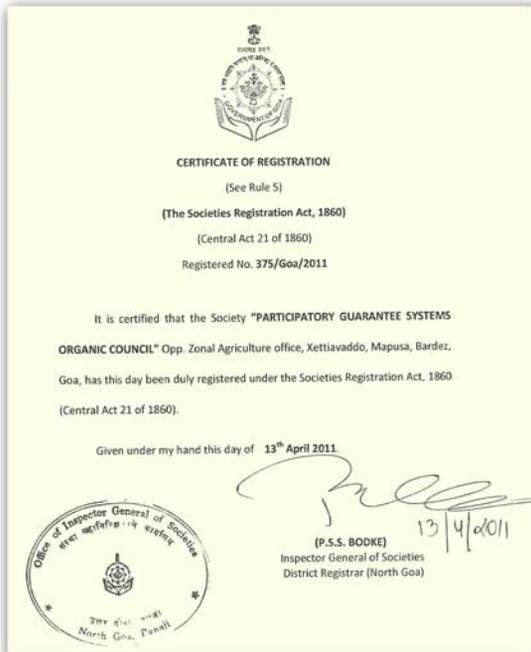


PGS Organic Council Registration



After much debate and discussions, it has finally happened. The PGS Organic Council was registered in Goa at the end of March. The final registration process was completed on the 13th of April, 2011. The word 'India' had to be dropped from the name due to some legal restrictions but the jurisdiction of PGS OC is the whole of India. Subsequently, there has been a change in the logo of the PGS OC which is now reflected at the top of the newsletter too.

The first meeting of the PGS National Council and Managing Committee was held in Goa on 30 April, 2011. The office members, who were functioning on an ad hoc basis, have been elected now as the 1st committee of the PGS OC.



lastforest
**finger prints
in green**

Honey, Spices, Bee Wax Soaps and Balms,
Essential Oils, Clothing, Handicrafts.

GREEN SHOP
ORGANIC FOOD | GIFTS | FAIRTRADE GOODS

Ooty • Coonor
Kotagiri • Mysore
Ph: + 91 9442272977
you can shop online at
www.lastforest.in

NTPF Eco Certification Workshop Steps towards PGS Wild



A workshop was organised at Kotagiri to discuss the issue of sustainable collection of Non Timber Forest Products (NTPFs) and review the current state of certification for NTPFs. Participants representing various research, academic and civil society organisations deliberated in the one and a half day workshop held at Keystone Foundation on 31st Jan and 1st February, 2011. Several participants have been a part of South and South East Asia NTPF Exchange Programme since the last 10 years, with substantive experience in the field.

The key objectives for the workshop were:

1. To share experience about the diversity of approaches being used to guide sustainable collection from the wild.

2. To share experience on how sustainable collection leads to better engagement with primary collectors and improved livelihoods.
3. To share experience on certification/ guarantee measures for sustainable extraction that could have the potential of improving market access.
4. To develop a vision for future and strengthen the diversity of efforts of sustainable collection and certification/ guarantee/ monitoring mechanisms.



The first day had presentations by many of the participants on the work that they are doing in their areas. It clearly came out in the presentations that there are three distinct processes that are currently under development or ongoing in the country. One, is the national process for forest certification of the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF), Government of India. Two, there are a host of international voluntary certification schemes such as FairWild. Three, there are community based monitoring mechanisms such as the **Participatory Guarantee Systems**. It was decided to broadly discuss the aspects of scope, clients, standards, process and feasibility of each of the three systems.

It is understandable that the National Certification System needs to harmonise the standards and procedure within a

framework that is internationally acceptable. This compulsion to gain equivalence with the international framework on sustainable forest management restricts the level of flexibility in trying to address several issues emerging from the grassroots. The consultative process is widely appreciated and a set of recommendations are being forwarded to the national process from this workshop. The overarching concern about the national system is that it should remain a voluntary mechanism available for those who wish to obtain this certification. On the other hand MoEF should promote, encourage and recognise the diversity of approaches of sustainable extraction and certification/ guarantee measures initiated by international voluntary certification schemes and the community based organisations following the PGS and other innovative and effective systems.

FairWild and other international certification systems should include in the scope not only the product but the area as well. The primary collectors should continuously be recognised as the custodians, rightful users, beneficiaries of any access and benefit sharing

mechanisms and be empowered to remain in control. The owner of the certification should be the governance body of the primary collectors.

The local monitoring and guarantee schemes such as **Participatory Guarantee Systems** that lay a claim on sustainable collection should further document the traditional ecological knowledge and integrate not only quantitative but also qualitative factors. The synthesis of science should not be overlooked and standards and methodology should be tested to assess the strengths and weaknesses before initiating the collection in a larger area. The commercial and subsistence species should both be addressed in the monitoring mechanism together with some indicators of forest health that are periodically assessed. The process included marketing aspects such as *mandi* and minimum support price for groups.

It was widely said that as far as the efforts made by NGOs and community groups are concerned, the participants could learn more about Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) type of approaches and see how they can be adapted for NTFPs. This will help to establish whether such a system can be implemented and have a credible label. It would ensure community controlled processes, traceability and fair price while ensuring quality to the consumer.

-Snehlata Nath

Launching of Participatory Guarantee System by the Govt of India

Under the National Project on Organic Farming, Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, an alternative organic guarantee system, entitled "Participatory Guarantee System (PGS-India)", has been launched. The new system empowers farmers in the group to follow all standard requirements of organic, have surveillance on each other and declare themselves as organic. The Regional Councils (RC), a monitoring and coordinating body endorses the decision of the group. The entire system will be fully transparent with all data on website and accessible to public through web tools.

The National Centre of Organic Farming(NCOF), Ghaziabad shall be the

Secretariat of the PGS-India programme with the Director of NCOF as the executive authority. For operationalization of the scheme, National Centre of Organic Farming, Ghaziabad and Regional Centres of Organic Farming at Bangalore, Bhubaneswar, Hisar, Imphal, Jabalpur and Nagpur shall act as ad-hoc Zonal Councils in the initial period, till regular zonal councils are appointed by NAC. Eligibility criteria, role and responsibilities etc for Regional Councils are given in the guidelines.

Agencies already operating PGS groups or having associated organic farmer groups or organic certification service providers of Central/ State Governments with 2 years of experience in facilitating

organic certification will be given preference.

State Government Departments/ agencies having separate independent PGS cell manned with personals experienced in organic farming certification systems

will also be preferred for appointment as RCs.

-edited from the notification of NCOF dt. 07-04-2011



Samdrup Jongkhar Initiative [SJI] in Bhutan



The Samdrup Jongkhar Initiative [SJI] was launched in December, 2010 by the Prime Minister of Bhutan, Mr. Jigme Y. Thinley, in the presence of the District Governor and Ms. Kesang Tshomo, Coordinator of National Organic Program [NOP] of Bhutan. SJI is led by a committee of various individuals but primarily Ronald Tashi Coleman and his colleague Dasho Tashi Dorji.

The Organic Farming Association of India [OFAI] was invited by SJI to conduct a series of lecture demonstrations and Q & A sessions from 18 to 27 February, 2011 to help promote Organic Agriculture & PGS and sensitize farmers on the benefits of running autonomous farmer cooperatives as a means to achieve the Bhutanese national goal of Gross National Happiness (GNH).

The farmers in most villages of Samdrup Jongkhar Dzongkhag were organic by tradition and only a few used any synthetic fertilizers like urea or sprayed any pesticides provided by the Bhutan Government agencies. Farmers knew many organic practices, including preparation of *panchagavya*, which is used in some religious rituals in Bhutan as in neighbouring India. Dasho Tashi Dorji translated and provided the local context and humour to the lecture-demonstrations by OFAI faculty members and towards the end of the ten day programme conducted some of the lecture-demonstrations independently in *Orang*, *Wooling* and *Dewathang* without any need of the OFAI team members from India.

Other extension programmes could be given similar hands-on exposure to organic

farming methods and visits to organic farms in India to be convinced that OA is better than the best of industrial agriculture, has sustained high production levels for all crops and at a fraction of the cost. The Low External Input Sustainable Agriculture [LEISA] 'organic' produce with credible local label such as 'PGS Organic' can actually be marketed at prices lower than those of industrial agriculture. The workshops culminated with a meeting with H.E. Prime Minister of Bhutan, Mr. Jigme Thinley. The PM also suggested creation of a model where by organic produce from the rural regions of SJ can be used to supply to tourism rich regions of western Bhutan by a government policy where by it may be mandated that a hotel will get a certain number of stars only if they serve organic food.

There is a substantial demand for vegetables by institutions like the JNP, the Army mess, the vendors in Dewathang and Samdrup Jongkhar towns and supplying to the people residing or working in Samdrup District of East Bhutan. They are willing to source their vegetables locally if the prices are competitive, the quality is better and the supply of required quantities are assured on a bi-weekly basis at a single point. That is the challenge before the Samdrup Jongkhar Initiative.

Detail of the visit can be seen at:
<http://sji.bt/assets/PDFs/Bhutan-SJI-Report-28-Feb-2011.pdf>
-Ashish Gupta, Vikram Rawat & Miguel Braganza



Konkan Fruit Festival

The unusual Konkan Fruit Fest, an event, first held in the summer of 2003 (and upto 2008), has in the past attracted large numbers of the general public, students, horticulturalists and academics and has been

successful not only in creating widespread interest in our common food heritage, but also in providing opportunities to growers to showcase and market their produce in a sustainable and affordable manner.

This year's Konkan Fruit Festival was different from many in the past because it featured several participants from the growing organic farming movement in India. Key amongst these was Shri Sarvdaman Patel (President of the Organic Farmers Association of India – OFAI), who inaugurated the Konkan Fruit Fest, on Friday, 29th April, 2011.

An outstanding farmer who is self-trained in bio-dynamic methods of organic agriculture, he brings serious commitment to the cause of organic farming. He markets his produce through a shop set

up at the farm gate, and through green stores in cities like Vadodara. Also present at the Konkan Fruit Fest 2011, from the organic world were Pratichi from Grassroots, Ranikhet with jams, jellies, marmalade and pickles, Mathew from Keystone, famous for the Last Forest brand of coffee, honey etc., Murali, a commercial grower of organic mangoes from Tamil Nadu, and The Choroa Farmers Club with delicious, naturally ripened and organic Aamcho Choroa Mancurad mangoes.

-Karan Manral



The 17th IFOAM Organic World Congress, the first in Asia, will be held in the Republic of Korea in 2011.

Program

The Organic World Congress (OWC) consists of a main conference with two tracks called a systems values' track and a research track and will be held in the Paldang Region, Gyeonggi Province from 28th September to 1st October 2011. The OWC also includes various thematic pre-conferences, held in different locations around the Republic of Korea from 26th to 28th September 2011.

Topics of the pre-conferences

Jeju Island	Tea
Pocheon City	Ginseng
Yangpyeong County	Wine
Goesan County	Seed
Namyangju City	Textiles, Cosmetics
Hwaseong City, Namyangju City	Urban Agriculture
Uljin County	Aquaculture



**I F O A M
General
Assembly**

OCTOBER 3-5, 2011 | NAMYANGJU CITY, KOREA

The IFOAM GA is the foundation of IFOAM and provides strategic guidance to the World Board, which appoints official committees, working groups and task forces based on the motions and recommendations of IFOAM's membership

Exciting pre-OWC Biotours in China & Japan!

Visit the official website for more information on pre-OWC tours to organic sites in China and Japan.

World Organic Fair 2011

The World Organic Fair 2011 will held in conjunction with the 17th IFOAM Organic World Congress under the theme "Organic+Fair". The fair will provide an ample opportunity for buyers and the public to come into contact with the diversity as well as the latest trends and developments in the organic sector.

For more information, please contact

The Korea Organizing Committee for the 17th IFOAM Organic World Congress 2011
Rm 202, Gawoon-dong 685-1, Namyangju City, 472-060, Gyeonggi Province, Korea
Tel: +82 31 521 3160 Fax: +82 31 521 9160 Email: info@kowc2011.org
www.kowc2011.org



3*62UJDQLF&RXQFLO

\$ V R Q \$ S U L O

States	Code	No. of Local Groups	No. of Members
1 OFAI	A 01		
a. Uttar Pradesh (KVK)	UP A 01	3	25
b. Kerala (INFACT)	KL A 01	1	10
c. West Bengal (DISHA)	WB A 01	7	48
d. Karnataka (Vinod)	KA A 01	1	5
2 Keystone Foundation(KF)	A 10		
a. Tamil Nadu	TN A 10	13	113
3 Covenant Centre for Development (CCD)	A 20		
a. Orrisa	OR A 20	3	30
b. Tamil Nadu	TN A 20	7	107
c. Andaman & Nicobar	AN A 20	6	35
d. Maharastra	MH A 20	6	58
4 GREEN Foundation	A 30		
a. Tamil Nadu	TN A 30	1	5
b. Karnataka	KA A 30	3	27
5 IIRD	B 01		
a. Maharashtra (IIRD)	MH B 01	78	1449
b. West Bengal (SEVA)	WB B 01	53	318
c. Tamil Nadu (PAF)	TN B 01	16	316
d. Karnataka	KA B 01	5	57
6 Timbaktu Collective	C 10		
Andhra Pradesh	AP C 10	53	966
7 Deccan Development Society (DDS)	C 20		
Andhra Pradesh	AP C 20	41	205
8 Chetana Vikas	C 30		
Maharashtra	MH C 30	21	134
9 Grassroots [PHGDF]	A 40		
Uttarakhand	UA C40	40	391
10 MOFF	D 01		
Maharashtra	MH D 01	52	398
TOTAL		411	4697

Printed for PGS Organic Council

Editor: **Mathew John**

c/o Keystone Foundation,

P.B. 35, Groves Hill Road, Kotagiri-643217

e: mathew@keystone-foundation.org

Ph: 04266-272277

83 & 20, 1* (9 (176

26 & 27 September

Pre-Conference Seminars (See Advt along side)

28 Sept-01 October

Organic World Congress 2011, Namyangju City, Seoul-Korea

02 October

INOFO [Inter-continental Network of Organic Farmers' Organizations] first General Assembly in Seoul

02 October

Global PGS Committee meeting in Seoul

03-05 October

17th General Assembly of IFOAM and elections to World Board 2011-13 at Seoul