



PRESSRELEASE

Naturland launches international Academy

E-learning platform of Naturland Academy goes online - Presentation at panel discussion at BIOFACH

Gräfelfing, 09 February 2024

From climate change to species extinction, agriculture is facing major and diverse global challenges. With the *Naturland Academy*, the largest international organic association is therefore now launching a web-based education campaign to support farmers worldwide with offers for further training and mutual exchange of knowledge in the necessary ecological conversion.

"With the *Naturland Academy*, we want to fulfil our responsibility as an international producer association and make a contribution to advancing organic farming worldwide," emphasises Marco Schlüter, Head of Strategy & International Affairs at Naturland. In addition to knowledge transfer in the form of online courses and events, Naturland also places particular emphasis on learning from and with each other. "We want to support organic farmers in networking, exchanging ideas and thus benefiting from each other's knowledge," emphasises Schlüter.

E-learning platform as centerpiece - field trips as an analogue extension

The centerpiece of the *Naturland Academy* is the e-learning platform academy.naturland.org. It offers various formats for guided or independent learning. Users will find a range of target group-orientated content, from **learning videos** and **in-depth seminars** to **complex multi-part courses** on specific specialist topics. The offer is supplemented by an **extensive library** with further videos and specialised manuals to browse through.

However, the *Naturland Academy* is not limited to digital learning programmes. Rather, these are often supplemented by analog **practical workshops**, especially for more complex courses. Such field trips, for which participants can register via the platform, expand the e-learning into "**blended learning**".

Broad range of topics for different target groups

The spectrum of topics is broad and ranges from specific questions of pest management in individual crops to the explanation of basic cultivation systems such as coffee production in agroforestry. One focus is on strengthening resilience to the consequences of climate change, be it through the development of sustainable water management or the climate-adapted production of compost to maintain soil fertility. In addition, basic knowledge is provided on ecological standards and principles, certification and internal control systems in smallholder cooperatives.

In addition to the farmers themselves, the target group focuses in particular on trainers and multipliers. With the help of the "**Training of Trainers**" (ToT) model, new and less experienced trainers are coached by master trainers, thus multiplying the transfer of knowledge.

There are also plans to set up online forums moderated by experts for farmers on the platform. These **peer-to-peer forums** can have a regional focus, i.e. bring organic farmers from a specific country together to exchange ideas, or focus on specific crops such as banana cultivation. In any case, the aim is to strengthen farmers through **community building** and mutual, **experience-based learning**.

Panel discussion at the Biofach

The *Naturland Academy* celebrates its launch with a panel discussion in the congress programme of Biofach, the world's leading trade fair for organic food, in Nuremberg. Under the heading "**Training in the organic sector: strong skills for a strong future**", experts from various international organisations will report on their experiences and the challenges that arise when exchanging knowledge with (small) farmers around the world.

WHEN: Thursday, 15 February, 16:45 to 17:30

WHERE: NCC East, Room Shanghai

WHO: Experts from Naturland, IFOAM International, the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) and Access Agriculture

Naturland - Association for Organic Farming

Naturland was founded over 40 years ago and is now the largest international organic organisation. 115,000 farmers in 60 countries around the world show that ecological, social and fair farming is a successful project. In Germany and Austria alone, 6,800 organic farms belong to this organisation. Worldwide, the majority of Naturland farmers are organised in small farmers' cooperatives and producer groups.