



GLOBAL ALLIANCE FOR ORGANIC DISTRICTS

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GAOD
39, Serre Street
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Italy - Europe

To:

His Excellency Gotabaya Rajapaksa
President of the Democratic Republic of Sri Lanka

With copy to:

The Honorable Members of the “Presidential Task Force for the creation of a Green Sri Lanka with sustainable Solutions for Climate Changes”

Thilak Kariyawasam, President Lanka Organic Agricultural Movement – LOAM

SUPPORT LETTER

Ceraso, Italy 8th June 2021

Your Excellency,

With reference

to the Presidential Directive given at Colombo under the Seal of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka on the 10th day of May, Two Thousand and Twenty One we have the honor and pleasure to present to you this Support Letter from the Global Alliance for Organic Districts (GAOD).

Your decision is of major importance both for the health of the people and nature of Sri Lanka. We also acknowledge that this important step taken from Your country is leading the way for us all and for the future we want. This brings forward the important dual purpose of our enthusiastic engagement: Our full support to the transition, sharing with You our knowledge and aspirations and the opportunity to learn from You and the process You have promoted.

In particular we would like to express our sincere and deeply felt appreciation of the decision made by Your Excellency for a full transition from chemical farming to natural farming and will respectfully ask you to consider our support flowing from the below short presentation of GAOD.



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The founding parties of GAOD are Asian Local Governments for Organic Agriculture (ALGOA), International Network of Eco-Regions (IN.N.E.R.), Regeneration International (RI) and League of Organic Agriculture Municipalities, Cities and Provinces of the Philippines (LOAMCP-PH) with the participation and support of IFOAM-Organics International, IFOAM Asia, IFOAM Organics Europe, Baltic Foundation of Lithuania and Organic Food System Programme.

The vision of GAOD is to co-create a global network able to support the local development of Organic Districts in different territorial contexts and scaling up examples of practical solutions; the transformation of global food and farming systems as key towards achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in general and Sustainable Food Systems in particular. The Organic Districts experience shows they can create important synergies between farmers, food producers, touristic operators, local communities and the Government. The great potential for a sustainable integrated development of Your wonderful country, gifted by great natural as well as human resources, could hence really come to fruition.

Your Excellency,

We will respectfully ask Your Excellency to consider the following proposals from GAOD as a support to the transition and for the work of the “Presidential Task Force for the creation of a Green Sri Lanka with sustainable Solutions for Climate Changes” and in drawing up a Road Map:

1. The establishment, following up and monitoring of Organic Districts

Organic Districts represents an inclusive interactive process at local level and involving all actors from the food chain, policy makers/authorities, research, education and civil society – a food system approach. The scale of an Organic District is dependent on the conditions in each country. It could be at community level, region or for a province.

- In Europe there are 50 Organic Districts
- The first Organic District was established 17 years ago in Cilento, southern Italy

What we may offer:

- i. Experience from Organic Districts in Europe
- ii. Guidelines for establishing an Organic District
- iii. Monitoring tool for evaluating the performance of an Organic District
- iv. Participation in the dynamic process of GAOD

2. The European Green Deal, Farm to Fork strategy and Action Plan for Organic Agriculture

The “European Green Deal” was adopted in December 2019, as a roadmap aiming to set Europe on



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the path of transformation to a climate-neutral, fair and prosperous society. The Green Deal includes the “The Farm to Fork” strategy, targeting 25% of agricultural land in Europe by 2030. It also calls for a reduction by 50% of the use of chemical pesticides by 2030. An “Action Plan for Organic Agriculture” was adopted in April 2021. This plan has three Axis: Demand and consumer trust; Conversion and value chain and Organic leading by example and 23 concrete actions.

In Action 14 of the plan the European Commission Encourage Member States to support the development and implementation of “Bio-districts” (Organic Districts)

What we may offer:

- i. Monitoring and sharing knowledge, actions and achievements from the European Green Deal and in particular related to organic agriculture
- ii. A specific follow up of the development in EU of Bio-districts (Organic Districts)

The above are just some examples of potential synergies in our concerted actions and as a contribution to transform Sri Lanka into a Green Socio-economy with Sustainable Solutions for Climate Changes.

Respectfully Yours,

Cesare Zanasi

Director Science and
Policy Development

Salvatore Basile

Co-President

Jostein Hertwig

Executive Director