

Certification schemes and traditional crops



MICHELE MACCARI
ICEA

BIOVERSITY

ROME, APRIL 2015

Outline



- Introduction to certification
- Certification and biodiversity
- Overview of the main certification schemes related to biodiversity
- ICEA's experience
- Next steps

Certification



- Last 20 years: growth/proliferation of a variety of certification schemes and programmes indicating to consumers that a product was generated through specific environmentally and/or socially responsible ways.
- Consumers: awareness, trust and price-premium
- Farmers: opportunities for improved competitiveness and more sustainable systems.
- Private sector: vital partner in the success of these programmes
- Institutions and public sector: help provide missing information and services and thereby ensure a more equitable development.
- Certification is a technical tool (not a panacea)

Market for certified products



- Cocoa sector: period 2008-2012, Fairtrade grew by 11%, Organic by 24% and Rainforest by 223 %.
- Coffee sector: Rainforest growing by 30%, UTZ Certified by 23%, Fairtrade by 13%, Organic by 8%.
- Global Organic business showed double-digit growth for the fourteenth consecutive year and is estimated to have reached over US\$ 63 billion at retail.
- More than 1.4 million farmers and workers in 74 developing countries benefit from global Fairtrade sales, valued at 5.5 billion euro annually (FLO 2014).
- Major agricultural commodity buyers are involved in some form of sustainable sourcing programme.

Opportunities



Sustainability certification programmes have developed as important tools to build producers' capacities in order to:

- manage their production systems and businesses more sustainably
- access international and new niche markets, in many cases at more remunerative prices.
- benefit from positive effects on their social and ecological environment (community/society)

Challenges



- Certification programmes bring challenges, in particular for poorer smallholders, and to benefit, producers and agencies must properly understand and manage them
- It is critical to identify and balance the investment required with the market benefits and to operate in order to maximize the social and environmental improvements
- Comprehensive approaches and solid partnerships with a wide range of private and public stakeholders must be established (service providers, industry, NGOs, certification bodies, government agencies and international financial institutions)

Certification and Biodiversity



- Several sustainable certification programmes make reference to Biodiversity protection and conservation in their standards.
- These issues are scattered among different certification schemes, without providing measurable benefits to smallholders.
- There is still work to be done in order to increase the relevance of environmental elements such as the protection of biodiversity and on-farm conservation practices.

Organic Agriculture



- Organic Agriculture is committed to the conservation of biodiversity within agricultural systems, both from a philosophical perspective and from the practical viewpoint of maintaining productivity.
- The importance of biodiversity as part of a well-balanced organic system is enshrined within the operating standards.
- The Organic Agriculture movement Sustainable Organic Agriculture Action Network (SOAAN) has defined the guidelines for interventions in respect of the Biodiversity.

Organic certification process



- Third-party certification involves an independent assessment declaring that specified requirements pertaining to a product, process or management system have been met
- Group certification is an approach that facilitates access of smallholders to organic certification (cost and management) through the Internal Control System (ICS)
- Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS): locally focused quality assurance systems to facilitate market access for smallholders.

Fairtrade



- Fair Trade certification is not only fair prices for farmers, better labour standards but also protecting the environment.
- Rigorous environmental standards encourage farmers to better protect their delicate ecosystems.
- Fairtrade standards for certification refer to Biodiversity with specific guidelines and requirements to be followed in order to obtain the certification: some are compulsory requirements and other are recommendations.

Rainforest Alliance



- Rainforest standards are designed to foster biodiversity conservation and safeguard social and environmental well-being.
- They are based on Ecosystem conservation, wildlife protection, integrated crop management and water and soil conservation.
- The Rainforest Alliance's auditing division, provides independent verification and certification services based on these standards, which are designed to generate ecological, social and economic benefits.



Slow Food



- Slow Food has put the defence of biodiversity at the heart of its strategies.
- It operates around the world with projects to defend local food traditions, protect local biodiversity and promote small-scale quality products.
- Projects like the *Presidia* sustain quality production at risk of extinction, protect unique regions and ecosystems, recover traditional processing methods, safeguard native breeds and local plant varieties.



SAFA



- Sustainability Assessment of Food and Agriculture systems (SAFA) provide Guidelines and indicators for assessing sustainability
- Among the various dimensions, the protection of Biodiversity plays an important role.
- The goal is to verify that the areas under agriculture, forestry and fisheries are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of all forms of biodiversity.
- Ecosystems, Species and Genetic diversity are the sub-themes considered in the guidelines.
- In Genetic diversity SAFA refers to protection, in-situ conservation and rehabilitation of the genetic diversity of domesticated plant and animal and aquaculture fish species in agriculture based food chains.

ICEA



- ICEA is a non profit consortium based in Italy providing services in the area of Sustainable Certification.
- ICEA is accredited to the main schemes for Organic Agriculture and also provides control and certification services for other schemes such as Fairtrade and non food certifications (sustainable tourism; textiles; cosmetics; bioarchitecture, etc)
- ICEA as an institute also develops new standards: i.e. Biologico di fattoria
- Because of its constituency, ICEA also operates in development cooperation working with NGOs and UN institutions (IFAD, FAO)

SAMCERT



Sustainable
Commodity
Initiative



- Strengthening Smallholders' Access to Markets for Certified Sustainable Products is a value chain development programme funded by IFAD.
- The goal of SAMCERT is to assist rural producers in utilizing sustainable certification programs to improve their economic, environmental and social situation.
- Field missions to assess the best certification options
- Technical Assistance providing training or brokering with private companies, including participation to exhibition and fairs

ICEA's role



Provide guidance in exploring two options:

- 1) creating a new label that indicates products were produced from threatened plant genetic resources by custodian farmer communities;
- 2) integrating on-farm conservation into existing certification systems.

Implement it through:

- Technical Assistance
- Market access
- Policy dialogue

Technical Assistance



- Analysis and pilot projects in the Countries to test and verify which are the most adequate certification schemes that can strengthen the value of biodiversity protection.
- Provide support in developing guidelines that emphasize biodiversity conservation.
- Capacity building in collaboration with the main networks (IFOAM, FLO, etc.)

Market access



- Brokering with selected private companies willing to invest in the biodiversity component.
- Explore niche markets opportunities for NUS
- Link up with consumers associations and alternative commercialization models and local markets
- Explore the possible linkages for NUS with Geographical Indication (GI)
- Participation to specialized exhibition and fairs
- Study tours and learning routes

Policy dialogue



- Networking with Institutions, Civil society and Certification Bodies involved in certification and Biodiversity.
- Facilitate dialogue with the main certification bodies to explore possible ways to set a common ground to strengthen the biodiversity components.
- Lobbying with the standard setting organizations

Next steps



- Let's continue the discussion at the side event today at 18:20
- Contacts:
- www.icea.info
- m.maccari@icea.info