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## Organic agriculture law adopted in Madagascar



The organic sector in Madagascar – like in many parts of the world - is growing rapidly, reaching US\$ 110 million of organic exports in 2019, compared to US\$ 23 million in 2012. The sector is strongly focused on exports of typical and/or high-value products such as spices, fruits and vegetables, essential oils, shrimps, cacao, palm oil, etc. A total of 48,000 ha are certified, from 30,000 producers organised in 120 groups, and another 270 companies employ 7,000 people.

Through the impetus given by Madagascar's organic farming syndicate, SYMABIO ([www.symabio.mg](http://www.symabio.mg)) - the national

organic sector organisation - and by the Department of Livestock and Fisheries of the Ministry of Agriculture, along with the support of the World Bank, the first law on organic agriculture was prepared from 2018 to 2019.

The work was done in tight collaboration with the private sector, producer organisations, NGOs, certification bodies, research institutions, and with concerned ministries, including the Ministries of Agriculture, Environment, Trade and Health

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# What's in TOS 185

Dear readers

This TOS issue addresses, among other topics, the adoption, changes and additions to three important organic regulations that contribute to the production, certification and marketing of organic products.

We are pleased to publish an article from a new TOS contributor, Laurent Liagre from the Institute for Research and Application of Development Methods (IRAM). In his article, 'Organic agriculture law adopted in Madagascar', he explains the work of several organisations in Madagascar which have enabled the preparation and approval of the Law. As Laurent mentions in his article, the Law "not only supports the growth of organic exports, but also the development and promotion of the national organic market in Madagascar".

Regarding changes in regulations, Lorenzo Nigo García, Managing Director of the Association of Approved Certification Bodies in Mexico (ACAMEX) and also a new, very welcome TOS contributor, explains in his article the basis and the work carried out on the creation and development, and current changes in the Mexican Organic Products Law (LPO), and the Regulation of the Organic Products Law. In the next TOS issue, there will be an article explaining the specific changes in the Law that, as Lorenzo concludes, will "achieve equivalencies with the main organic standards such as the Canadian (COR), United States (NOP), the EU Regulation for organic production, among others".

Regarding additions and

amendments in the regulations, Nuria Alonso explains in her article, 'Additions to the future EU regulation', the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2020/427 and the Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2020/464. She also reminds us of the concepts of Delegated Acts and Implementing Acts.

In this issue, we welcome a third new contributor, Mauricio Soberanes H., President of ACAMEX. In his article, he explains the beginning of organic farming in Mexico, organic certification and circumstances for the creation of ACAMEX, including its organisation, its mission and objectives. As he concludes in his article, ACAMEX "must consolidate the work of organic certification and contribute to the development of the organic sector in Mexico".

Regarding the current Covid-19 pandemic and the need to implement safety measures to prevent contagion including good hand disinfection, Nuria explains in her article, 'Hand-sanitising gel: better if it is organic', that all hand-sanitising products are not the same. She gives concrete examples of ingredients of conventional and ecological gels and draws our attention to the type of alcohol used, concluding that "it is always a good idea to use certified natural hand-sanitising products, or even better to choose organic ones".

In these days, when many Certification Bodies (CBs) have to undertake remote control visits, one of the key elements to guarantee the organic integrity and traceability of organic products is the organic



certificate issued by an accredited CB. The article, 'Organic certificates for herbs, oils & spices', explains that most EU certificates not only comply with the indications in the Annex XII of EU Regulation 889/2008, but also provide additional information such as the mark or code and the validity of the certification for each product on the certificate. However, there are some EU certifiers which indicate just 'oils', 'herbs', etc on the certificate, and this makes it difficult for the inspector of the buyer operation and for the operator himself, to follow the traceability of a product (e.g. olive oil) when, for example, the certificate says simply 'oils' and the oil comes from a supplier who distributes organic and non-organic oils.

There is other information such as news shorts which we hope you also enjoy.

Best regards,

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Joelle Katto-Andrighetto from IFOAM-Organics International was hired as an international consultant to provide technical support to this process.

The law reflects the strategic ambition of the Madagascar government to support the growth of organic exports, but also to start promoting the development of its national organic market. The text contains commitments in favour of organic research, technical support, promotion of organic territories within

the framework to develop a national organic standard, for use by producers wishing to produce for the local market. However, it also recognises the equivalence of other organic standards, particularly those already used for exports, so that the products certified against those standards will continue to be marketable as organic on the domestic market.

Another strength of this organic law is that it encourages participation of small producers into the sector by recognising Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) as a valid means of certification for the domestic market. These are expected to be cheaper and



Parliament and the Senate. The next steps will be the development of complementary legislation, including the national organic standard, and the development of the first national organic strategy for organic agriculture, with its related action plans at national and regional levels.

Preparatory work has already started, with capacity-building activities for the policy makers and stakeholders who will be involved in these processes. Those activities include training on policy support to organic agriculture, conducted by IFOAM-Organics International with the support of GIZ, and a policy exchange mission to Morocco and Tunisia, with the support of the World Bank, GIZ and IFAD. ■

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*Photo by Sigmund on Unsplash*

the country, and measures to mitigate chemical contamination of organic value chains. It also establishes a National Commission on Organic Agriculture, a consultative body representative of private and public stakeholders, who will play a role in the implementation of the national organic law and related programmes.

The regulatory approach adopted in the law is designed to ensure organic integrity without hindering sector growth. The law establishes

more appropriate for small farmers aiming at the domestic market, than third-party certification.

In May 2020, the law development process was finally concluded, with the adoption of the law No. 10/2019 of 28 November, 2019. The law was adopted unanimously both by the

The regulatory approach adopted in the law is designed to ensure organic integrity. ■





*Madabio brand in Madagascar*

Laurent Liagre is an agricultural economist who specialises in support for small farmers (extension services and organisation), sustainable value chain development and participatory processes for agricultural policies development. Rich in professional experiences in various geographical contexts (Central America, West Africa, Southern Africa, South East Asia), he has been working since 2000 at the Institute for Research and Application of Development

Methods (IRAM - [www.iram-fr.org](http://www.iram-fr.org)), a French professional association founded in 1957 and supporting rural development. As of 2011, based in Madagascar, he has been the representative of IRAM in the Indian Ocean and Southern Africa regions. For the last six years, he has progressively focused his activities, through expertise and long-term technical assistance, on the field of organic agriculture and the valorisation of biodiversity, paying

specific attention to the position of small farmers and their role in value-chain development and the policy making process on organic agriculture (Guinea Conakry, Cambodia, Madagascar). The most significant works conducted in Madagascar were related to a study on biodiversity-sustainable valorisation in the aromatic and medicinal plants sector and a feasibility study supporting the organic sector funded by AFD. As a long-term technical assistant in public policy and sector governance within the Agricultural Growth and Land Security Program / WB, he facilitated, on behalf of the Malagasy Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, the whole policy making process resulting in the adoption of the law on organic agriculture No. 10/2019 of 28 November, 2019.

