated to organic agriculture, promoting organic products in the domestic markets, further scaling up of piloted practices, potential risks of trade off between the short term versus long term benefits, and the need for appropriately designed marketing strategies specific to organic commodities. The efforts so far made in organic certification, promotion, awareness creation etc are encouraging and laudable. Nonetheless, they are of limited scale when compared against the high hopes and expectations.

Mr. Yisake reminded all above these are important issues requiring persistent and concerted efforts of both the public and private sectors and very much hopeful that the policy recommendations made by this august forum are well shared by all of us, and will be part of our action plans on which to work from our own perspectives for their full realizations.

ANNEXES

Annex 1. Programme

08.00 - 08.45	Registration
08.45 - 10.00	Opening
<i>Moderator: Tsegaye Kassa, EAOA</i>	
08.45 - 09.00	Introduction by Participants
09.00 - 09.05	Welcoming Remarks (Tesfaye T/Haimanoite, President of EAOA)
09.05 - 09.10	Welcoming Remarks (Sophia Twarog, UNEP-UNCTAD CBTF)
09.10 - 09.20	Opening Speech (H.E. Dr. Abera Deressa, State Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development)
09.20 - 09.30	Key Note Address (Dr. Tewolde G/Egziabher, General Director Ethiopian Environmental Protection Agency, and Chair of GA)
09.30 - 10.00	Sector Development
<i>Moderator: Tadesse Meskela EAOA and Oromia Coffee Farmers Cooperative Union(OCFCU)</i>	
09.30 - 09.45	Status of Organic Agriculture in Ethiopia (Mohammed Kiyar, EAOA and Aco Ersha)
09.45 - 10.00	Organic Sector Developments in East Africa (Alastair Taylor, Agro Eco Louis Bolk Institute)
10.00 - 10.30	Coffee/ Tea and Group Photo
10.30 - 12.20	Policies
<i>Moderator: Addisu Alemayehu, EAOA and Aco Ersha</i>	
10.30 - 10.50	Presentation of the CBTF Study "Best Practices for Organic Agriculture" (Sophia Twarog, UNEP-UNCTAD CBTF)
10.50 - 11.00	Policy Development in Ethiopia (Dr. Berhei G/Egzaibher Directorate, Animal and Plant Health Regulatory MoRAD)
10.00 - 11.40	Discussion
11.40 - 12.20	Ministries: How can they contribute? (H.E Tadesse Haile State Minister of Trade and Industry, and Dr. Berhei G/Egzaibher, MoRAD)
12.20 - 13.40	Lunch
13.40 - 15.40	Panel Sessions
<i>Moderator: Dr. Amare Getahun, GM Apinec Agro processing PLC and Advisor of EAOA Board</i>	
13.40 - 14.10	Panel Session 1: Organic Domestic and Export Development in Ethiopia and Role of EAOA (Mr. Tesfaye T/haimanote, President, EAOA and Gebreihmedin Berga, Secretary of GA and GM of Eco Shemachoch Mahber)
14.10 - 14.40	Panel Sessions 2: Organic Agriculture and Food Security in Ethiopia (Sue Edwards, Director of ISD and Board Advisor of EAOA)
14.40 - 15.10	Panel Session 3: Organic Standards (Mr. Fekire Markose Deputy Directorat, Animal and Plant Health Regulatory)
15.10 - 15.40	Panel Sessions 4: Organic Research and Training (Dr. Solomon Assefa, General Director of EIAR)
15.40 - 16.10	Coffee/ Tea

16.10 - 17.30 Way Forward and Closing

Moderator: Tsegaye Kassa, EAOA

- 16.10 - 16.20 The way forward from an International Perspective (Dr. Sophia Twarog, UNEP-UNCTAD CBTF)
- 16.20 - 16.30 The way forward from a National Perspective (Addisu Alemayehu, EAOA and Aco Ersha)
- 16.30 - 17.15 Discussion and Feedback
- 17.15 - 17.20 Closing Remarks (Mr. Yishak Mengeska delegate from Ethiopian Commodity Marketing Authority)

Annex 2

Ethiopian Organic Forum: Public Private partnership, July 8,2009 - List of Participnats

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13	ECX Authority	Dr. Ambassador Addis Alem	Directore, Ethiopian Commodity Exchange Authory(ECXA)				
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