Development of criteria and procedures for the evaluation of the European Action Plan of Organic Food and Farming

Results from the ORGAP Project
(No. CT-2005-006591)

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Introduction

- The European Commission released in June 2004 the European Action Plan for Organic Food and Farming (EU-OAP)

- In May 2005 the EU funded 3-year research project with the acronym ORGAP started.
- In the project 10 partners from 9 countries (CH, UK, DE, IT, DK, SI, CZ, NL, ES) participated, as well as IFOAM EU Regional group.
- The overall objective of this project was to give scientific support to the implementation of the EU-OAP by the development of an evaluation toolbox (ORGAPET).
What were the main methods and results?

- Comparison of national organic action plans
- Meta-evaluation of evaluations of national organic action plans (DE, NL, UK DK)
- **ORGAPET development** (Website and CD Rom)
- **Focus group discussions** on the national implementation of the EUOAP – synergies and conflicts
- **Policy analysis** of the European Action plan (including potential implementation problems)
- **Resource manual** for development, implementation and evaluation of Organic Action Plans
- **Recommendations** (including Golden Rules)

- Project website, newsletter and forum

All reports can be downloaded from the Project website: [www.orgap.ch](http://www.orgap.ch)
## Overview of national and regional Organic Action Plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General information</th>
<th>AND</th>
<th>CZ</th>
<th>DK</th>
<th>DE</th>
<th>ENG</th>
<th>IT</th>
<th>NL</th>
<th>SI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bottom-up initiative</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top-down initiative</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder participation</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP: evaluation and monitoring included</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>(✓)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP has been evaluated</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targets: OF-area %</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target year:</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

✓ = yes, (✓) = restricted, - = no
Organic action plans - differences

- Variation with regard to elaboration process, targets, objectives and emphasis of measures on certain areas – due to national/regional context.
- Large set of measures included in most action plans, however different levels and preciseness.
- OAPs of Andalusia, Czech Republic, Slovenia and Denmark: broad portfolio of areas and measures.
- Dutch, Italian and English OAPs: main focus at market development and consumer information.
- German Federal Organic Farming Scheme: priority to consumer information/education as well as to the support of applied research for the organic sector.
ORGAPET development

- A collection of evaluation tools and material (documents, methods, data sheets)
- Divided into sections or compartments
- Overview documents explaining key evaluation principles and issues that need to be addressed, including checklists,
- Aimed at action plan administrators and engaged stakeholders
- Linked to EU (MEANS, Evalised, IRENA) and national evaluation frameworks
- Annexes provide in-depth examples and information sources to give further background and support expert evaluators
- Internet and CD-ROM accessible
ORGAPET - The Organic Action Plan Evaluation Toolbox on CD-Rom and website www.orgapet.orgapet
Focus group discussions – perceptions regarding the national implementation of EU Organic Action Plan

- Only the focus groups of CZ and SI found the EUOAP important and had positive expectations to it.
- DK: EUOAP positive but EUOAP considered insignificant.
- In DE, EN and IT: expectations were neutral (or partly negative) and the EUOAP considered insufficient;
- In Spain (Andalusia) EUOAP was considered insufficient and expectations negative.
- Only two problems appeared in most focus groups:
  - the lack of sufficient statistical data as basis for market transparency
  - and the GMO suggested threshold level in organic produce (common agreement - threshold should be very low if it was to be allowed at all).
- All other issues specific to the national context - implementation problems are specific to each EU member state.
Focus group discussions - conclusions regarding national implementation of the EU-OAP

- Successful implementation in any member state depends strongly on the balance of 3 main factors: the **willingness**, **capability** and **comprehension of the main actors** (in a positive and negative sense); these balances are unique to each member state.

- Importance how **conflicts between the organic food and non-organic farming sector** are handled; e.g. different goals, perceptions and impacts regarding the European Organic Action plans (e.g. new regulation)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cause</th>
<th>Effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of stakeholder involvement</td>
<td>Lack of capacity building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate information and promotion campaigns</td>
<td>Lack of knowledge/awareness on OF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of information</td>
<td>Lack of political interest to support OF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak lobbying for OF</td>
<td>No mandatory implementation of AP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research not developed enough</td>
<td>Insufficient importance given to OF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventional interests against organic lobby</td>
<td>Lack of financial resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different priorities among MS</td>
<td>General implementation problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different interests between EU and MS</td>
<td>Inadequate rules/procedures</td>
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</table>

OF = OF Farming  AP = Action Plan

Result from electronic consultation with ca. 30 experts
How to develop a core set of appropriate indicators for ORGAPET, which then can be adapted to specific action plan evaluations.

- **Process/design indicators**: scope OAP, stakeholder involvement, etc.
- **Resource indicators**: Budget, staffing, etc.
- **Output indicators**: action points completed, expenditure, etc.
- **Result indicators**: see example
- **Impact indicators**: environment, animal welfare, social, etc.

The testing showed that major problems are the data availability and limited resources for data collection, which limits the number of indicators.
Example: RESULT indicators for EUOAP

I. Production
   (holdings, land area, new entrants, incomes, prices)

II. Market
    (operators, retails sales, consumer trends)

III. Regulation
     (inspections/infringements, regulator burdens/changes)

IV. Capacity
    (number and size of support organisations, support levels)
Synthesis/interpretation issues regarding the EU-OAP

- Trend on most indicators since 2004 is positive
  - But can this be attributed to the action plan?
  - As still the EU Organic Action Plan is in implementation phase, most effects may still be to come

- Other causal factors
  - Economic/market conditions
  - National policy initiatives

- Counterfactual analysis
  - what would have happened without the policy?
The Golden Rules for Organic Action Plan development I

• Participatory stakeholder involvement - early & with resources, in all stages of OAP
• Good communication during entire period
• OAP as strategic instrument for achieving policy goals
• Clear and operational objectives
• Based on a status quo analysis
• Review of policy areas related to the OAP and their impact
• Actions tailored to the respective problems
• Good implementation plan with sufficient financial and human resources
The Golden Rules for Organic Action Plan development II

- Relevant government departments must be involved
- Balanced mix of ‘supply-push’ and ‘demand-pull’ policy measures
- Countries with short tradition in OAP development need special measures
- Monitoring and evaluation included from the outset
- Action Plan evaluation = tool for further development of the plan
- Successful evaluation with clearly purpose, scope and appropriate standard
A resource manual for the organic food and farming sector is available.

This manual includes a CD Rom with ORGAPET – the evaluation toolbox with checklists and many background documents.

For further information:
www.orgap.org
A: PROCESS/ DESIGN indicators for EU Organic Action Plan

● Mainly qualitative, document based, linked to checklists:
  1. Prior policy initiatives
  2. Occasion/problem leading to policy initiative
  3. Nature of stakeholders involved in policy decision
  4. Scope of final plan
B: RESOURCE indicators for EUOAP

- Budget
- Steering groups to involve stakeholders
- Staffing
- Institutional changes
- Legal basis for action plan
C: OUTPUT indicators for EU OAP

- Action points completed/in progress
- Actual expenditure/relation to budget

With respect to each action point:
- Uptake (number of projects/businesses)
- Expenditure per project/business
E: IMPACT indicators for EUOAP

- Environment and resource sustainability
  (global warming potential, nutrient/energy balances, resource conservation, support, biodiversity)
- Animal health and welfare
  (veterinary derogations, longevity of breeding stock, high welfare holdings, support)
- Social
  (gender, age, occupational health, migrant labour)
- Economic/rural development
  (employment, labour incomes, risk)
- Food security, safety, quality
  (productivity, residues, safety incidents, quality, self-sufficiency)