An introduction to Participatory Guarantee Systems

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### 3rd party and PGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Third party certification</th>
<th>PGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>Voluntary to professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent from stakeholders</td>
<td>Participatory (stakeholder involvement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In accordance with international norms</td>
<td>Following general PGS international principles but locally adapted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gives access to international markets (with right channels)</td>
<td>Access mostly to local, regional or unregulated markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normal guarantee system in government organic regulations</td>
<td>Often not recognized by governments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deals only with certification</td>
<td>Combines with other functions, e.g. capacity building, marketing, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Consumers
Other local stakeholders (NGO staff, extension worker, consultant, etc.)

Farmers:
(members of the local PGS group)

Year-round social control
Annual farm visit of assessment team

Farm inspection report
Certification decision

Regional / national stakeholder council
- Decision on standards and procedures
- (Approval of certification decisions)
- Approval of the groups
- Maintenance of central documentation
- Logo management
- External relations

Participatory Governance

Annual Peer Review
Peer review report

Use of the logo and support for marketing
Individual certificates
Use of the logo and support for marketing

Certification decision
Individual certificates
Use of the logo and support for marketing
1. History and current status of PGS development worldwide
The conceptualization of PGS

- PGS even existed before 3rd party certification.
- 2004 IFOAM – MAELA: Workshop on alternative certification for organic production, Torres, Brazil

Why alternative certification?

- High costs
- Disagreement with paradigm
- Strengthen small-holders

→ During meeting, participants realized that they follow the same basic approach and share many common elements

PGS as a concept was born
International workshop on alternative certification Brazil, 2004

India, Philippines, Thailand, New Zealand, Brazil, Peru....
Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) are **locally focused quality assurance systems.** They certify producers based on active **participation** of stakeholders and are built on a foundation of **trust, social networks and knowledge exchange.**

-- Official IFOAM PGS Definition --
2. What is a PGS
Local adaption

Adapted and specific to local conditions

→ Every PGS is different

Details of methodology and process vary

→ Consistency of core principles
The Key PGS Elements

- Shared Vision
- Participation
- Transparency
- Horizontality
- Trust
- Learning Process
Peer review

Process where farmers belonging to the PGS together with consumers and other stakeholders assess the production practices of their peers.

It is the core of the PGS system.

It means that the quality control is not carried out by an external inspector but by the members of the same group.
PGS aim at …

*providing a credible organic guarantee to consumers seeking organic produce* …

• …creating meaningful relationships between stakeholders, based on democracy and inclusion
• …at a reasonable cost for the farmer
• …building alternative food networks
• …reestablishing ownerships of production standards and certification
• …supporting agroecological approach (science-practice-movement)
• …fostering food sovereignty
PGS: more than a guarantee system

• Bring people together

• Is a tool for collective actions bringing opportunities for cooperation and other social processes

• Generates learning and improvement of practices for farmers and consumers

• Build alternative food systems

These benefits may even be perceived as bigger benefits than the certification itself
Challenges

• Requires high degree of dedication from stakeholders:  
  \( \rightarrow \) greater empowerment = greater responsibility.

• Long term process for capacity building

• Government recognition is still limited (limiting making organic claims)

• Complex social organization (participatory governance)

• Replacing external professional work by volunteer internal work means less cash expenses, but more time input

• Requires building consumer awareness

• By law many countries currently impose limitation to the import/export of PGS certified products
3. Steps in PGS implementation
Steps in the implementation of PGS

1. Situation Analysis
2. Build Shared Vision
3. Define and agree how the PGS will work
4. Build awareness and make pledge
5. Day to day operation
6. Peer review
7. Certification approval
1. Situation analysis

To understand if PGS is relevant/important/necessary for a certain group of stakeholders, they should understand:

- the context in which it would be implemented,
- the needs of those involved,
- the challenges and the opportunities
- What are the motivations behind?
2. Build a shared vision

• The PGS development is the implementation of a Shared Vision

• Building a shared vision through a participatory process is an essential step in the PGS development

• People need to understand the benefits they can get from joining a PGS

• They also need to make a commitment towards achieving this common goal.

• No matter how complex or easy is this vision, the important thing is to ensure that it is accepted and understood by all members.
Examples

**France**

**Charte de la Fédération Nature & Progrès**
- Version avril 2013

Nature & Progrès est un mouvement citoyen, libre de tout corporatisme, composé d’adhérents de la société civile et d’adhérents professionnels qui répondent aux exigences de sa mission.

Cette charte s’adresse à chacun d’entre eux.

Elle est le ciment qui les réunit autour du projet associatif de Nature & Progrès et de ses enjeux. Son acceptation, ou mieux son appropriation, est un acte volontaire. Elle détermine les activités des groupes locaux et de la Fédération, leurs prises de position, leurs règles de fonctionnement.

Chaque adhérent de Nature & Progrès, quelle que soit son activité ou la forme de son engagement, peut s’en approprier les principes et s’efforcer de les mettre en œuvre.

Les titulaires de la mention s’engagent plus particulièrement à son application au mieux de leurs moyens dans leur activité professionnelle, dans une perspective d’amélioration permanente. Cet engagement est évalué dans le cadre du Système Participatif de Garantie.

**PREAMBULE**

Constituée en 1964 afin de faire reconnaître et progresser l’agriculture biologique, Nature et Progrès propose un engagement global qui va bien au-delà d’un simple label et qui s’inscrit dans la dynamique mondiale du mouvement écologique.

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**South Africa**

**Documentation for the Bryanston Market PGS**

**The Bryanston Organic & Natural Market**

The Bryanston Organic & Natural Market is committed to sustainability in all aspects of its operation. Infrastructure, product selection, stallholder support and the enabling of smallholder organic farmers are all supported by policies that reflect a commitment to community, the environment and future generations.

**The Vision**

To be the leading South African outdoor market – synonymous with sustainability, food sovereignty and economic freedom.

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**Australia**

**Members Guidelines**

**Byron Region**

Will use inputs and practices consistent with the National Organic Standard.

Will not use synthetic pesticides such as insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, non-organic fertilizer.

Will not use chemically treated or genetically modified (GMO) seeds or feeds.

Will ensure that water usage on my farm is efficient and sustainable.

Will aim to minimize waste and seek renewable and efficient sources of inputs where possible.

Will provide a positive, safe and equitable working environment for all people involved on the farm.

Will assist with learning and training opportunities for new farmers.

Will encourage community food security and food sovereignty by participating in shorter value chains and interacting with community members.

Will promote the vision and values of FEED – BR and contribute content for newsletters and other media.

Agricultural inputs should be sourced from Certified Organic, FEED - BR members or from a farmer who has signed an equivalent declaration of ecological management.

Best practices for environmentally friendly, naturally produced, nutrient dense farm produce should take precedence.

Animal welfare should be paramount to enhance their natural genetic expression.
3. Define and agree how the PGS will work
A PGS initiative must have:

- Shared vision (Charter or similar)
- Standards
- Rules/norms: including consequences for non-compliance
- Pledge/contract between members of the PGS
- Documented management systems and procedures
- Certificate
- Producers database
- Logo (optional)
- Legal entity (optional)
- Mechanisms for supporting farmers
4. Build and Raise awareness

- Meetings
- Trainings about OA, standards, PGS procedures etc...
- Events to involve consumers
- Informal learning opportunities

**Learning process** is a key element of PGS, it is important that the initiative organizes activities to train new PGS members and support them with capacity building.
Contrat d'engagement

Demande de mention 20__

Je soussigné(e), ................................................... Tel : ........................................
(Compléter par le nom d'une personne physique) Fax : ........................................
Au nom de .......................................................... E-mail : ........................................
(Compléter, le cas échéant, par le nom de la personne morale)
Adresse : ..........................................................

Demande la mention NATURE & PROGRES pour l'année 20__.

Je m'engage à :

-  Appliquer au mieux la Charte Nature et Progrès,
-  Respecter les règles de production du ou des cahiers des charges Nature & Progrès me concernant,
-  Signaler sans délai et soumettre à l'approbation de la Fédération Nature & Progrès toute modification relative à mes produits,
-  Observer le règlement d'utilisation de la mention Nature & Progrès et sa charte graphique, en particulier pour l'étiquetage de mes produits, documents de communication, panneaux d'affichages ...
-  Soumettre tout nouvel étiquetage à la COMAC fédérale ou la COMAC locale agréée,
-  Accepter la visite, même inopinée, d'enquêteurs mandatés par la COMAC fédérale ou par la COMAC locale agréée, pour contrôler la conformité de mes pratiques vis-à-vis de la charte et des cahiers des charges de N&P sur l'ensemble de ma production, ainsi que ma comptabilité,
-  Transmettre des réception, à la COMAC fédérale ou la COMAC locale agréée, une copie du rapport de visite (recto/verso) de l'organisme de contrôle pour l'année en cours ainsi que le certificat de conformité correspondant (cette obligation ne s'applique qu'à ceux qui sont certifiés « agriculture biologique »),
-  Manquer d'adhésion et de mes frais de mention à la Fédération et/ou au groupe local,
-  Transmettre à la Fédération Nature et Progrès le montant de mon chiffre d'affaires de vente de produits sous mention N&P, éventuellement diminué de mes achats d'intrants sous mention N&P, et payer, à réception de la facture, ma cotisation solidaire sur chiffre d'affaires,
-  Participer aux activités de mon groupe local Nature & Progrès et de la COMAC.

Ce contrat est renouvelé par tacite reconduction à la fin de l'année civile. Toute résiliation de sera signalée dans les meilleurs délais à la Fédération Nature & Progrès par lettre recommandée.

Mon contrôle pour certification en agriculture biologique est fait par : .............. (nom de l'organisme certifiateur)

Fait le : ...................... à ............................................
Signature

Liste des productions 20__ pour lesquelles est demandée la mention Nature & Progrès :

Contrat en deux exemplaires. Nous retourner cet exemplaire (2 pages) avec votre règlement à
Nature & Progrès, 13 boulevard Louis Blanc - 30100 Alès
5. Day to day operations

A PGS initiative should have:

• A **coordinator/coordination team** supervising the day to day management, usually a member with technical ability and time availability (voluntary or paid position).
Typical roles of PGS coordination

1. Contact point for the PGS initiative.
2. Schedule meetings, trainings, etc.
3. Process PGS applications
4. Keeps and manages data about PGS members (database)
5. Coordinate schedule of the annual farm visits.
6. Follow-up incomplete documentation.
7. Local support for members.
Verification of producers through peer reviews

Members joining the PGS declare to share the vision

Mechanisms to verify compliance

Step 1

Verification of producers through peer reviews

Step 2

Approval

Certification

Shared Vision

Standards and Rules conceived by all members

1. Standards and Rules
2. Pledge/Contract
3. Peer review questionnaire
4. Producers database
5. Peer review report
6. Certification + (Logo)

The PGS aim is not the certification in itself

How PGS normally work:
**PGS ENDORSEMENT**

This serves to confirm *Nature’s Heritage Drumblade and Walkerville properties* were assessed by the Bryanston Market PGS on 13 November 2017 and are endorsed to sell their products as:

**NATURALLY GROWN**

Based on compliance with the Basic Production Principles of Bryanston Market PGS and the adherence to the required guidelines, the following products are endorsed as grown according to organic principles:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beetroot</th>
<th>Cauliflower</th>
<th>Green Beans</th>
<th>Melon</th>
<th>Sweet potato</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broccoli</td>
<td>Chilies</td>
<td>Kale</td>
<td>Pumpkin</td>
<td>Swiss Chard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butternut</td>
<td>Egg plant</td>
<td>Leeks</td>
<td>Raspberries</td>
<td>Tomato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td>Gem Squash</td>
<td>Lettuce</td>
<td>Spinach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrot</td>
<td>Granadilla</td>
<td>Marrows</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sweet Pepper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For: Bryanston Market PGS Group

Bryanston Market PGS is a member of PGS South Africa (NOSRA), a voluntary association of growers, retailers and consumers supporting organic agriculture and local food production based on the principles of ecology, health, fairness and care.

NOSRA is a proud member of IFAM Organic International and supports the development of organic agriculture in its full diversity worldwide.

This certificate is valid for 18 months from date of farm visit.

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**PGS - India**

A Participatory Organic Guarantee Programme
Department of Agriculture and Cooperation
Govt of India

**Scope Certificate**

This Scope Certificate is to certify that the product(s) and area(s) of the Shri Sadasiv Madhav Vandhekar belonging to PGS-India Group HRI GURUDEV KISAN MAITREYA GROUP d with Regional Council No. PGS/K/E-1628 ORGANIC FARMING SOCIETY are in accordance with requirements of *PGS-India National Standards For Organic Production*

For the process of:

“Crop Production”

This Scope Certificate m(MM/DD/YYYY) 9/22/2017 until 9/22/2018 product(s) and area(s) specified in the annex compliance with the required standards and PGS-India guidelines.

Signature of PGS India Group Leader
Local Group No. LG110011027
Marketing

• It is important to maintain integrity of organic PGS certified products after they leave the farm.

• Build market linkages ⇒ involve local retailers/food-coop

• Develop a logo (optional)

• Point of sales ⇒ in some cases the PGS establishes its own farmers market or point of sale

• If the PGS doesn´t have point of sale, it is important to verify possible misuse of the logo and check integrity of the products in the place where these products are sold.
Financial sustainability

- PGS rely on a lot of volunteer internal work, especially in the first years of implementation.

- Consumers can share the workload taking over different tasks.

- At least 3 years are needed to set-up a PGS initiative.

- The financial sustainability comes from the market access and premium price compensating for their efforts in engaging in the PGS.

- Membership fees also support the administration of the scheme and the defrayal volunteers' expenses.
4. PGS development worldwide
Current development of PGS worldwide

• There are PGS initiatives in over 60 countries, in all 5 continents. Around 391’078 smallholders benefiting from the system and 142’295 already certified.

• South-East Asia and Latin America are the regions with the biggest level of PGS development, including in the national legislations.

• Many local PGS initiatives but also many examples of nation-wide PGS systems.
The growth of PGS worldwide

Source: IFOAM – Organics International
The growth of PGS worldwide

Source: IFOAM – Organics International
Farmers PGS certified & Countries that recognize PGS in their OA regulation in 2018

Source: IFOAM – Organics International PGS survey 2017
### MPPI countries - overview

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>OA Regulation</th>
<th>PGS recognition</th>
<th>PGS initiatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>New Regulation enforced since July 2018</td>
<td>Yes (only PGS India)</td>
<td>PGS India PGS-OC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italia</td>
<td>EU Regulation</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>Few</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyrgyzstan</td>
<td>Drafting</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Organik Aimak</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>Law 8 2002 and decree 146 - 2004</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>Decree 10 - 2012</td>
<td>Pending: drafting of regulations for alternative certification systems (PGS)</td>
<td>Different groups under a National Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Drafting (national standards)</td>
<td>- Pgs guidelines</td>
<td>Few</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>New standards 2018, problematic for PGS</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Well established organic PGS and also GAP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An Introduction to Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS)
THANK YOU!
www.eatingcraft.ifoam.bio