

# International Workshop on Organic Agriculture Research and Development

Beijing, 21-23 October 2009

## **ORCA: Organic Research Centre Alliance**

by

Nadia Scialabba, Senior Officer, Organic Agriculture Programme, Food and  
Agriculture Organisation (FAO)

Lise Andreasen, International Coordinator, International Centre for Research in  
Organic Food Systems (ICROFS)



# ORCA IS A JOINT INITIATIVE

J Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations



J Research Institute of Organic Agriculture, FiBL (Switzerland)



J Tufts University (USA)

J International Centre for Research in Organic Food Systems,  
ICROFS (Denmark)



## Supported by:

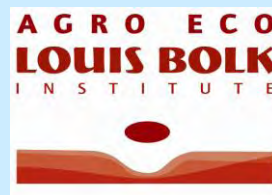
“International Society of Organic Farming Research (ISO FAR)

“International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM)

“Agro Eco Louis Bolk Institute

“Vienna University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences (BOKU)

“German Federal Research Institute von Thunen (vTI)





# THE ORCA VISION FOR ORGANIC RESEARCH

**Mainstream, robust, and  
valued by farmers and  
policy-makers worldwide  
by 2025**





## WHY ORCA?

- “ Needs unique to organic agriculture
- “ Relations to the Consultative Group of International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)  
<http://www.cgiar.org/>
- “ Responding to the International Assessment for Agriculture Science and Technology Development (IAASTD)  
<http://www.agassessment.org/>





## THE ORCA OBJECTIVE

A network of research centres collaborating to produce high quality research in organic agricultural systems relevant to the needs of farmers and processors in developing countries





## ORCA will:

- ; Build collaboration on organic research priorities
- ; Promote scientific exchange N/S and between centres (twin)
- ; Undertake onfarm research trials and systems research
- ; Apply transdisciplinary research, with farmers/processors
- ; Understand complex interactions within the organic sector
- ; Develop knowledge for upscaling adoption of organics







# 5 AGROECOSYSTEM FOCUS AREAS

- i Coastal and small islands agroecosystems:  
Capture fisheries ; Aquaculture
- i Hilly and mountainous agroecosystems:  
Forests ; Wild collections
- i Arid and semiarid agroecosystems:  
Pastures ; Livestock
- i Humid and subhumid agroecosystems:  
Rice systems ; Fruits & vegetables
- i Temperate and irrigated agroecosystems:  
Comparative studies; Cropland yields



# 6 SPECIALTY FOCUS AREAS

- i Seeds and breeds:
  - Protected areas ; Agtburism
- i Postharvest and safety:
  - Pest and disease management ; Fibers & textiles
- i Economics, markets and trade:
  - Commodity intelligence ; Consumers
- i Nutrition, quality, and health:
  - Under-utilized varieties ; Aromatic & medicinal plants
- i Urban and periurban systems:
  - Landscaping ; Compost & waste management
- i Climate Change:
  - Agroenergy & energy flows ; Agroforestry



Each ORCA centre has three main functions:

- ; Manage its network of institutions
- ; Undertake research in its Focus Area relevant to Soils and two main subjects
- ; Organize and deliver information for two main subjects.



# The ORCA secretariat responsibilities

- “ a support system (a virtual laboratory) for the exchange of organic research results and networking among organic research and development institutions
- “ strengthen collaboration and coordination among stakeholders in organic research
- “ a common organic research agenda for developing countries is established and revised regularly
- “ operational procedures for the ORCA system and for the Centres of Excellence



# Launching ORCA

- ; ORCA concept development: July 2008
- ; Public consultation: November-December 2008
- ; ORCA Directory: February 2009
- ; ORCA concept discussed at 1st African Organic Conference: May 2009
- ; Creation of web portal on FAO server: July 2009
- ; Revised proposal: July 2009
- ; Submission to donors for funding of first centre(s): November 2009 =>



The full ORCA proposal  
can be downloaded from:  
[www.fao.org/organica](http://www.fao.org/organica)

THANK YOU  ICROFS