

REGIONAL INITIATIVE TEMPLATE

Please complete each section below.

1. Contact Details

Please provide the following contact details:

Name of individual or group submitting initiative	Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community (POETCom)
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2. Name of Initiative

Organic Islands; Growing our future through the Organic and Ethical Trade

3. Background and Rationale

You may consider: What is the issue being addressed by this initiative? What are the causes of this issue? Are there relevant studies that have been carried out to support the issue? Are there links to national, regional or international goals/policies?

Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.

The overall economic performance of Pacific Island countries in the course of the past two decades has been poor. One third of Pacific Islanders still live below nationally defined poverty lines and they face increased risk and vulnerability. All countries are highly vulnerable to environmental, political and economic shocks. Persistently high food and energy prices and the growing costs of climate change are impacting agriculture increasing the vulnerability of rural communities. Sustainable Economic Development is a key priority for the Pacific and is essential for progressing towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

Agriculture provides more employment than any other sector in the Pacific island countries. It presents many opportunities for growth, domestically and for export, but is operating well below potential. There are limited agricultural exports from the Pacific despite the predominance of agriculture for subsistence and cash income in many of the PICs, and the comparative advantage of climate vis-à-vis Australia and New Zealand. The Pacific requires greater productive capacity to be able to add value to its natural

resources, boost exports and displace imports.

Globally, the market for organic agriculture is growing rapidly – including in Asia, Australia and New Zealand. Forecast global organic retail sales reached 72 Billion, USD in 2013, and revenues have increased almost five fold since 1999¹. The growing consumer demand for organic commodities provides a potentially viable opportunity for PICTs farmers and processors to benefit from this expanding international and regional market. There are also significant opportunities for production of organic produce for local markets, particularly for the hospitality and tourism industries as currently much of the food used by these industries is imported, primarily from Australia and New Zealand. For example Fiji trade statistics report the value of imported fresh fruit and veg. to have increased from 54.7 million FJD in 2004 to 72.3 Million FJD in 2008², and the Central Bank of Samoa reports Fruit and vegetable imports in 2007 of almost 5.8 Million SAT³. The key requirements to enable penetration of these markets are good quality produce and reliability of supply, all of which are challenges to Pacific islands exporters.

The increased demand for high quality products in export markets, coupled with the related economic, environment and social benefits, suggests organic agriculture may offer good prospects for the development of smallholders and the rural areas in the Pacific. There are a number of emerging examples from the Pacific demonstrating the potential for profitable production and trade into niche markets within this sector. The geographic location and the agro-ecological conditions of countries in the region provide a comparative advantage and opportunities in the production and trade in high value organic agricultural products. While there is significant potential for increasing the number of growers and production area for Pacific Island countries, especially with small farmers, many of whom still follow traditional management practices which are aligned closely with organic production standards, further assistance is required to enhance productive potential, technical capacities, marketing and value addition and the development of adequate policy and institutional standards to meet international market requirements.

Based on recommendations from a review undertaken by the International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements (IFOAM) that identified the lack of a coordinated approach and the cost of certification as major obstacles to the development of organic agriculture in the Pacific Islands Region. The Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community⁴ (POETCom) has been working to facilitate organic certification in the Pacific region based on the Pacific Organic Standard (POS) adopted by the Ministers of Agriculture at their meeting in Samoa in 2008. The POS has been assessed by the International Organic Accreditation Service⁵ (IOAS) as being equivalent to the EU organic regulations. It has also been assessed through the Common Objectives and Requirements of Organic Standards (COROS) tool by IFOAM and accepted into the IFOAM Family of Standards⁶ which allows exports to enter Australia and New Zealand without additional certification. It is established that for access of organic products into international markets the products have to be certified to a recognised organic standard by an approved 3rd party organic certification agency, but there is also a demand from organic growers for lower cost certification options for local and regional market development. POETCom as initiated work in this area to develop appropriate and coordinated certification systems.

These efforts align with the Waiheke Declaration on Sustainable Economic Development which supported development of high value niche agricultural production and its links into global value chains such organic and fair trade⁷ and the Fifth Regional Meeting of the Heads of Agriculture and Forestry endorsed that the management and implementation of the POS and Pacific organic guarantee scheme be delegated to POETCom and that organic agriculture should be mainstreamed into SPC and national agriculture strategies in recognition of its role in food and nutritional security, climate change adaptation and mitigation, enhancement of biodiversity and the livelihood opportunities it can provide.

¹ Frick & Bonn, *World of Organic Agriculture* 2015, FIBL pg 25

² Fiji Islands Trade & Investment Bureau, *Profile on Fruits & Vegetable Industry in Fiji*, June 2009

³ Ministry of Agriculture Samoa, *Samoa Fruit and Vegetable Strategy, 2009*

⁴ The Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community (POETCom) formed in 2010 is a not for profit membership organisation with active members (farmers associations, farmer support organisations, NGOs, private sector, research institutions and working with governments) in 14 countries of the Pacific Island region with the Secretariat hosted the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) in Suva, Fiji.

⁵ <http://www.ioas.org/>

⁶ http://www.ifoam.org/about_ifoam/standards/family_of_standards/family_of_standards.html

⁷ Forum Communiqué 42nd Pacific Islands Forum, Auckland New Zealand 2011

4. Description

Please provide a brief overview of this initiative. Try to address the following: Does this initiative contribute to a positive change to the region? What makes this initiative of importance to the Pacific region as a whole? Who would implement this initiative? Who are the main beneficiaries? Are regulatory or legislative changes required at the national level to implement this initiative? How would the initiative be funded? Has this initiative been carried out previously? What are the key risks in implementing this initiative? Are there any complementary projects and programmes currently active? What is the proposed timeframe for this initiative? How would the initiative be sustained over the proposed timeframe?

Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.

This initiative provides a basis for sustainable economic development for Pacific island countries by developing organic agriculture as a pillar of the green economy. Sustainability, is about cultural values, ecosystem integrity and resilience, social well-being, economic resilience, and good governance. Organic agriculture has a significant contribution to make towards sustainable development in the Pacific due to its environment and climate friendly production systems, its suitability for small holders and family farmers, and its adaptation to local conditions. The entire organic system is based on participation and necessary public-private partnerships, whereby small holders are integrated into markets creating livelihood opportunities and alleviating poverty. Further, the diversity of food cultures, traditional knowledge and nutritional security are safeguarded by organic agriculture and it also has an important role in adaptation to climate change and building climate resilient food systems.⁸

The initiative grew from the shared belief of organic producers across the region that our traditional agricultural practices which have sustained a high quality of life and food security in our islands for generations, when supplemented with new innovations and technologies in organic agriculture, provides a viable vehicle to meet new challenges to assure a continued quality of life and ongoing food security as well as opportunities for livelihoods development through marketing of our organic produce to the world. An important aim is the conservation of natural resources: fertile soil; clean water; rich biodiversity, and also, cultural diversity and traditional values.

An opportunity exists to address key cross cutting development challenges and promote the green economy through this initiative to strengthen POETCom's service delivery and support to the organic industry with regard to managing the regional Pacific Organics Standard and Pacific Organic Guarantee Scheme.

The initiative to develop organic agriculture as a pillar of the green economy will:

- Improve local and regional food and nutritional security through developing diversified, productive and sustainable farming systems resilient to climate impacts;
- Improve farmer livelihoods by enabling farmers to trade, with access to both domestic and export markets through appropriate and cost effective certification;
- Improve human health, by providing better access to high-quality, clean and nutritious food;
- Protect and enhance the environment, by encouraging the use of environmentally friendly management practices from ridge to reef; and
- Improve the well-being of people and communities, by promoting the adoption of ethical labour and social justice principles.

POETCom will be the key implementer of the initiative in partnership with its member organisations and other civil society stakeholders, SPC, the private sector, and governments of the region. POETCom members and private sector processors and exporters are also beneficiaries of the initiative in that they will receive capacity building, training and lower cost and more appropriate certification systems that will benefit their businesses but the ultimate beneficiaries are the regions small holder organic producers who will gain access to markets and potential price premiums, and Pacific consumers who will have access to a wider range of clean safe locally grown food and a protected environment.

⁸ See additional information for further information on organic agriculture, climate change and food security.

While regulatory changes are not required, in fact regulation too early in developing markets can negatively impact on growth,⁹ the development of supportive policies at national level will facilitate the initiative and lay the groundwork for regulation once the industry develops and regulation is deemed beneficial. Work to support countries in policy development has commenced with an *organic policy development toolkit* under development with assistance of the EU Pacific Agricultural Policy Project in SPC.

The initiative builds on the existing work of POETCom and its host organisation SPC such as the development of the Pacific Organic Standard, a regionally tailored low cost organic certification system, known as Participatory Guarantee System and training in organic agriculture across the region. It also builds on the work programmes of POETCom members at national level.¹⁰ The regional work is currently supported by a variety of small grants and funding streams such as the EU Increasing Agricultural Commodities Trade project and the International Fund for Agricultural Development. Lack of coordinated development partner assistance has slowed implementation of the initiative and achievement of objectives. Financing and human resource constraints remain the key risk in implementation. Without appropriate funding activities and responsibilities will necessarily be undertaken on a voluntary basis by POETCom members which will slow momentum and development.

Currently developments in organics are strongly driven by the sector its self and a regional certification scheme has evolved based on a common regional organic standard and certification mark, the 'Organic Pasifika Mark' to facilitate intra regional trade and a regional organic brand. A possible risk is countries moving to national policies or regulations that do not align with the current voluntary regional coordination and recognition. The development of the policy toolkit is designed to mitigate this risk and support governments in alignment and supporting industry.

This initiative complements and builds on several programmes designed to support producers into value chains such as the EU/SPC Increasing Commodities Trade project and the work of SPC and the PHAMA project in market access. The Organic Islands initiative plays a well-defined role in value adding through certification while ensuring production systems are sustainable.

POETCom is currently in year 3 of a 5 year strategic plan (2012 – 2017), and while sound progress has been made towards objectives it is expected due to resource constraints that the current plan will need to be extended by 2 years to 2019 to meet all objectives. By that time the services POETCom provides should be well developed and institutional capacity built to move from 'initiative' stage to that of an ongoing industry led programme with a strategy for financial self sufficiency genuinely contributing to the growth of the green economy.

To move the initiative to an established programme POETCom will seek development partner and Government support for assistance and seek to undertake a business modelling exercise to identify income streams and fee for service structures.

5. Alignment to Regional Vision, Values and Objectives

Briefly describe how your initiative supports the vision, values and objectives set out in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. These can be found in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism document or in the submissions guideline document.

Please limit your response to no more than 500 words

The vision, values and objectives of the Framework for Regionalism are fully supported by POETComs' own organisational value set as outlined in the POETCom Strategic Plan¹¹:

Vision-

Organics and ethical trade: the key contributor to sustaining our cultures and communities; improving farmer livelihoods, people's

⁹ UNEP-UNCTAD, Best Practices for Organic Policy; What developing country Governments can do to promote the organic agriculture sector, 2008

¹⁰ Members list is available in the additional information

¹¹ "Growing Our Future – Pacific Organic & Ethical Trade Community Strategic Plan 2012 – 2017"

health and the environment in the Pacific.

Mission - *Through coordination, information sharing, networking, capacity building and establishing a regional certification scheme; grow the organic and ethical trade movement and contribute to a productive, resilient, sustainable and healthy Pacific Island region.*

Values -

- *We are committed to preparing our populations for the challenges of climate change; and ensuring food and nutritional security and enhancing adapted biodiversity.*
- *We are guided by an understanding of Pacific approaches to decision making and take into account Pacific values, traditions and cultures.*
- *We seek to ensure equality of access, e.g. by people of different genders and ages and from different countries and sub regions —as well as the principles of fairness, justice and partnership.*
- *We recognise the value of youth for a productive agriculture sector.*
- *We recognize the need to support and enhance the quality of people’s life —with an emphasis on those who work on the land and future generations as well as respect for the land and broader environment.*
- *We are committed to networking/positive engagement and communication, and the development of increasing self reliance.*
- *We are committed to the principles of organic agriculture and the holistic approaches it encompasses.*
- *We are committed to building a more inclusive Pacific community— Working together, supported by past traditions and connections with the land —to achieve our vision.*

The initiative promotes regional collective action through initially *Cooperation* in developing coordinated policies in support of organic agriculture, including common recognition of the Pacific Organic Standard and Organic Pasifka Mark. Cooperation of this nature will also facilitate *Economic integration* promoting inter regional trade in organics under a common system albeit without the need for legally binding agreements in the short to medium term.

The majority of services will be provided by national actors and where there is benefit to be gained the initiative will adopt *Collaboration*. Such as with regard to the regional organic guarantee scheme; the production and export base of individual PICs is too small to justify the cost and complexity of establishing national organic certification services that will meet the requirements for international accreditation and market access which are essential for development of potential economic development and livelihoods opportunities organic agriculture can provide. POETCom is working with selected certification bodies to build capacity in the region and coordinate certification services so cost effectiveness can be achieved through regional economies of scale including improving access for small holders and family farmers, cost savings to producers and sustainability of the industry.

In the longer term these actions and the development of the industry may evolve to require legally binding harmonisation of standards and arrangements but inline with best practice in developing organic markets this is not encouraged in the early stages.

6. Additional Information

Please provide or attach additional information in support of this initiative.

Please limit your response to no more than 5 pages.

The initiative is under pinned by POETComs Strategic plan 2012-2017. The plan was developed through a consultative process with POETCom members and the results of the situational analysis were used to identify the key areas of impact that the Strategic Plan focuses on.

Area of Impact	Goals
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Mindset	For organic agriculture to be 'mainstreamed' and widely recognised and adopted as a solution to many of the regions challenges
Production & Environment	For organic production to meet market demands and ensure food and nutritional security for Pacific peoples
Value chains	For domestic and export organic value chains to be developed and strengthened providing expanded livelihoods opportunities for Pacific producers
Sustainability	For POETCom to secure the partnerships and the human, financial and institutional resources it requires to achieve its mission and goals.

Annually POETCom reports to its members and stakeholders against indicators this plan. Data is compiled from the annual reporting of POETCom Focal Points. Progress to date is as follows:

Area of Impact: 1. Mindset

Goal: For organic agriculture to be 'mainstreamed' and widely recognised and adopted as a solution to many of the regions challenges

Impact Indicators	2013	2014
No. of national strategic development plans that include Organic Agriculture (OA) and Ethical Trade (ET)	8	16
No. of national environmental plans including OA	Unknown	16
No. of organically certified farms	8769+(includes in conversion)*	Survey underway during 2015
No. of POETCom members and affiliates	12	29
No. of organic projects/ programmes in the region	16	22
No. of positive media articles	49 printed	145 printed

Area of Impact: 2. Production & Environment

Goal: For organic production to meet market demands and ensure food and nutritional security for Pacific peoples

Impact Indicators	2013	2014
Quantity of certified produce exported	unknown	Survey underway 2015
Availability of organic inputs	13 inputs available	37 inputs available
No. of training courses & resources	unknown	63
No. of demonstration farms	1	31
No of farmers undergoing training	100+	1571
No. of extension services focused on/with capacity in OA	1	20
Number of countries with Labelled organic food available	3	8

Area of Impact: 3. Value Chains

Goal: For domestic and export organic value chains to be developed and strengthened providing expanded livelihoods opportunities for Pacific producers

Impact Indicators	2013	2014
Value of organic exports:	data not available	Survey underway 2015
No. of different products exported	7	17
No. PGS(and No. Farmers)	2 PGS 150 farmers	6 PGS +400

No. ICS(and No. farmers)	13+	13+ To be updated by survey 2015
No of processors organically certified	13+	13+ To be updated by survey 2015
No Individual licensees	17+	17+ To be updated by survey 2015
No. licensees using “Organic Pasifika Mark”	1	4
No. of ethical trade certifications	2	3

Area of Impact: 4. Sustainability

Goal: For POETCom to secure the partnerships and the human, financial and institutional resources it requires to achieve its mission and goals.

Impact Indicators	2013	2014
Funding for Secretariat services identified beyond 2014	IFAD sustainability project in planning stages	New IFAD Grant approved 2015-2017 Further funding for core services required
Membership growth	12 approved	29 approved
Growth in use of POS	4 countries	6 countries
No. of donors and partners	15+ regionally	32 regionally
Incorporation of organisation:	not yet progressed	GA approved incorporation, to be auctioned 2015
No. of regional governments providing budget allocation to organics	4	4
Focal Points able to meet reporting obligations	capacity building required	capacity building required; Cook Islands; PNG and Fiji were not able to report for 2014
Internship/volunteer programme in place	First Intern placement complete	Ongoing

POETCom recognizes organic agriculture and its role and potential for addressing development issues for Pacific states including as a combined policy tool addressing a range of issues but in particular food security, environmental protection, climate change and trade. Organic agriculture's potential contribution is briefly explained below, the section on Trade provides details on the current status of organic certification and services in the region.

Food and nutritional security: Traditionally the Pacific Islands have maintained food security through traditional mixed cropping practices ensuring diversity of crops, resilient production systems and care of the soil and environment. However Pacific farmers are dealing with a range of new climate associated risks and issues, are managing introduced non-traditional crops, and needing to feed higher populations on less and sometimes degraded lands.

There is an urgent need to increase the efficiency of present resource use and at the same time conserve – and where possible enhance – the productive capacity of our agricultural resources. Organic agriculture is a production system that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems and people. It relies on ecological processes, biodiversity and cycles adapted to local conditions, rather than the use of inputs with adverse effects. Organic Agriculture combines tradition, innovation and science to benefit the shared environment and promote fair relationships and a good quality of life for all involved. Organic agriculture can play a major role in addressing food security, ensuring an adequate and stable food supply for most of the population in our region and as a means of alleviating poverty. These are some of the ways in which organic agriculture helps sustain food security.

- Organic agriculture can increase and stabilise yields, particularly from land that is less productive or marginal.

- Building capacity in organic farm management can assist farmers, fishers and pastoralists build resource management skills.
- Increased organic production can improve the variety, availability and affordability of clean, safe local foods in our diet, thereby contributing to controlling NCDs and other diseases. Organic Agriculture is a production system that sustains the health of soils, ecosystems and people.
- Unemployment can be reduced by providing jobs in the organic agricultural sector and enabling cash-poor households to obtain enough good quality food – organic agriculture can provide 32% more jobs per farm than conventional farms.
- Organic systems are more resilient to climate change and extreme weather events. For example, organic farms survive cyclone damage much better, retaining 20–40% more topsoil and sustaining smaller economic losses than their neighbours.
- Organic systems improve water uptake and retention, and reduce soil erosion, thereby helping to overcome land aridity/desertification. A 2003 study found that, during drought years, organic farms can have yields that are 20-40% higher than conventional farms.
- Organic systems ensure availability and sustainability of resources for future generations.
- Organic systems protect our coastal fisheries from run-off and siltation.

A 2014 study released by the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) noted that Organic Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS) enhance food security. Of the respondents in the study, 78 % stated that their farm performs better today than prior to joining the PGS; 92% claimed that they now have access to sufficient food all year, while 84% believe that their families have more diverse meals now than before joining the PGS.¹²

More information is available in Gunnar Rundgren (2008) Organic Agriculture and Food Security Dossier, IFOAM Bonn

Climate change¹³: Organic farming methods offer the best, currently available, practical production model for addressing climate-resilient food production and adapting food systems to climate change impacts. Climate change and the global food crisis have put a spotlight on the vulnerability, unsustainability and social inequity of agriculture and food production. There is growing acceptance that policies and practices have failed to feed the world’s most vulnerable people, failed to adapt to continuously changing environmental conditions, and failed to protect the very ecosystems that sustain us. Policy makers are now referring to ‘soil organic matter’, ‘soil carbon,’ ‘ecosystem services’ and to ‘holistic’ approaches- all of which are established pillars of Organic Agriculture. Organic Agriculture enhances biodiversity, protects our fragile soils, improves the nutritional quality of food, ensures high standards of animal welfare and provides increased employment in rural areas. At the same time, Organic Agriculture reduces green house gas emissions, cuts nutrient and pesticide pollution and stops potentially harmful pesticide residues entering our food chain. Organic Agriculture builds resilient farming systems capable of combating climate change and securing local food supplies. Organic farming has significant potential to avoid or reduce the emission of green house gases through:

- Lower use of fossil fuels – organic farming does not use energy demanding synthetic fertilisers as it focuses on maintaining soil fertility through the use of internal farm inputs.
- Reduction in the production of nitrous oxides – organic farming does not use synthetic nitrogen fertiliser. Reduction in methane production by promoting soil aerobic microorganisms and high levels of soil biological activity.

In addition, organic practices encourage the sequestration of carbon by:

- Maintaining tight nutrient and energy cycles through organic management of soils;
- Systematic recycling of organic waste, often by means of composting;
- Encouraging agro-forestry farming systems;
- Protecting soil from erosion and associated loss of soil organic matter.

¹² Pacific Organic & Ethical Trade Community 2014, *Organic agriculture: enhancing food security – sustainably*, (fact sheet) Suva Fiji

¹³ Pacific Organic & Ethical Trade Community 2012, *Organic Agriculture and Climate Change*, (fact sheet) Suva Fiji

Organic farming also provides strategies that will assist farmers to adapt to the potential impacts of climate change, for example by establishing farming systems that:

- Lessen the impacts of wind, e.g. through providing shelter for land, farms and people;
- Are drought resistant and support the conservation of water resources;
- Are tolerant of higher temperatures and fluctuations in temperature;
- Encourage use of locally adapted varieties and in situ-adaptation of crop species.

More information is available in Otschi Müller-mann (2004): The Role of Organic Agriculture in Mitigating Climate Change IFOAM. Bonn.

Sustainable economic development through trade: The geographic location and the agro-ecological conditions of countries in the region provide a comparative advantage and opportunities in the production and trade in high value organic agricultural products this coupled with the growing consumer demand for organic products provides a potentially viable opportunity for PICs farmers and processors to benefit from this expanding international and regional market. There are also significant opportunities for production of organic produce for local markets, particularly for the hospitality and tourism industries as currently up to 70% of the food used by these industries are imported.

For most markets, and to attract premium prices for organic production, recognized certification is required. Currently two options exist for organic certification in the region. Participatory Guarantee Systems (PGS), and third party certification. PGS are a low cost system to provide a guarantee of organic integrity of a product for local market. The first Pacific PGS was established in New Caledonia and approved by POETCom to use the “Organic Pasifika” mark in 2010 and the second; ‘Bio Fetiā’ was approved in July 2012 for French Polynesia.

Cicia Island and Fijian NGO FRIEND received certification in 2015 and a further 4 PGS are under development in Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Fiji, and Samoa with requests for assistance pending in Cook Islands and Palau.



Third party certification which is required for organic export markets has expanded considerably over the last 2 years with growers in 9 countries and territories now third party certified with a total of approximately 46334.24 hectares certified and 8367 growers benefiting. The table below indicates current certification by country. Requests for support in achieving 3rd party organic certification are also pending due to lack of resources with demand in Samoa, Federated States of Micronesia, Guam and Republic of the Marshall Islands.

Export Certification Data 2014			
	Ha Certified	No growers	Crops
Cook Islands	22	75	Noni
Fiji	2006	170	noni, spices, VCO, fruit, coconut meal, lemon grass, root crops, lamb, ginger
French Polynesia	21.5	21	noni, fruit & veg, rum
Niue	173	122	honey, noni, vanilla, citrus
PNG	6845	6635	cocoa, coffee, essential oils, nuts, spices, honey & products, VCO
Samoa	33515	743	coconut, VCO, coffee, cocoa, tamanu/dilo, spices, fruit & veg.
Solomon Islands	1307	384	VCO, canarium nuts
Tonga	248	122	VCO, coconuts, vanilla
Vanuatu	2196.74	95	Tamanu/dilo, VCO, coconuts, coconut meal, vanilla, nuts spices, beef, sandalwood

	46334.24	8367	
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Late in 2012 three of the main organic certifying bodies in the region (National Association of Sustainable Agriculture Australia, BioGro, and BioAgriCert) agreed to provide certification services to the Pacific Organic Standard (POS). The scheme is now being implemented and will include building capacity for locally based auditors and innovations such as identifying options for 'whole island' certification which aim in the medium term to reduce costs and complexity of organic certification in the region. This scheme allows organically certified producers from the region to export under the common 'Organic Pasifika Mark' capitalising on the clean, green and untouched image of the Pacific and facilitating joint marketing efforts. Funds for promotional campaigns are in the process of being identified and the first product certified for export was a rum from French Polynesia. 2015 will see several other products exported under this Mark.

Export Markets

Most of the organically certified products from the Region are for export although local markets are developing in some countries. The main international markets for the listed products are Australia and New Zealand representing the main destination for the export of organic products due to the proximity. Japan is a growing market and other markets include North American and the European Union.

There is growing interest and activity in the area of Fair Trade programmes and certification and efforts are being made by POETCom to link organic producers into these systems as a way of adding further value to products and ensuring maximum benefits to the farmers.

For the first time in September 2011 Pacific exporters exhibited together under the POETCom banner at an international expo. As part of the events surrounding the Pacific Island Forum Leaders Meeting in Auckland New Zealand a "Pacific howcase" was held exhibiting and promoting products and produce from the Pacific Islands. Organically certified products were exhibited from French Polynesia, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu and public response was very positive.

Domestic Markets

Generally the domestic markets for organic certified products are not very developed and in some cases are non-existent. Organic products are commonly sold as conventional without premium price. Some initiatives are on-going or are in the pipeline to promote the awareness of the consumers about organic products but few countries as yet have made real breakthroughs in this area. Interesting opportunities are now being explored within the tourist structures of several countries that are facing a growth in the presence of tourists (e.g. Fiji, Cooks and Samoa) focusing on development of Pacific cuisine and linking small holder organic farmers directly with tourism and hospitality providers. While market research is needed anecdotally there appears to be growing demand in this area. There is continued growth and interest in organic products in New Caledonia and French Polynesia as evidenced by the PGS developments in both countries where regular Organic Farmers Markets are now established.

More information is available at www.organicpasifika.com and <https://www.facebook.com/organicpasifika?ref=hl>