

ORGANIC ACTION PLAN

Lessons learnt from ORGAP project – planning, implementation and evaluation of Action Plans for Organic Food and Farming

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Introduction

- > Already in 1995 the Danish Ministry of Agriculture launched the first Action Plan for Organic Food and Farming.
- > Half of the European Countries have in recent years elaborated and implemented such Action Plans. *More information see www.orgap.org*
- > 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 ORGAP Project - methodology

- > **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).**
- > **ORGAPET was tested in eight countries, which had national Organic Action Plans.**
- > **National organic action plans as well as the EU Organic Action Plan were analysed.**
- > **With stakeholder workshops areas of synergies and of conflict between national and EU-OAP were identified.**
- > **Finally a policy analysis and recommendations, including a practical OAP resource manual for the organic farming sector were made.**

ORGAPET – The Organic Action Plan Evaluation Toolbox on CD-Rom and on website



ORGAPET: The Organic Action Plan Evaluation Toolbox

Version 6 April 2008

Part A	A1. Introduction to ORGAP	A2. Evaluation principles	A3. Development of organic farming	A4. Involving stakeholders	A5. Planning an evaluation
Part B	B1. Programme processes	B2. Content and follow-up	B3. Evaluating stakeholder involvement		
Part C	C1. Identifying objectives	C2. Defining indicators	C3. Gender indicators		
Part D	D1. Integrating results	D2. Evaluation exercises		D4. Report/assessment	

Overview (Home)
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ORGAPET overview

Introduction

Part A: Background and context
A1. Introduction
A2. Evaluation principles
A3. Development of organic farming
A4. Involving stakeholders
A5. Planning an evaluation

Part B: Evaluating programme design and implementation
B1. Programme processes
B2. Content and follow-up
B3. Evaluating stakeholder involvement

Part C: Evaluating programme effects
C1. Identifying objectives
C2. Defining indicators
C3. Gender indicators
C4. Report/assessment

Part D: Synthesis
D1. Integrating results
D2. Evaluation exercises

Printer Friendly Version



ORGAPET: The Organic Action Plan Evaluation Toolbox

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Overview of ORGAPET

The Organic Action Plan Evaluation Toolbox (ORGAPET) is a collection of different information/data sources and evaluation tools, including participative techniques, quantitative assessments and methods to identify relevant indicators, which can be used selectively to meet the needs of a particular assessment of national or EU organic action plans.

The toolbox is structured around 'compartments' or sections containing 'tools' fulfilling different functions. Each section contains an overview document and a series of annexes detailing a range of methodological approaches (including background documents, relevant data sources and other items), as well as examples of how these have been applied in specific cases, for example the evaluations and workshops conducted as part of the [ORGAP](#) project. The structure of ORGAPET is summarised [below](#).

ORGAPET is aimed primarily at organic action plan managers/administrators and engaged stakeholders involved in action plan implementation and the commissioning (and possibly conduct) of evaluations. It does not attempt to provide the full methodological guidance that might be necessary for the training of expert evaluators, but expert evaluators should benefit from the specific organic farming policy examples presented and the information on relevant data sources (particularly in the annexes to each section).

The full version of ORGAPET is not aimed at stakeholders involved in overseeing the implementation of action plans or working with the results of evaluations, for example as participants in action plan steering groups. For this purpose, a [manual](#) for developing, implementing and evaluating organic action plans has been produced. (If using the CD-ROM version of ORGAPET, the manual referred to is the one accompanying the CD-ROM.) The manual is intended to be a tool for stakeholder involvement in future action plan development and implementation processes at national, regional and EU levels and to provide an introduction to the use of ORGAPET and the interpretation of evaluations.

ORGAPET covers all possible aspects of action plan evaluation - if at first this seems overwhelming, try a small part first!

Why Organic Action Plans?

- > For policy makers, the challenge is to support a multi-functional organic farming systems approach on national and European level, which meet the dual role of organic farming:
 - > Organic land and farm management – providing public goods/benefits
 - > Organic food market – responding directly to consumer demand
- > Need to balance supply-push policies with more market-focused demand-pull policies – neither distort the market mechanisms nor the organic value perspective.
- > An integrated approach is required and this has been more or less achieved through the formulation of Organic Action Plans.

Organic Action plans – tailored packages of policy measures

- > Organic farming action plans normally include **targets for adoption** (typically 5-10% by 2000/2005 or 10-20% by 2010).
- > They contain a **combination of specific measures** such as:
 - a. Direct support through agri-environment/rural development programmes.
 - b. Marketing and processing support.
 - c. Producer information initiatives.
 - d. Public procurement initiatives.
 - e. Consumer education/promotion and
 - f. infrastructure support.
- > The **more elaborated plans contain evaluations** of the current situation and specific recommendations to address issues identified.

Overview of national and regional Organic Action Plans

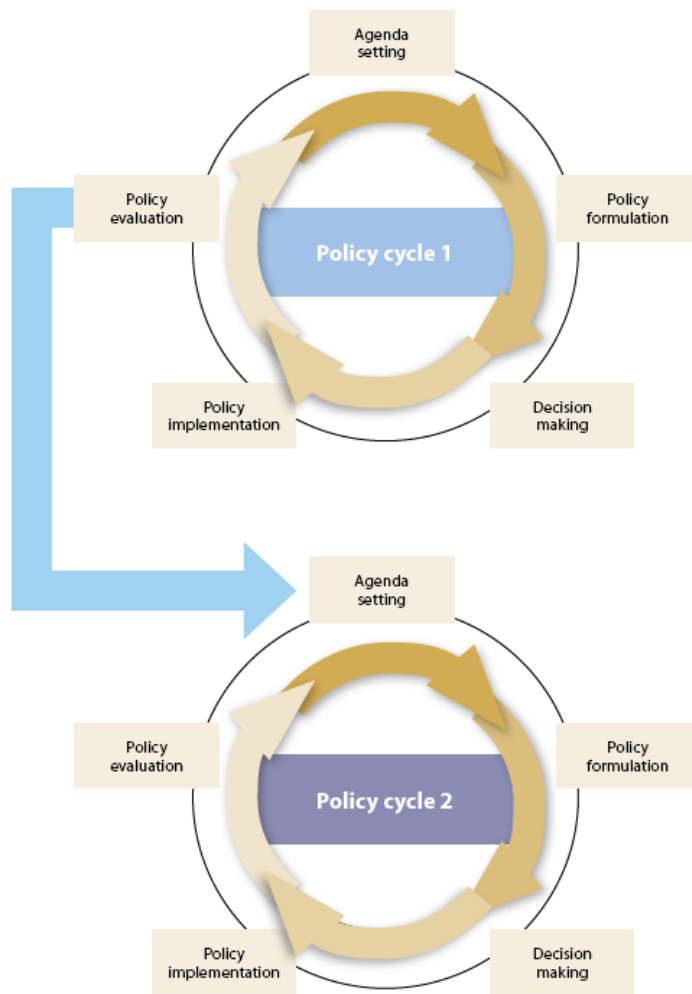
General information	AND	CZ	DK	DE	ENG	IT	NL	SI
Start of elaboration	2001	2002	1998	2001	2002	2001	2004	2004
Implementation	2002	2004	1999	2001	2002	2005	2005	2005
Bottom-up initiative	✓	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-
Top-down initiative	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓
Stakeholder participation	high	high	high	high	high	high	high	high
AP: evaluation and monitoring included	✓	-	✓	✓	(✓)	-	✓	✓
AP has been evaluated	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-
Targets: OF-area %	-	10%	12%	20%	-	-	10%	20%
Target year:	-	2010	2003	2010	2010	-	2010	2015

✓ = yes, (✓) = restricted, - = no

Organic action plans - differences

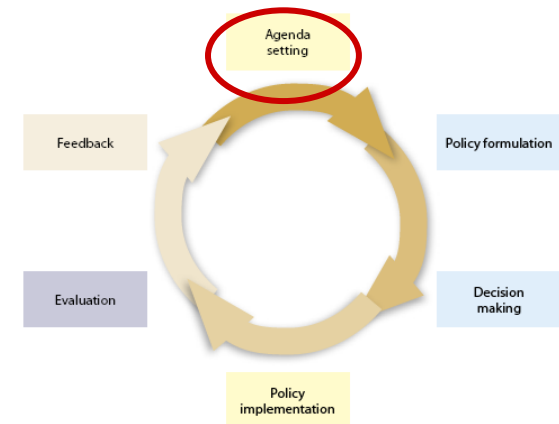
- > Variation with regard to elaboration process, targets, objectives and emphasis of measures on certain areas – due to national/regional context.
- > Large set of measures included in most action plans, however different levels and preciseness.
- > OAPs of Andalusia, Czech Republic, Slovenia and Denmark broad portfolio of areas and measures.
- > Dutch, Italian and English OAPs put 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

Policy cycles to be considered in Organic Action Plans



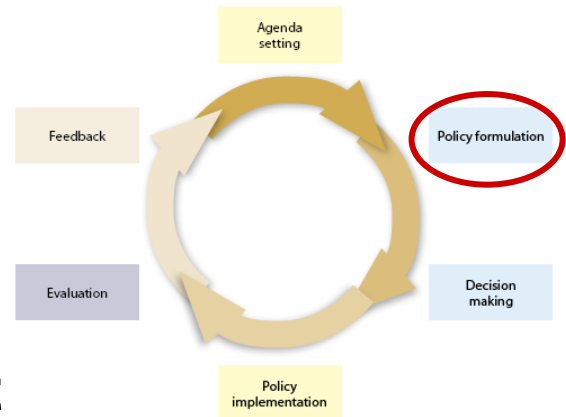
- > Policy development involves a series of linked phases or stages following a “policy cycle”.
- > Although this is a theoretical model as all stages may be intermingled, an awareness of the policy cycle can help inform actors in the policy process as to where to direct their attention and efforts.

Key elements to consider for OAP policy design



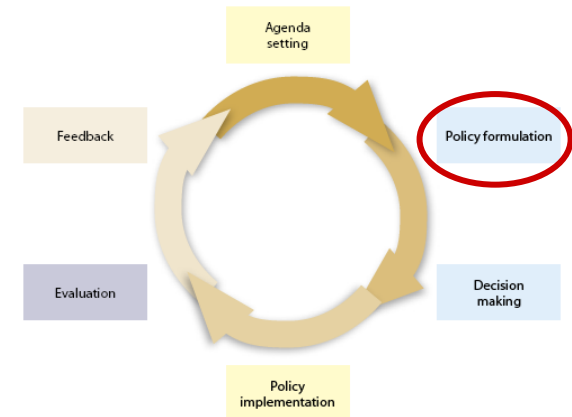
- > The **characteristics of the process** for setting the agenda of the policy making process, in particular the definition of the specific issues/problems leading to the policy initiative, if any.
- > The **extent of prior policy initiatives** in support of organic food and farming (if any) should be taken into account - including the outcome of completed evaluations.
- > The **findings of status-quo analysis** (if any) of the organic food and farming sector and their needs. => Precursor to the definition of objectives.
- > **Summary of the programme content and relevant regulatory (legislative) framework** such as new EU Council Regulation (EC) 834/2007.

Key elements to consider for OAP policy formulation



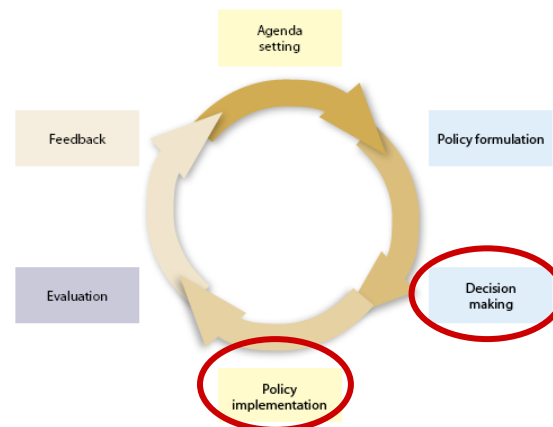
- > **Setting clear and specific object** which should be 'SMART' (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound) but also take into account of the complex systems and multiple objectives inherent to the organic farming system. These should be differentiated in global objectives, sector level objectives and societal objectives.
- > **Definition of the motivations and mechanisms** of the policy objectives and measures (the 'programme theory') and their relevance to solving the original problem.
- > An **assessment of the relevant alternative** (complementary or exclusive) **policy options** to be implemented.

Key elements to consider for OAP policy formulation II



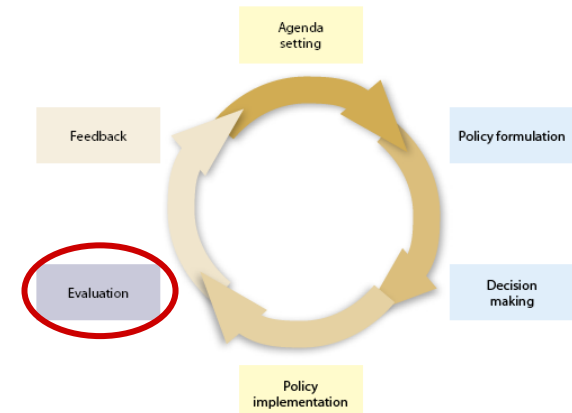
- > An **analysis of the conflicts and synergies** (coherence) of possible policy measures and risk of failure, including due attention to the different stakeholders views (e.g. ethical value orientation versus purely market orientation) – results may imply adjustments of objectives and policy measures.
- > **Indicators** should be chosen that are **relevant to decision-makers**. Developed by defining and clustering impact statements in a participatory process, closely linked to the goals and objectives of stakeholders. They need to be described and possibly quantified (depending from data availability and benefits gained from the data).
- > Ensure that **monitoring and evaluation issues** are addressed appropriately from the outset and are fully integrated into programme planning and management.

Key elements to consider for OAP policy implementation



- > **Definition of the institution(s) responsible** for the implementation of the Action Plan in terms of their **comprehension, willingness and capabilities** regarding the agreed policy objectives.
- > Allocation of a separate **budget and staff resources** for the implementation of the Action Plan.
- > Understanding the **specific administrative issues/constraints** which may affect implementation.
- > Finding **solutions for public-private partnership** for effective implementation with all involved stakeholders.

Key elements to consider for OAP policy evaluation



- > Use **both a generally accepted evaluation standard but also develop specific indicators** (standards) appropriate to the national Action Plan; ORGAPET provides a procedure for selection of indicators and examples.
- > Clearly **differentiate between facts and areas more open for interpretation** through inclusion of stakeholders. Ensure sufficient data availability and resources for data collection.
- > Review the **main actors who were involved** in decision making and implementation.
- > Consider the situation that might have existed if the Action Plan or other policies had not been implemented (**'counter-factual' analysis**).
- > Evaluate whether the Action Plan was relevant to the original problem, if no longer relevant - **review the factors that have changed.**

Particularities for stakeholder involvement in OAP's I

- > **Three perspectives are relevant when identifying stakeholders that should be involved in developing Organic Action Plans.**
 - > the values of organic food and farming
 - > the market perspective, and
 - > the public goods perspective
- > **It is essential that politicians and policy makers find effective ways to engage with all of the relevant stakeholders, both inside and outside the sector to ensure that the priorities for development are clearly identified and that the policy measures can be effectively met.**



Particularities for stakeholder involvement in OAP's II

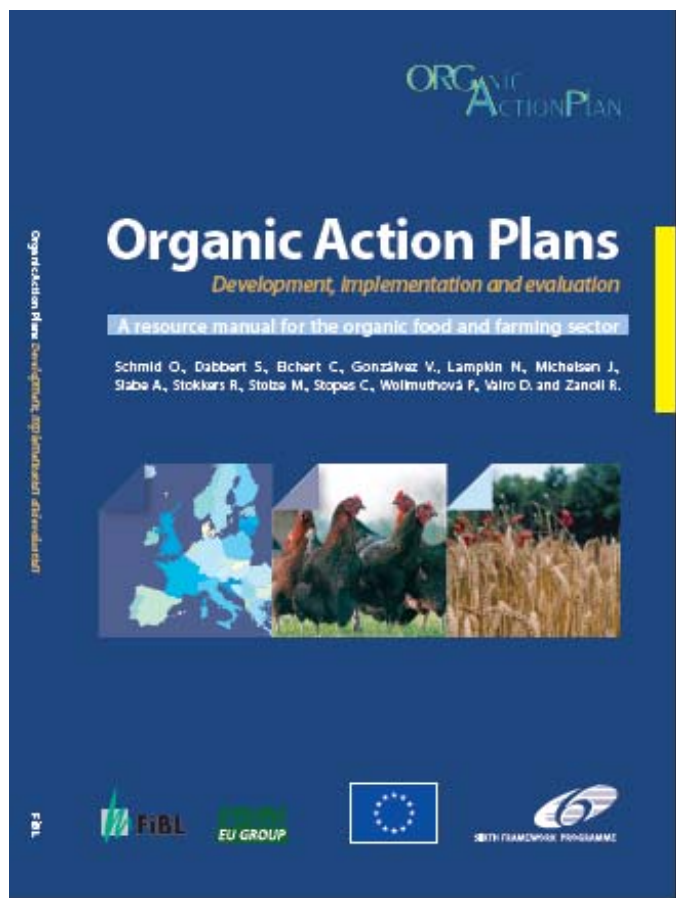


- > **Involvement on a permanent or temporary/ad hoc basis.**
- > **Stakeholder involvement thus demands careful preparations and sufficient time of consultation with stakeholders.**
- > **Stakeholder involvement is successful if it uses several participatory methods and runs throughout all stages of the policy process.**
- > **From the preliminary analysis of existing Organic Action Plans, in some cases involvement was limited to certain phases/stages of the process only, which was one of the causes for implementation problems.**

Discussion and conclusions

- > Organic action plans provide a **mechanism for an integrated and balanced policy** with strong link to the new Rural Development Plans with their potential for exploiting cross-axis synergies.
- > While the EU Action Plan for Organic Food and Farming is focussed on the revision of the EU Reg. 2092/91 in the first place, there is the **need for a new focus on mainstreaming Organic Farming in the EC.**
- > In the longer term, a **new EU-OAP** might be needed to deliver the key environmental and sustainability goals.
- > **On national level** it would be desirable that in the future Organic Action Plans focus more on capacity building, more support for information campaigns for consumers and other actors and public-private partnerships in market driven approaches.

For further information: www.orgap.org



> 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.

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