

Africa Strategy of FiBL 2021–2025

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Core Team Africa Strategy

Final - Drafted by the FiBL Africa Strategy Core Team

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Executive summary

Welcome to FiBL's Africa Strategy for 2021-2025

This strategy guides our work on and in Africa and positions the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture FiBL clearly as a bridge-builder between research and development, contributing to the evidence-base for the adaptation and promotion of organic agriculture and other agroecological approaches to empower partners in Africa and achieve sustainable/ecological organic food systems from production to consumer health and nutrition. While FiBL is a relatively small player in research and development in Africa, we see leverage in our close collaboration with local partners, who are best positioned to build the food system they want, incorporating the needs of the planet, farmers, and consumers.

Why is FiBL engaging in Africa?

For us, the African continent holds a primordial position to build a sustainable/ecological organic food system. With nearly 2.5% annual population growth and a young population that is increasingly migrating to cities, the demand for adequate, nutritious, safe food that contributes to healthy diets will continue to increase. There are growing concerns about food safety among the population. In the areas of food security, diversified nutrition, sustainable, organic agriculture, and creating markets for sustainable agriculture, the Sustainable Development Goals can only be achieved if we engage strongly and firmly in and with Africa. There is an apparent urgency to act now and realise Africa's potential to show the world what sustainable, well organised, ecological organic food systems can look like. We know that the usual narrative on Africa is one of hunger and crises. While we recognise these as a part of the reality of the continent, it is only one part. We believe that Africa also offers incredible opportunities for solutions based on local resources. Add to that our strong expertise and two decades of experience working with partners in the African context, and it becomes clear that there is both an urgency and a need that FiBL play a role in the mutually beneficial transformation of African food systems.

Within the next five years, FiBL's work in Africa will focus on the following four focus areas:

- **Human health** - contributing to improved, diversified and safer household nutrition security both in rural and urban areas.
- **Sustainable, ecological organic and resilient farming and production systems** - contributing to a more profitable, environmentally friendly, diverse, and resilient agricultural production that recognises a systems approach, like in ecological organic farming. Strengthening the soil as the foundation for sustainable agriculture.

- **Markets and value chains** - contributing to improved access of smallholders to markets for income generation.
- **Policy and sector development** - contributing to achieving improved overall system resilience.

In doing this, FiBL recognises the importance of transdisciplinary approaches, engaging stakeholders at different levels on equal footing, and engaging marginalised communities. The overall impact we want to contribute with our work in Africa is to create more resilient and sustainable food production systems that enhance nutrition security and the well-being of both smallholder farmers and urban consumers.

Who is this document for?

This document is primarily for internal use, but FiBL shares it publicly via our website www.fibl.org to communicate the approach for our work across Africa. We would be happy to receive feedback on this strategy from interested partners and stakeholders.

With this, we hope you enjoy the read and will become a part of FiBL's work in Africa over the following years.

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Abbreviations

AfDB	African Development Bank
AfroNet	Umbrella organisation of the organic sector in Africa (“IFOAM Africa”)
AU	African Union
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
BvAT	Biovision Africa Trust
CAADP	Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme policy framework, AU and NEPAD
CFS	Committee on World Food Security
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EOA	Ecological Organic Agriculture
FANRPAN	Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
FiBL	Research Institute of Organic Agriculture
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GPFS	Global Programme Food Security
HLPE	High Level Panel of Experts of FAO’s Committee on World Food Security
ICS	Internal Control Systems
IP	Innovation Platform
KCOA	Knowledge Centres for Organic Agriculture
NARS	Nationale Agrarforschungssysteme (“National Agricultural Research Systems”)
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa’s Development
NOAM	National Organic Agriculture Movement
NOARA	Network of Organic Agriculture Researchers in Africa
ORM4Soil	Organic Resource Management for Soil Fertility (2015-2021)
R4D	Research for development
REC	Regional Economic Community
ReSAKSS	Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System

ROPPA	Réseau des organisations paysannes et de producteurs de l'Afrique de l'Ouest
SACAU	Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
Syprobio	Amélioration du revenu et de la sécurité alimentaire des producteurs grâce à des systèmes de production biologiques et diversifiés (2011-2015)
SysCom	Comparing organic and conventional production systems in the tropics (2007 onwards)

I. Why a FiBL Africa Strategy?

Based on FiBL's existing activities and expertise, Africa holds a primordial position and a huge potential to advance the transition to sustainable, organic food systems and rural development. The global environmental and social challenges are especially pronounced on the African continent, and the adverse effects of climate change, biodiversity loss, food security and nutrition make a transition to sustainable/ecological organic food systems (see definitions in Annexe 0) an extremely urgent imperative.

In the search for such sustainable food systems, **organic agriculture and other agroecological approaches are gaining importance in Africa** as they contribute to healthy, diversified diets and promote more sustainable production systems. This is reflected by the fast-growing interest in organic production practices, the increasing area in organic production, and the number of actors involved since 2000. As FiBL's research in Africa shows, implementing sustainable, ecological organic agricultural systems can significantly increase productivity, profitability and sustainability. FiBL is increasingly recognised as a key player in the development of the organic sector in Africa.

On the political level, the high-level decision by the African Union Heads of States and Governments on Organic Agriculture (OA) in 2011 resolved to mainstream organic agriculture into national plans programmes and policies by 2020 (now 2025). The high-level decision led to the subsequent implementation of a multi-year continental initiative on Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA-I) outlining the politically recognised importance of organic and sustainable agriculture in Africa.

This strategy is the result of an internal participatory process to define and summarise FiBL's envisioned engagement in Africa. This strategy aims to outline FiBL's focus areas and way of working in Africa for the next five years (see Illustration 1). It builds on FiBL's growing number of projects and activities in Africa, which started in the early 2000s. This strategy guides FiBL's stronger future involvement in Africa.

Box A: The objectives of FiBL's Africa strategy 2021-2025

- Guide FiBL activities in/on Africa for the short and long term and create a shared understanding of FiBL's engagement in Africa
- Expand FiBL's activities within the identified key work areas, the targeted outcomes, and impacts
- Define FiBL's strategic engagement in Africa and secure financial and human resources for the next five years
- Seek and deepen strategic partnerships with African and other partners
- Strengthen our communication of activities on/in Africa

All of FiBL’s work in Africa aims to fulfil FiBL’s Core Missions (see Annexe A4) and, especially, build more resilient, sustainable and ecological organic food and agriculture systems that lead to healthier diets and improve farmers’ livelihoods. With that goal in mind, the objectives, most of which are interlinked, are outlined in Box A.

4 work areas	
What	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthier and more nutritious diets • Ecological organic farming for sustainable and resilient production systems • Policy and sector development • Inclusive markets and value chains
How	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting (solution-oriented) research with development work • Co-creation/co-design of sustainable and ecological organic food systems in a transdisciplinary manner • Providing evidence for effective development work and policy development • Empowering and/or leveraging African partner organizations (research, NGOs, government institutions, private sector) to more effectively bring about the transition to more ecological organic, sustainable and resilient production and healthier diets and food systems
Where	Continental Africa, with focus on East Africa (mainly Kenya), West Africa (mainly Sahel) and Northern Africa (mainly Tunisia and Morocco). Open for all countries.
Why	Urgency of challenges, FiBL’s expertise and potential to build more sustainable and resilient production systems, including the promotion of biodiversity and healthier diets/sustainable food systems

Figure 1: Overview of the strategy and its goals

1.1 Food systems challenges & opportunities in Africa

The global challenges of the food systems, such as the adverse effects of climate change, biodiversity loss, food and nutrition insecurity (including unhealthy diets), as well as enduring rural-urban migration and unequal access to knowledge and markets, are present in Africa. In many cases, these challenges are exacerbated by weak institutions than in other world regions.

About 60% of the African population depend on agriculture (including livestock, fisheries, and forestry) for their livelihoods. This is related to the colonial impact (1870-1960) and the subsequent strong influences of external private and public actors on African policies and investments, impeding industrial development outside the mining and agriculture sectors (Rodney, 1981). At the same time, 50% of Africans live in urban regions due to a strong rural exodus over the last 50 years. Many urban dwellers still try to produce some food in the backyards and open urban spaces while maintaining close links to rural food sources to meet part of their food requirements. Hence, the agricultural sector is central to all African countries' economies, societies, communities, and ecosystems. Africa continues to be one of the global hotspots for malnutrition, exhibiting the triple burden public health challenges of undernutrition, overnutrition (leading to obesity), and micronutrient deficiency (hidden hunger) in a rapidly expanding population. While the prevalence of undernourishment in Africa fell until 2014, since then, it has slightly increased in line with the global trend. Together with the not-yet-clear short and long-term adverse effects of COVID-19¹ on food security globally, there is a need for increased attention and focus on improving food and nutrition security through sustainable local and regional production, assemblage and food safety.

At the same time, Africa is the continent with the youngest population and the largest “underused” natural resources globally, presenting immense opportunities for a transition to sustainable and resilient food systems and high resilience to shocks. The rapid spread of cell phones and digital technologies creates further substantial opportunities to scale up knowledge-intensive approaches such as organic agriculture. Strong institutions to advance sustainable and ecological organic food systems are needed to achieve this. These institutions and programs dealing with sustainable/ ecological organic food systems (see Terminology in Annexe A0) are still weak compared to those promoting Africa's conventional food systems. Governance systems suffer from insufficient financial resources and rather weak civil societies. However, there is a strengthening consensus that both globally and even more so in Africa, a transition to more sustainable and productive food systems is needed, exemplary in the rise of agroecology-based practices and related alternative approaches towards sustainable and ecological organic food and agriculture. Over the past decades, this rise has led to the creation of relevant institutions, networks, and platforms/forums across the continent. The rise of digital technologies

¹ There are indications, that the Covid-19 pandemic will lead to a major economic recession and up-to double the number of acute hunger affected people on the continent (various sources), mainly due to the economic slowdown and contracted markets (both international and domestic).

and levels of education make knowledge-intensive approaches such as agroecology and particularly organic agriculture more implementable across the continent. However, these alternative approaches remain underrepresented and not well known or out of reach by the actors within the sector.

Box B: The main controversial issues surrounding food systems that have a bearing on FiBL's strategy for Africa:²

When assessing the main controversial issues surrounding food systems globally, the FAO Committee on World Food Security's High Level Panel of Experts (HLPE) concluded that while there is a global consensus around the need for a transformation of agriculture and food systems, six key controversial issues on what that transformation might look like remain. They relate to (i) the size of agricultural enterprises; (ii) the deployment of modern biotechnologies; (iii) the deployment of digital technologies; (iv) the use of synthetic fertilisers and agrochemicals; (v) biofortification; and (vi) biodiversity conservation strategies.

Related to FiBL's work and mandate, whether and how organic and other agroecological approaches can nourish the world's growing population and contribute to the transformation of the global food system is a seventh (vii) key issue.

1.2 What we have done so far

Following years of collaborative research and development activities, FiBL is now a recognised partner for many African and global stakeholders promoting organic, ecological organic, and other alternative production and food systems on the continent.

² This section is based on the FAO Committee on World Food Security's High Level Panel of Experts' 2019 Report on Agroecological and other innovative approaches available [here](#).

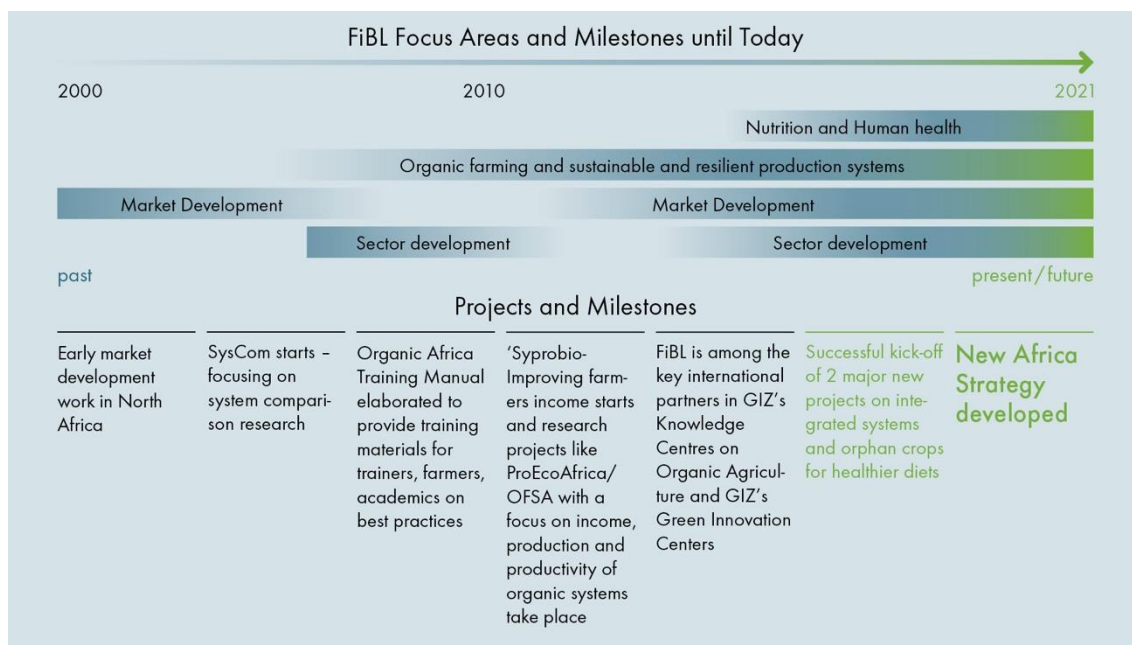


Figure 2: Overview of FiBL focus areas and milestones until today

Early on, FiBL’s activities in Africa were focused on capacity-building and elaborating organic action plans in Northern Africa. Some years later, with the initiation of the long-term farming systems comparison trials (SysCom) in Kenya, FiBL engaged in comparative research to better understand the performance of organic agriculture in the African context and expanded its research activities by addressing key challenges of organic farmers. FiBL’s strength lies in a participatory farmer-researcher approach, e.g., through the application and refinement of Innovation Platforms (IP) at the local level as applied in the Syprobio project. Addressing the declining soil fertility of Africa’s farmland with applied research has been a key issue since 2010. FiBL achieved a higher awareness at university and agricultural research and extension level for integrated solutions. This work will continue with the SustainSahel project in West Africa. The learnings from SysCom and ProEcoAfrica/Organic Food Systems Africa are already being transferred into policy recommendations.

Additionally, with the work on the African Organic Agriculture Training Manual, a broader approach to strengthening farmers’ capacities and skills through training began. The work on training materials gained strong momentum when FiBL became involved in the Green Innovations Centers in 2017 – part of the German government's One World – No Hunger program through the GIZ. Later on, the training materials work has continued through FiBL’s involvement in the African Knowledge Center for Organic Agriculture (KCOA) and its five regional hubs, also through GIZ. Finally, societal and cultural dimensions are addressed in our research methodology, and conflicts and controversies related to knowledge and practice are made visible.

2. FiBL's contributions in Africa

This FiBL Africa strategy aims to transform food and agriculture systems towards more agroecological, more profitable for our target groups (see chapter 1.7), more equitable and social, more attractive for the youth, and more gender-balanced, locally and nationally. Therefore, our main objective is to contribute with appropriate knowledge and agency in this transformation of the food and agriculture systems.

FiBL strives to strengthen and accelerate the transition outlined above, but we recognise that such a transition is a complex endeavour and that FiBL can only be effective in its work through partnerships with African-based organisations and other relevant actors. Also, partnership and cooperation with institutions that do not yet recognise the value of organic systems is also a goal for us, particularly if they are strategic (like National Agricultural Research Systems (NARS) and Extension, regional/continental policy networks, and sub-regional research and economic bodies).

FiBL is conducting organic research based on data from long-term trials and farm surveys and using environmental, social, and economic models. Modern evaluation and impact assessment methods (see core mission 6) enable sound assertions to be made on the performance and the optimisation potential of organic farming. FiBL carries out interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research approaches through participatory initiatives such as innovation platforms and participatory market chain approaches, thus developing and optimising environmentally, socially, and economically robust systems. Using established sustainability assessment methods and environmental, socio-economic models at the field, farm, and regional levels, it is possible to comprehensively evaluate the agricultural and food systems. The analysis of trade-offs or synergies between economic, social and environmental aspects helps practitioners and stakeholders in government, industry, and society to make evidence-based decisions. (See FiBL Core Missions in Annexe A4).

Our work in Africa focuses on jointly resolving problems and finding pragmatic solutions to bottlenecks for our clients and partners. Our role is different in each project, depending on the target and scope of a project. Thereby, we rely on a wide range of analytical tools to adapt our work depending on the diverse contexts and challenging circumstances. Relying on a wide range of specialised FiBL experts and staff from five continents, we strongly build on our social and scientific competence to complement our thematic expertise.

Within this work, programs, institutions, and agreements, such as the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (see box below), African Union Commission's Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative, Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA)'s Science Agenda, Agenda 2063, and the work of AfrONet/IFOAM and NOARA on the continent, help to guide FiBL's approach in Africa.

In our work in Africa from 2021-2025, FiBL's work, jointly with its partners, will focus on the following areas to bring about the necessary changes to the food systems:

- Strengthening our participatory and comparative research in food systems, local and export market development, capacity development, and training-related activities (including digital) in Africa and better communicating it to partners
- Incorporating local research agendas on organic and starting from available research to provide far-reaching rewards for Africa. FiBL will take cognisance of existing efforts and generally look at building onto past and on-going research and development programmes or projects, and work with relevant partners and stakeholders to strengthen and take such promising initiatives to higher levels
- Investing in human nutrition and health initiatives and projects driven by healthier and safer diets, taking cognisance of needs, equity and imbalances related to, e.g. gender and age

In addition to the four principles shown in Figure 1 - research and development, trans-disciplinary, providing evidence and empowerment, we will do this by working in the following ways:

- Recognising the importance and **building on our partnerships** and networks with local and community-based organisations, including the private sector
- Strengthening networks and suitable platforms and pathways for dissemination of successes and lessons learnt
- Utilising a systems approach, integrated projects and case studies of local food systems and making the cases better known to more practitioners as well as African media and regional/continental platforms
- Exploring the option of a stronger presence of FiBL in Africa

Box C: The UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Agenda 2030 are highly relevant for food and agriculture systems:

The UN SDGs guide our work as the global consensus of the world we want to build by 2030. While the 17 SDGs are broad and complex, we want to ensure that our work contributes to achieving the following nine SDGs that are related to food systems:



3. Our work priorities in Africa

In our work in and relevant to Africa, FiBL’s overall objective is to create and disseminate the knowledge and agency needed to advance the transition to sustainable and ecological organic African food systems, based on our comparative studies, long experience, and building capacity of partners. We aim to do this by working on the four key work areas outlined below, each with its own outcomes that contribute to the overall objective and expected impact (see Fig. 3 below)

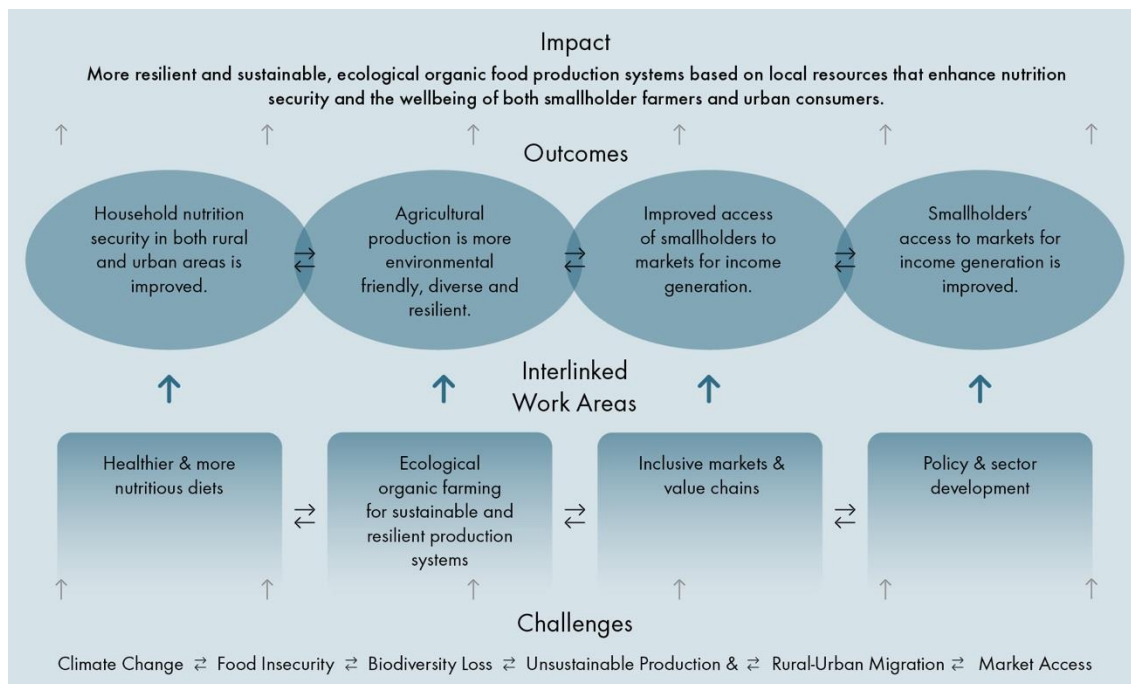


Figure 3: FiBL Theory of change for Africa

We expect our strategy to change and influence African food systems in the four selected key working areas of ecological organic farming systems and other agroecological approaches, household nutrition, markets and organic and sustainable value chains, as well as policy and sector development. As we work strategically on organic-relevant issues and with like-minded partners, we utilise synergies in existing programs and projects and focus on the final impact in mind: to support more resilient, sustainable food and organic agriculture systems that lead to healthier diets and improve farmers’ livelihoods.

3.1 Targeted outcomes and main activities

The tables below provide an overview of topics and priority activities according to the four prioritised work areas, as shown in Figure 3. They outline FiBL’s current and future collaborative activities and partners in Africa. The actual activities will be determined by the available budgets and priorities of our financial partners.

Healthier and more nutritious diets	
Expected outcome: The household nutrition both in rural and urban areas has improved through a more diverse diet, ensured access to pesticide-free production, and improved availability of and access to nutrition-sensitive food (crops and animal products).	
Topic	Priority activities
Nutrition-sensitive food literacy	Stakeholder engagement, education/awareness-raising on health-food-lifestyle nexus (incl. influencer marketing), empowerment of stakeholders and institutions in endorsing nutrition-sensitive agroecological practices and consumption patterns (incl. inter-sectoral collaboration on healthy diets).
Agroecological diversification of local food production	Promotion of diversified home gardening and terrace farming, fostering small-scale irrigation schemes, research and development of ecological agro-intensified production systems (incl. combining vegetable, animal, and/or fish production).
Highly nutritious crops and safer food production	Awareness creation of healthy food crops (incl. marketing concept, recipe development and utilisation), dissemination of these crops (incl. school gardens), participatory breeding, and development of seed systems.

Ecological organic farming for sustainable and resilient production systems

Expected outcome: Resilient African ecological organic and sustainable farming systems based on integrated management and utilisation of soil, livestock, plant, economic and socio-ecological interactions are co-created/co-designed and showcased.

Topic	Priority activities
Soil fertility and health	R4D activities enhancing soil conservation, climate change adaptation and mitigation and soil quality improvement (organic matter, fertility, soil structure, improve water capture and storage, etc.).
Agroforestry	Design agroforestry systems, diversity, indigenous resources, best practices, non-certified production, crop-shrub/tree interactions, alley cropping, agrosylvopastoralism and adding value through by-crops.
Plant production	Agrobiodiversity, plant protection, locally adapted mechanisation, plant nutrition, best agronomic practices and improved water use efficiency.
Plant breeding	Participatory plant breeding; local seed systems, including orphan crops and agroforestry species; seed quality, preservation and storage.
Ecosystem services	Fauna and flora abundance and diversity in agricultural systems, pest and disease/beneficials, environmental pollution (pesticides, heavy metals, erosion) and landscape ecology.
Scenario-building and modelling	Landscape-level and long-term impacts of agricultural practices and participatory scenario-building.
Animal breeding, husbandry and pasture management	Poultry and non-ruminants, small ruminants, large ruminants non-dairy, dairy, breeding, pasture and rangeland management, smallholder fodder initiatives, animal health (including ethnobotanical approaches) and welfare, traditional knowledge, improved crop-livestock integration and farmer-pastoralist relations.
Social-ecological interactions	Land tenure, gender and youth empowerment, labour availability, capacity development, sustainable food and fibre production, social systems building, dissemination, adoption and upscaling.

Inclusive markets and value chains

Expected Outcome: The production and marketing of organic produce to safeguard natural resources and foster economic development, and the competitiveness of rural areas and farm households is fostered.

Topic	Priority activity lines
Local/domestic markets for organic produce	Awareness creation (incl. social media influencer marketing), value chain & business development, networking & stakeholder empowerment (incl. capacity building for local producer groups, value chain actors, and unions) and increasing local actors' income.
Export markets for certified organic produce	Support sustainable production of organic produce in the tropics, supporting market access and North-South trade collaborations (incl. quality assurance for export ventures) and farmer training and technical advice (incl. certification advice).
Smallholder certification schemes	Advice to link smallholders with export ventures, promotion, and support of ICS schemes (design, advice, capacity building, digital support tools) and empowerment of farmer groups (incl. access to training materials, organic inputs).

Policy and sector development

Expected Outcome: The system's resilience has improved at the case level by integrated systems solutions and by promoting organic principles and best practices focusing on digitalisation, capacity building, networking, policy support, sustainability assessments, and integrated value chain analyses.

Topic	Priority activity lines
Digitalisation	Create innovative prototypes of training and communication with farmers using SMS and apps, ensuring access of farmers and multipliers through digital means to relevant training, knowledge, organic inputs, and organic farming markets. Explore other digital innovations and tools that facilitate and enhance processes such as certification and traceability, as well as those that enhance testing and sustainability of farming systems.
Capacity building, education	Farmer training and extension, further develop the African Organic Training Manual (FiBL/IFOAM) and increase its accessibility and use at a national and local level, support the Knowledge Centers on Organic Agriculture and partner-up with national partners; research capacity

	building of local partners including students; curriculum development; food system caravan and its follow-up.
Network promotion	Local, national (NOAMs), regional/continental (Organic knowledge hubs, NOARA, Afronet, EOAI); but also strategic “general” institutions and platforms and facilitating stakeholder engagement.
Policy support and dialogue	Engaging in the dialogue with African Union Commission’s Ecological Organic Agriculture Initiative and its New Partnership for Africa's Development as well as with international and United Nations organisations, including Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA), Food, Agriculture and Natural Resources Policy Analysis Network (FANRPAN), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and its Committee on World Food Security (CFS), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the European Union, governments, private donors, farmers organisations and civil society organisations. Proactive participation in innovative platforms with broader outreach.
Sustainability assessment	Make environmental, economic, social, and governance sustainability assessments of organic farms and supply chains; trade-offs and synergies from organic management and comparative assessments.
Value chain development and sector analyses	Provide research-based and evidenced knowledge and agency for policy decisions (public, private, and for Civil Society Organizations); statistics on organic agriculture and development (production, marketing, etc.), including capacity building of local partners in data gathering and processing, organic and Fairtrade cotton value chains West Africa.

Communication and outreach

In order to implement the FiBL Africa Strategy, there is a need to scale up alternative production systems in Africa. This will be best achieved if scientific evidence is accompanied by effective communication activities that bring the knowledge into the mainstream to help influence production practices and extension, environmental, human and animal health, as well as marketing and policy change. FiBL research and development activities should build on a common understanding of how research results can be up-scaled to support the sustainable transition of African food systems. This shared understanding should allow all research activities to effectively and efficiently identify and address the different levels and the target groups that can maximise their impact.

3.2 Beneficiaries

The final beneficiaries of FiBL's collaborative activities are farmers, farmer organisations, consumers and small and medium enterprises related to the agriculture and food sector with a specific focus on smallholder family farms (see definitions in Annexe 0).

3.3 Partners

3.3.1 Key strategic partners

The current key strategic partners of FiBL are those with whom we collaborate across various projects and aim to develop and implement new projects. They may evolve over the years. At the moment, they are:

- Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and especially its – Global Programme Food Security (GPFS)
- Liechtenstein Development Service (LED)
- Mercator Foundation Switzerland
- Biovision Foundation, Biovision Africa Trust / EOA-I Secretariat
- AfrONet/ NOARA
- European Union
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
- Swissaid
- IFOAM – Organics International
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
- The United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (movement)

Generally, we aim to work together with these strategic partners on concrete cases and with local, regional and continental partners who work with farmers or are framing the given agriculture sector; these include multipliers (advisors, trainers, local and national facilitators, development agents, service providers, Community-Based Organisations, NGOs, etc.), traders, processing companies, researchers and policymakers.

3.3.2 Key implementing partners

Apart from our strategic partners, we work with a wide range of partners in implementing projects. Key partners across our key areas of work (listed alphabetically) are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access Agriculture – Pan-African • African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services – AFAAS • African Organic Network – AfroNet – Pan-African • Africrops! - Germany • Agro Eco Louis Bolk Institute • Arifu – Kenya • Bio Suisse – Switzerland • Biovion Africa Trust • Center for Development Research – ZEF - Germany • Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement (The French Agricultural Research Centre for International Development) – CIRAD – France • Coop - Switzerland • Centre de Suivi Ecologique (Ecological Monitoring Center; CSE) • ecos/Organic & Fairtrade Cotton Coalition West Africa – CCBE – West Africa • ETH Zürich (Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich) – ETH - Switzerland • Fair Trade International - Germany • farmbetter Ltd.- UK • Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa – FARA – Ghana • Hivos • ICIPE - International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology – Kenya • Institut d’Economie Rurale – IER – Mali • Institut de l’Environnement et de Recherches Agricoles – INERA – Burkina Faso 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (the French National Research Institute for Sustainable Development) – IRD – France • Institut Sénégalais de Recherches Agricoles (Senegalese Institute of Agricultural Research) ISRA – Senegal • International Institute of Tropical Agriculture – IITA • Institut Polytechnique Rural – IPR- Mali • Kasisi Agricultural Training Center – Zambia • Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization – KALRO • Kenya Organic Agriculture Network – KOAN – Kenya • Makerere University – Uganda • Ministry of Food and Agriculture – MOFA – Ghana • Network of Organic Agriculture Researchers in Africa (NOARA) • Organic Agriculture Centre of Kenya – OACK - Kenya • Organic Cotton Accelerator - International • Organic partners (NOAMs in the countries) – Pan-African • Participatory Ecological Land Use Management – PELUM • Pro Fair Trade – Switzerland • Sustainable Institute – South Africa • Tradin Ltd. – the Netherlands • Université Nazi Boni – UNB – Burkina Faso • University of Ghana – Ghana • University of Hohenheim – Germany • University of Kassel – Germany • University of Zambia – UNZA - Zambia • Yielder Ltd. – Kenya
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3.4 Geographical focus

We cover all five sub-regions of Africa: West, East, North, Southern, and Central (currently in this order of focus, from most to least). Based on our current involvement and networks, our focus countries are Kenya, Mali, and Ghana, where we have strong partnerships and networks and are implementing various projects in different contexts and topics. We want to expand our focus countries to create other hubs in the Francophone countries, especially in the Sahel region (e.g., Burkina Faso, Senegal, Chad) and the Maghreb (Morocco/Tunisia). We will also engage and strengthen our collaboration in other countries, such as those in Central and Southern Africa, whenever our expertise can provide a relevant contribution to the local development and when we have strengthened partnerships in those regions.

3.5 Organisational base

FiBL realises its work through strong partnerships in the partner countries, independent of FiBL's role in the project. Our model is that the work on the ground is implemented by the partners supported and backstopped by FiBL in those areas where FiBL has substantial expertise and is complemented by further experts. Complementary to this cooperation model, FiBL had a project office in the IER-CRRA premises in Sikasso, Mali, with local staff, which can still be utilised. Currently, one FiBL staff member is located in Kenya; further presence in Kenya is envisaged. It will be explored whether a formal registration of FiBL in Kenya could strengthen the implementation of FiBL's Africa strategy, facilitate project management and reduce travels.

3.6 Team development

Across FiBL, many colleagues are engaged in Africa with a strong core of expertise and activities within FiBL's International Cooperation Department. With its strong partnerships, experience in Africa, and core competence in intercultural cooperation and research for development, the department will lead and coordinate the implementation of the FiBL Africa strategy. The core team within FiBL's International Cooperation Department is composed of:

- Head of the department (Beate Huber),
- FiBL Africa coordinator (Gian Nicolay),
- FiBL ambassador for Africa (Irene Kadzere)
- and further Africa specialists on soil (Noah Adamtey) and digitalisation (Benjamin Gräub).

Other colleagues within the department and in all other FiBL departments, including a veterinary expert in FiBL France, play an important role in contributing to the implementation of the FiBL Africa strategy with their specific expertise. Over the next five years, the aim is to involve more staff and expertise from FiBL in African projects. Additionally, we would like to strengthen the exchange and learn amongst colleagues from different FiBL units and departments doing work in and about Africa.

An expansion of the team and activities will depend on potential financial core resources for those activities being made available and our success in acquisition.

3.7 Financial & human resources

Overall, the vast majority of the financial and human resources are funded by projects. In order to achieve the strategic goal of growth of our activities and impact in Africa, we are proposing the following additional resources:

- General coordination and active participation in relevant networks – 0.5 FTE
- Monitoring of the strategy – 0.5 FTE internship
- Overall fundraising for further work in Africa – 0.5 FTE
- Digitalisation – build on existing strong players in this sector to strengthen FiBL’s position and build strategic partnerships – 0.2 FTE

Additionally, to strengthen FiBL’s presence and fundraising capacities in East Africa by registering and setting up a local presence (office in a co-working space) budget of 2,000-3,000 CHF per year would be needed.

3.8 Monitoring of the expected outputs and outcomes

In order to ensure accountability regarding this strategy, we will monitor the achievement of the objectives of each work area from Chapter 3.1.

Overall, we are foreseeing the following metrics to monitor our work in and about Africa:

Table I Monitoring framework for FiBL's Africa Strategy

Monitoring indicators	Baseline 2021	Goal by 2025
Number of beneficiaries and partners reached with the estimated impact	To be defined by the person responsible for monitoring based on	20% increase from baseline

Monitoring indicators	Baseline 2021	Goal by 2025
	information available within FiBL in 2022	
Budget spent for activities in Africa	To be defined by the person responsible for monitoring based on information available within FiBL in 2022	20 % increase from baseline
Number of capacity-building materials (documents, text messages, apps) created and number of users/readers of these materials	To be defined by the person responsible for monitoring based on information available within FiBL in 2022	Double from 2021
Number of PhD and Master students trained	To be identified by the person responsible for monitoring based on information available within FiBL in 2022	Double from 2021
Number of research papers published and number of reads of them	To be defined by the person responsible for monitoring based on information available within FiBL in 2022	20% increase from baseline
Number of digital advisory content pieces developed and number of learners reached with them	To be defined by the person responsible for monitoring based on information available within FiBL in 2022	Triple from 2021
Number of organic value chains developed with FiBL's support	Not applicable	At least 6 by 2025
Number of national action plans or national organic policies enacted in countries where FiBL's active	Not applicable	At least 3 by 2025

We will base the monitoring data for all metrics on data we receive from on-going FiBL projects and derived from the initial phase of new projects.

To ensure that the strategy can align with changes in our operating environment, the Core Group of the Africa Strategy will meet at least yearly to review the progress made and whether the indicators and objectives are still adequate or need to be adapted.

3.9 Risks and mitigation measures

Table 2 Risks and mitigation measures

Risks	Mitigation measures
Political and social tensions and conflicts interrupt project activities and/or divert the focus on sustainable agriculture	Keep close dialogue with local partners and development actors in order to anticipate measures.
Lack of political support for agroecological programs and programs addressing smallholder farming systems.	Use comparative research to continuously inform policymakers on the advantages of agroecological, organic, and regenerative agriculture. Close collaboration with non-state actors.
Pandemics and/or natural disasters do not allow to keep the required close contact with realities on the field level.	Strengthen digital communication, foster individual partnerships.
The ambitious and extensive agenda of the FiBL strategy cannot be matched with experienced and available staff, leading to disappointments and reputation damage.	Only accept and enter into projects where we can assume responsibility for the quality of our work and assure positive results and impact.

4. Annexes

- A0 Terminology
- A1 Maps
- A2 List of current and past projects
- A3 FiBL core missions
- A4 References

A0 Terminology

Terminology	Definition used
Ecological Organic Agriculture	Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) is a holistic production system by design that sustains the health of ecosystems (particularly the soils), the livelihood security of people (labourer mainly; farmer to consumer), strengthens communities and societies and relies on functional (material, symbolic) cycles adapted to local conditions, rather than the use of synthetic inputs which have adverse effects on total health (human, animal, plant and environmental). Regeneration is a key principle; certification is not a requirement. This production form is promoted on the African continent – initiated by the African Union in 2011 - in order to make the best use of both organic farming and agroecology (FiBL working definition, 2017).
Food system	<p>We define here food system as including agriculture with all of the processes and infrastructure involved in nourishing a population as well as providing raw material (like fibre and fat) from land use and fishing.</p> <p>The food system includes all people and activities that play a part in growing, transporting, supplying and, ultimately, eating food. These processes also involve elements that often go unseen, such as food preferences and resource investments. Food systems influence diets by determining what kinds of foods are produced. They also influence what foods people want to eat and are able to access.</p> <p>The different parts of the food system include food supply chains, food environments, individual factors, consumer behaviour and external drivers (factors that push or pull the system).</p> <p>See more in Annexe A I</p>
Sustainable food and agriculture system	<p>See the definition in the above section of 'food system'. Agriculture covers crop farming, agroforestry, livestock, fishing and forestry (related to food and farmer income). In order to be sustainable, the following criteria may be necessary:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It must be self-sustaining, including energy. It should be managed to reduce losses to a minimum and all by-products recycled. 2. It must be diversified to include livestock, polyculture and agroforestry in order to be self-sustaining and promote ecosystem functions and services to agriculture. 3. Minimise external input use (through integrated pest management and integrated soil fertility management). 4. Maximise net output per unit area through the use of sustainable approaches. 5. It must be aesthetically and ethically acceptable.
Food security	Composed and measured with the four pillars: food availability, access to food, utilisation and stability. The nutritional and safety dimension are integral to the concept of food security.

Terminology	Definition used
Institutions	<p>Institutions are structures and mechanisms of social order and cooperation governing the behaviour of two or more individuals. Institutions are identified with a social purpose and permanence, transcending individual human lives and intentions and making and enforcing rules governing cooperative human behaviour. The term ‘institution’ is commonly applied to customs and behaviour patterns important to a social community, as well as to particular formal organisations of government and public service. As structures and mechanisms of social order among humans, institutions are among the principal objects of study in the social sciences, including sociology, political science and economics. Organisations are a complex of institutions with a specific purpose.</p> <p>Institutions are prescriptions that humans use to organise all forms of repetitive and structured interactions, including those within families, neighbourhoods, markets, firms and government.</p>
Value chains	<p>Value chain refers to the functional activities of a business that add value to its customers. According to Porter, it consists of primary activities and support activities, all of which add value to the products or services offered by the business. Ideally, the company’s products pass through the activities of the value chain and along the way, each activity adds value to the products.</p> <p>When managing the value chain system, the idea is to optimise the chain so as to maximise value while minimising cost. A business must use its value chain activities to create value and capture that value. The value created by this chain should exceed the sum of the values added by each individual activity.</p>
Smallholder, smallholder agriculture	<p>Approximately 2.5 billion people live directly from agricultural production systems, either as full or part-time farmers or as members of farming households that support farming activities (FAO 2008a, cited in IFAD 2013). Smallholders produce food and non-food products on a small scale with limited external inputs, cultivating field and tree crops as well as livestock, fish and other aquatic organisms. But they are not always full-time smallholders. In fact, most low-income families earn their incomes in multiple ways, and productivity on farms should be viewed in the overall context of total family income (Reardon et al. 1998, cited in IFAD 2013).</p> <p>There is no universally accepted definition of a small farm. ‘Small’ may refer to the number of workers, capital invested, or amount of land worked. Land size is the criterion most commonly employed, but given the differing potential of land in soil quality and rainfall, a single measurement hardly captures the sense of limited resources or relative powerlessness characteristic of smallholders.</p> <p>Overall, smallholder farmers are characterised by marginalisation in terms of accessibility, resources, information, technology, capital and assets, but there is great variation in the degree to which each applies (Adeleke et al.,</p>

Terminology	Definition used
	<p>2010; Murphy 2012; IFAD 2013, FAO 2015). With these qualifications, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO 2015) adopted a 2-hectare (ha) threshold as a broad measure of a small farm (which is not inclusive of fishers and other small-scale food producers).</p> <p>Smallholder agriculture is defined based on:</p> <p>Land size (they cultivate up to 2 hectares of land). However, in very densely populated areas, smallholders might work on less than 1 hectare, and in sparsely populated semi-arid areas (sometimes in combination with livestock), smallholders could work on up to 10ha and even beyond);</p> <p>Technologies (affordable, often also traditional);</p> <p>Land operation (integrated, diversified products, the family in the centre of, decision-making and implementation);</p> <p>Input use (recommended fertiliser rates to use by small scale farmers are 60kg N ha⁻¹ and 40-60 kg P₂O₅ ha⁻¹);</p> <p>Revenue (supplemented by self-consumption of farm produce).</p> <p>Major challenges of smallholder farmers are (1) Land property rights, (2) Access to land and credits, (3) Access to markets,(4) Inadequate infrastructure, (5) Lack of skills in modern agriculture, (6) Reduced use of quality inputs such as fertiliser, pesticides and seeds.</p>
ReSAKSS	<p>The Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (ReSAKSS) supports the successful implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) by providing policy-relevant data, facilitating dialogue among stakeholders; monitoring progress in reviewing goals; and strengthening mutual accountability processes at continental, regional and national levels.</p> <p>ReSAKSS' work is organised around four primary functions:</p> <p>Knowledge Management and Policy Dialogue</p> <p>Strategic Analysis</p> <p>Monitoring and Evaluation</p> <p>Capacity Strengthening</p> <p>ReSAKSS is a multi-country network, structured around four “nodes”- one at the Africa wide level, and three within each of Africa’s major regional economic communities (RECs): East and Central Africa (ECA), West Africa (WA), and Southern Africa (SA). In addition, each node comprises a network of national, regional, and international partners. See more in the annexe.</p> <p>Source and more info: https://www.resakss.org/</p>

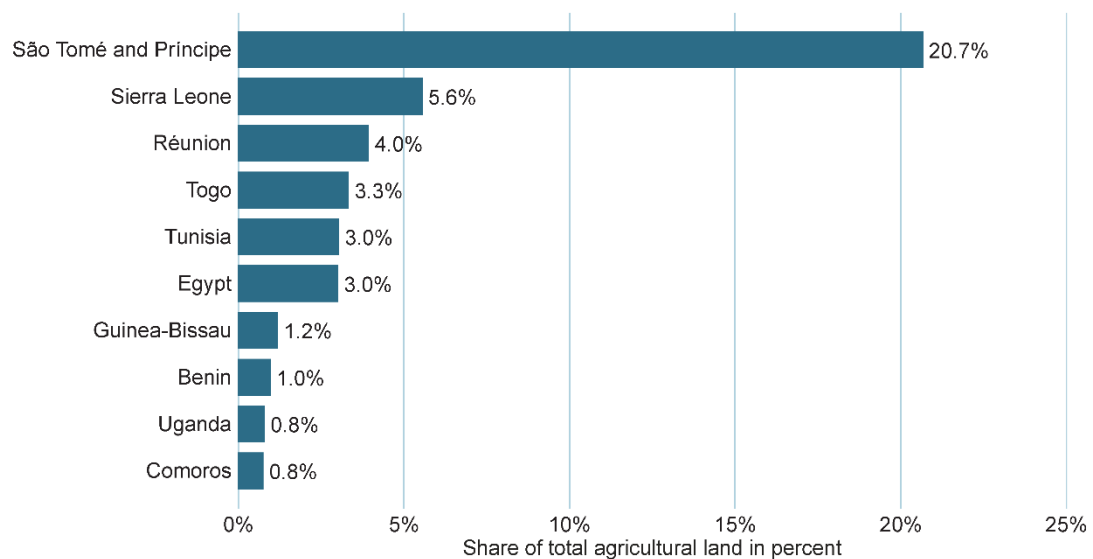
AI Maps

Overview of organic agriculture in Africa (from Willer et al. 2022)

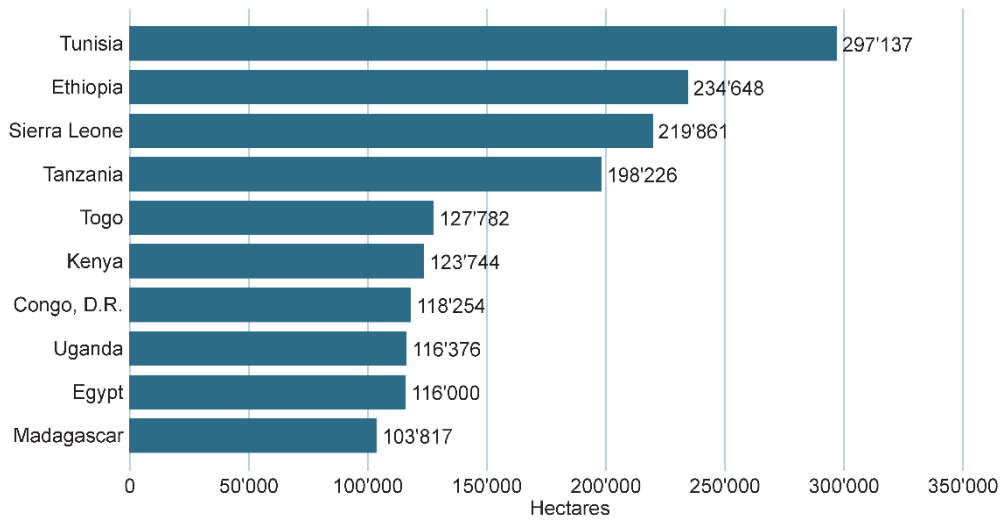
Share of organic agricultural land 2020



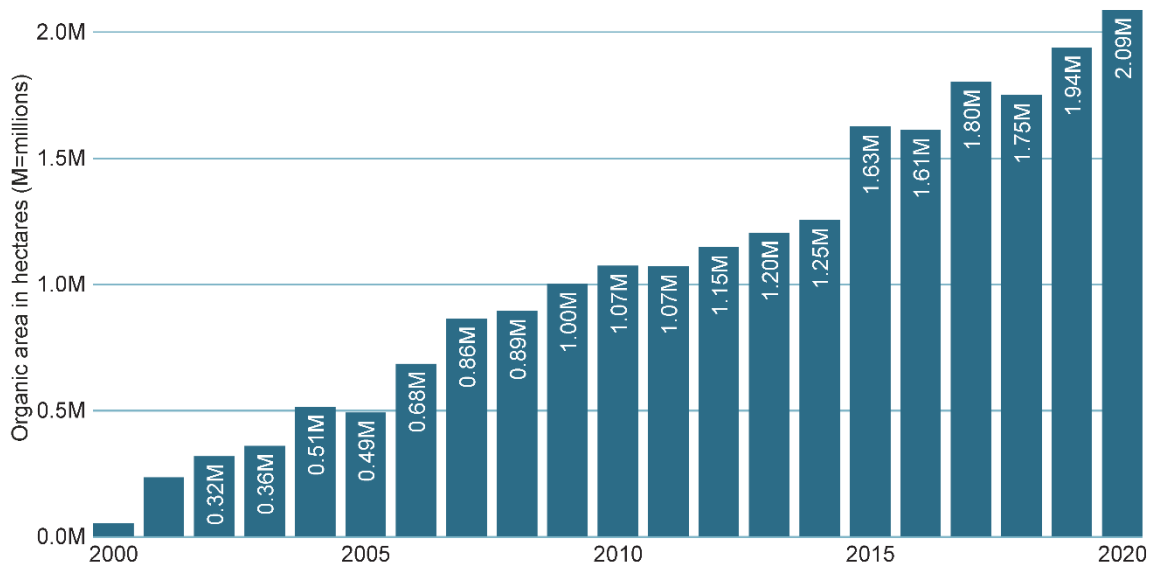
The ten countries with the highest organic share of total agricultural land 2020



The ten countries with the largest organic agricultural area 2020

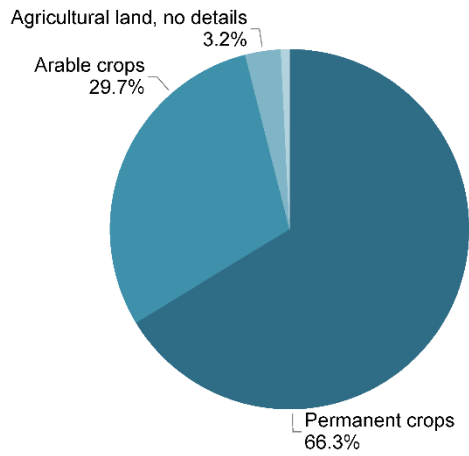


Development of organic agricultural land 2000 bis 2020

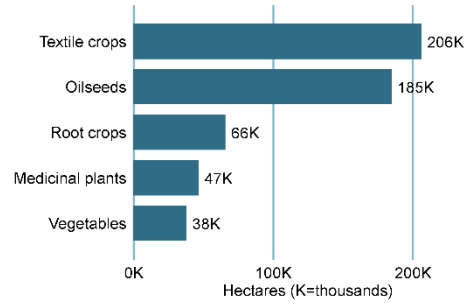


Use of organic agricultural land 2020

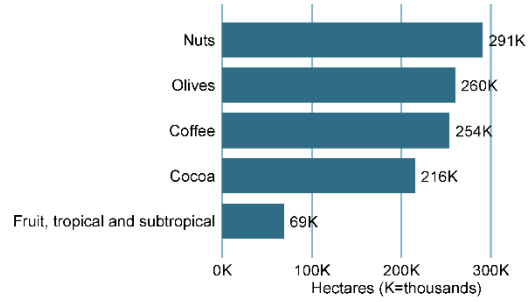
Land use types



Key arable crops



Key permanent crops



A2 List of relevant current and past FiBL projects

Status	Project title	Start	End
on-going	Synergistic use and protection of natural resources for rural livelihoods through systematic integration of crops, shrubs and livestock in the Sahel (SustainSahel)	01.09.2020	01.09.2025
on-going	Knowledge Centers Organic Agriculture for Africa (KCOA)	01.04.2020	30.06.2022
on-going	Regional Knowledge Hub for Organic Agriculture in East Africa: a pilot on transforming farmer access	01.03.2020	30.06.2022
completed	Äthiopien Agrinatura VCA4D Baumwolle	08.01.2020	31.08.2020
completed	Research Backstopper for Inception Phase of the Establishment of Northern Africa Organic Knowledge Hub	01.12.2019	30.04.2020
on-going	Knowledge transfer to ICS certified producer groups in selected African countries within the framework of GIZ SI training and employment (Africa ICS GIZ)	15.10.2019	31.12.2020
on-going	German-Moroccan expert dialogue on agriculture and forestry (DIAF)	01.10.2019	30.09.2021
on-going	Farmer capacity development to improve organic sesame production in Ethiopia	01.07.2019	30.06.2022
completed	Mali Agrinatura VCA4D Fisch	01.07.2019	31.03.2020
completed	Support to Professional Associations in Morocco	01.02.2019	31.03.2019
on-going	Microbial nitrogen cycling and functional diversity of soil microbes in organic and conventional farming systems under temperate and tropical climates	01.01.2019	31.12.2021
on-going	Green Innovation Centres for the Agriculture and Food Sector – Organic Working Group	01.01.2019	31.12.2020

Status	Project title	Start	End
on-going	Organic Food Systems Africa (OFSA)	01.03.2016	31.12.2020
on-going	Linking organic farmers in Muranga, Kenya, to markets through value chain, agribusiness and technical capacity development (Africa ProEco PMCA Bachmann)	01.10.2019	31.12.2021
on-going	Drivers and potential health impacts of dietary and nutrition practices and choices in Kirinyaga and Muranga counties, Kenya (Nutridecisions)	01.10.2019	31.10.2021
completed	ProEcoAfrica -Productivity, Profitability and Sustainability of Organic and Conventional Farming Systems in Sub-Saharan Africa: Comparative analyses (2013 – 2019)	01.07.2013	31.12.2019
completed	Cameroon Agrinatura VCA4D Cotton	01.01.2019	31.10.2019
completed	Organic and Fair Palm Oil Production	01.10.2018	31.03.2019
completed	Appui au réseau coton Bio-Equitable 2018/19 et son institutionnalisation au SICOT et ICAC	01.09.2018	30.04.2019
ongoing	Dynamic Agroforestry Systems (DAFS) (DAFS)	01.04.2018	31.12.2021
completed	Experience exchange and joint assessment to promote organic agriculture in Tunisia and Morocco	01.12.2017	31.12.2017
completed	Green Innovation Centres in the Agriculture and Food Sector - Working Group on Organic Agriculture	01.08.2017	31.12.2018
completed	Green Innovation Centres in the Agriculture and Food Sector - Working Group on Organic Agriculture	01.08.2018	31.12.2020
On-going	Green Innovation Centres in the Agriculture and Food Sector - Working Group on Organic Agriculture	01.02.2021	31.01.2023

Status	Project title	Start	End
completed	Application of organic bio-fertiliser technology to improve the sustainability of date palm production and cultivation (fertile date palm)	01.08.2016	31.07.2019
on-going	Nutrition in Mountain Agro-ecosystems (NMA)	01.05.2015	31.05.2021
completed	Transdisciplinary systems research to develop a novel holistic concept for reducing the spread and impact of Cocoa Swollen Shoot Virus Disease in West Africa (TransdisCSSVD)	01.04.2015	31.12.2018
on-going	Farmer-driven organic resource management to build soil fertility (ORM4Soil)	01.01.2015	31.12.2020
completed	Import of organic fruits and vegetables	01.01.2015	31.12.2017
on-going	Yamsys, Biophysical and socio-economic drivers of sustainable soil use in yam cropping systems for improved food security in West Africa (Yamsys)	01.11.2014	30.11.2021
completed	Mid-term Evaluation Biotrade South Africa Project	01.09.2014	31.12.2014
completed	CONNEcting knowledge, scales and actors; An integrated framework for adaptive organic resource management targeting soil aggradation and agroecosystems' resilience in Sub-Saharan Africa (ConneSSA)	01.08.2014	31.12.2017
on-going	Ram pasture	01.01.2014	not defined
completed	Insect-based feed and fertiliser production via waste transformation for smallholders in Ghana (IBFFP)	01.01.2014	31.12.2017
completed	Potential of Sustainable Land-Use Systems to Promote Adaptation to Climate Change	01.12.2013	31.05.2017

Status	Project title	Start	End
completed	Market access facilitation for selected value chains of typical food products (PAMPAT)	01.09.2013	31.12.2015
completed	Multi-purpose cowpea inoculation for improved yields in smallholder farms in Kenya (COWBIA)	01.03.2013	28.02.2016
completed	International Symposium on Mediterranean Organic Agriculture (Agadir 2013)	01.12.2012	31.12.2013
completed	Syprobio-Improving farmers income and food security in diversified organic production systems in West-Africa (SYPROBIO)	01.01.2011	31.12.2015
completed	Organic cotton- Experimental Learning Methodologies	01.01.2010	31.07.2010
on-going	African Organic Farming Training Manual	01.10.2009	
completed	Organic Agriculture Action Plan Tunisia	01.01.2006	31.12.2006
on-going	Long-term farming systems comparisons in the tropics (SysCom)	01.05.2005	31.12.2022
completed	Technical Leaflets Tunisia	01.01.2005	31.12.2006
completed	Küchenkräuter aus Ghana	01.01.1999	31.12.1999
completed	R4D synthesis project Food Systems Caravan (2019)	01.01.2019	31.12.2019

A3 FiBL's Core Missions

Core mission 1:

Plant breeding for agroecological and organic cropping systems

Core mission 2:

Use of digital technology in modern organic farming

Core mission 3:

Organic crop protection for the entire farming sector

Core mission 4:

Optimum nitrogen management for crops, livestock and the environment

Core mission 5:

Animal welfare, productivity and sustainability—solving the conflicts

Core mission 6:

Climate change and organic farming

Core mission 7:

Improving the sustainability of agriculture and the value chain

Core mission 8:

Making value chains transparent and securing the long-term trust of Consumers

Core mission 9:

Organic advisory services of the future—the digital advisor and the personal discussion

Core mission 10:

Organic farming's contribution to sustainable development in the countries of the global South

Core mission 11:

FiBL campus— Agroecology and organic farming need interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary education and training

Source: FiBL 2019

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