



Round Table on Organic Agriculture and Climate Change

Minutes of the Founding Meeting in Copenhagen, December, 16 2009

Matthias Stolze, Frick, 12.2.2010

Participants

International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements IFOAM

Markus Arbenz, Robert Jordan, Julia Lernoud, Cristina Grandi, Hervé Bouagnimbeck, Corey Withney (minutes)

Soil Association (UK), Gundula Azeez

Environmental and Ethical Certification Institute ICEA (IT) Antonio Compagnoni, Paulo Foglia

KRAV (SE) Johan Cejje

International Centre for Research in Organic Farming Systems ICROFS (DK) Niels Halberg, Lise Andreasen

Rodale Institute (USA) Timothy LaSalle, Eliav Bitan

Organic Federation of Australia OFA (AU) Andre Leu

FAO, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nation Alexander Müller (excused)

Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL (CH), Urs Niggli

Invited guests:

Willy Douma, Hivos, NL

Bodina Luske, Louis Bolk Institut, NL

Erik Fog, Danish Agricultural Advisory Service National Centre, DK

Tobias Bandel, Soils and more, NL

Chair: Matthias Stolze, FiBL

Round Table on Organic Agriculture and Climate Change

c/o Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL

Ackerstrasse, CH-5070 Frick

Tel. +41 (0)62 865 72 72

info.suisse@fibl.org, www.fibl.org



Agenda

- 14.00 Welcome & introduction to the meeting
- 14.30 Common understanding and agreement on the aims of the Round Table (see *Draft "RTOACC aims"*)
Discussion and Acclamation
- 15.00 Organization of the RTOACC:
Criteria and principles for collaboration
(see *Draft "Criteria for collaboration and admission of new members"*)
Discussion and Acclamation
- 15.30 Discussion and decision on Action Points for the next 2 years
Presentation of the RTOACC Action plan (see *Draft "Action plan"*)
Amendments and compilation
Discussion and Acclamation
- 16.00 End of the meeting

Welcome and introduction

Antonio Compagnoni and Urs Niggli welcome the participants of the meeting. Urs Niggli informs that Alexander Müller (FAO) will unfortunately not be able to attend the meeting and reads the welcome message of Alexander Müller to the round table. Each participant is introducing herself or himself respectively.
All participants agree on the agenda as presented by the chair Matthias Stolze.



Common understanding and agreement on the aims of the Round Table

The basis for discussion is the draft document 'Round Table on Organic Agriculture and Climate Change' (version 10.12.2009) circulated by FiBL prior to the meeting.

Preamble

The round table participants agree to change and include following issues in the preamble:

- Organic agriculture aiming at producing food has a huge potential to mitigate climate change through soil carbon sequestration, reduced GHG emissions and sustainable use of natural resources
- This mitigation potential is system immanent to organic farming as are efficient resource use (water, nutrients), food security and ecosystem services.
- There is a potential for improvement within organic production and processing, organic food and organic supply chains

Aims

The discussion on the aims to be included in the round table document concludes to following amendments of the draft document:

- Promote innovation, research, standard setting, awareness building about the advantage of organic farming systems
- Advise the international community on organic agriculture and climate change issues, with a view to initiate policy change to wider adoption and support of organic agriculture
- Support the RTOACC member organisations as well as other governmental and non-governmental organisations in developing and fully implementing policies on climate change
- Support management practices and standard development issues that look at improving organic standards from a climate change perspective

Members of the RTOACC

There is consent that RTOACC shall be composed of two categories of members: Participating Members representing organisations and Observing Members (individuals). New Participating Members should come from the following sectors:

- Associations in the organic sector, standard-setting organisations and certification bodies operating in organic agriculture;
- Environmental organisations;
- Intergovernmental Organisations (IGOs);

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- Organisation involved in the management of the voluntary offset mechanisms and the CDM;
- Research organisations;
- Funding Organisations

It is highlighted that the paragraphs on RTOACC membership in the document on the RTOACC aims and in the document on RTOACC collaboration require being consistent

Article 1

The last paragraph (RTOACC gives special attention...) should be deleted.

Article 2

The discussion concludes that article 2 should be completely revised:

The RTOACC adopts, further develops and disseminates concepts and methodological frameworks for measuring and accounting the GHG mitigation and carbon sequestration in organic agriculture worldwide.

The positive effects of organic agriculture on climate change, once calculated through the adoption of proper tools, should be valorised within the existing offset voluntary or mandated initiatives. To do so, the Round Table on Organic Agriculture and Climate Change will identify the best partners to co-operate with.

Article 3

Article 3 should be revised stressing particularly that the RTOACC intends to develop information on organic agriculture and climate change to support governmental and non-governmental organisations in developing and fully implementing policies on climate change.

New article 4

The RTOACC participants decide to include a new article 4:

The RTOACC provides support for advocacy concerning the advantage of organic farming in adaptation and mitigation regarding climate change.

The RTOACC intends to support the international community on organic agriculture and climate change issues, with a view to initiate policy change to wider adoption and support of organic agriculture.

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Article 5 (old article 4)

The RTOACC decide to include KRAV's suggestion for an article on 'possibilities to develop organic standards to a higher level of climate change'. The last part of the last sentence in the drafted article 5 should be deleted (... with the least possible impact on trade).

Decision: The RTOACC consented to the RTOACC-Aims on the basis of the discussion and the agreed amendments which will be included in the final version of the document.

Organization of the RTOACC

The basis for discussion is the draft document 'Criteria for Collaboration and Admission of New Members' (version 10.12.2009) circulated by FiBL prior to the meeting.

The secretariat of the RTOACC

Under the paragraph 'The secretariat of the RTOACC', a new point h) is to be included: *The secretariat of the RTOACC is established and will be managed by one participating member.*

The RTOACC decided that FiBL will be responsible for the RTOACC-secretariat for the next 12 months. IFOAM offers FiBL administrative support if required. It is highlighted that the FAO funds are financing three RTOACC-activities in 2010 but not the RTOACC-secretariat.

At the next annual RTOACC-meeting, the issue of the secretariat and the issue of a more elaborated RTOACC governance structure will be revisited.

Decision Making

The last two sentences of the paragraph are to be deleted (Each participating member organisation has the power of veto...).

Membership

There is consent that the RTOACC shall be composed of two categories of members: Participating Members representing organisations and Observing Members (individuals). Individuals demonstrating agreement of the objectives of the RTOACC are permitted to request membership as Observing Members.



It is highlighted that the paragraphs on RTOACC membership in the document on the RTOACC aims and in the document on RTOACC collaboration require being consistent.

Rights of the Members

Point c) is to be amended: *only Participating Members shall be entitled to call for a formal meeting.*

Finances

The wording of this paragraph is to be changed:

The funding of RTOACC is managed through the Organic World Foundation or bilaterally between participating members.

DECISION: The RTOACC consented to the RTOACC “Criteria for Collaboration and Admission of New Members” on the basis of the discussion and the agreed amendments which will be included in the final version of the document.

Discussion and decision on Action Points

Matthias Stolze informed the RTOACC Participating Members on the three already scheduled actions for 2010 which will gratefully be financed by FAO.

Action 1: Workshop on the climate change mitigation potential of organic farming systems and the development of a methodology for the carbon market.

Responsibility: FiBL

Funds: FAO

Date: 1 day workshop in April or May 2010

Location: Frick, Switzerland

Action 2: In-depth scientific exchange on the available data on GHG emissions and the carbon sequestration potential of organic crop and livestock systems.

Responsibility: FiBL

Funds: FAO

Date: 1 day workshop or conference in June 2010

As an alternative locations to Rome, the RTOACC suggested Bologna (ICEA) and the Climate Change Exhibition Conference Center in Basel.

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Action 3: Scientific exchange on LCA methods, models and databases focusing on GHG emissions and sequestration potentials of organic farming systems and organic food.

Responsibility: ICROFS

Funds: FAO

Date: 1 day workshop / conference in September 2010 (scheduled)

ICROFS suggested conducting action 3 at the LCAFOOD 2010 conference in Bari (22 – 24.9.2010). The RTOACC supported this suggestion.

Urs Niggli suggested a new action: Development of a document to influence the decision of the Ad Hoc Working Group established under the UNFCCC for March of 2010. The RTOACC agreed to start this action with IFOAM as the leading Participating Member.

UPDATE 2010: Robert Jordan contacted the UN about the Agriculture SBSTA work program. The draft decision on Cooperative sectoral approaches and sector specific actions in agriculture proposed by the Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group on long-term cooperation under the Convention was **NOT** adopted by the Parties. It is the opinion of the UN that Parties do not wish to commence the working group until after the decision is adopted - the next opportunity is at the next CoP in Mexico at the end of this year. Therefore, this action will not start.

In 2010, the RTOACC secretariat will circulate a questionnaire to the RTOACC Participating Members to survey ideas and potential activities which could be launched as RTOACC activities.

Founding of the Round Table of Organic Agriculture and Climate Change

By signature, the founding members of the Round Table on Organic Agriculture and Climate Change agree on the objectives of the RTOACC, the Criteria for Collaboration and Admission of New Members and the Action Plan.

Following institutions and organizations signed the founding document:

International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements IFOAM

Soil Association (UK)

Environmental and Ethical Certification Institute ICEA (IT)

KRAV (SE)

International Centre for Research in Organic Farming Systems ICROFS (DK)

Rodale Institute (USA)

Organic Federation of Australia OFA (AU)

Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL (CH)

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