



PRESSRELEASE

Support small farmers, save the climate!

Naturland on COP27: Organic farming makes farms more independent and climate resilient

Gräfelfing, 10th of November 2022

Climate justice and food security can only be achieved with a strong small-scale organic agriculture. This is pointed out by the international organic association Naturland with a view to the UN Climate Change Conference in Sharm El-Sheik, Egypt. On Saturday (12 November), the conference will focus on the transformation of agriculture at the "Adaptation & Agriculture Day".

"The consequences of climate change hit smallholder farmers in the global South particularly hard. At the same time, they are the ones who produce the food for most of humanity," said Naturland President Hubert Heigl in Gräfelfing on Thursday. "Climate justice therefore also means supporting these smallholder producers in adapting to climate change. And organic farming offers the best prerequisites for this."

Organic farming does not need expensive and climate-damaging fertilisers and pesticides. The use of these products often drives smallholder family farms into economic dependency. "In order to secure the world's food supply, we must instead empower small farmers to increase their yields with the help of regionally adapted, agro-ecological methods. Regionally adapted farming systems that rely on ecological diversity support us in meeting the challenges of climate change," said Naturland President Heigl.

Regional climate adaptation through ecological diversity - the example of agroforestry

A good example of this is mixed crop cultivation under shade trees. These so-called agroforestry systems imitate the natural canopy structure of the rainforest. Various crops grow together with trees and shrubs in one area. The trees provide foliage and root mass to build up humus and protect the soil from erosion and drying out. At the same time, valuable habitats with high biodiversity are created, where pests and diseases are naturally held back.

The smallholders harvest is also more diverse. Instead of producing only cocoa or coffee for the world market, for example, families can also harvest pineapple, mango, papaya, pumpkin or other crops for self-sufficiency or for sale at regional markets. Agroforestry systems thus not only make an important contribution to climate adaptation in agriculture, but also to food security and the economic independence of smallholder families.

"Climate justice therefore also means supporting smallholder family farms all over the world in implementing such forward-looking ecological farming methods," said Naturland President Heigl. An example from Burundi, where Naturland supports 17 coffee cooperatives in an agroforestry project financed by the state of Baden-Württemberg, can be found here (in German): [Magazin-N | Nahrung Nachhaltigkeit Naturland - Agroforst und die Revolution im ökologischen Kaffeeanbau](#).

Online petition for climate justice

Fairer climate financing for smallholder farmers is also the subject of an online petition. This is initiated by the fair trade company GEPA. Naturland supports this petition. It calls on EU Commissioner Frans Timmermans to act. He should lobby at COP27 for international programmes and financial instruments to be geared particularly to the needs of small farmers and their organisations, and for agroecology to be promoted. Financial resources, training and expert advice should be made available as unbureaucratically as possible so that small-scale producers can protect themselves against the unavoidable consequences of the climate crisis and preserve their livelihoods. More at: Petition: [Petition: Klimafinanzierung gerechter machen! \(gepa.de\)](https://www.gepa.de/petition/klimafinanzierung-gerechter-machen/)

Naturland e.V. – 40 years for people and the environment

Naturland was founded in 1982 by ten pioneers and is today the largest international organic association. More than 140,000 farmers in 60 countries around the world show that ecological, social and fair management is a successful project. In Germany alone, more than 4,500 organic farms belong to this association. Worldwide, the majority of Naturland farmers are organised in smallholder cooperatives and producer associations.



In its anniversary year, Naturland is celebrating 40 years of organic farming, 40 years of social commitment, 40 years of regional and international cooperation on farms, at trade fairs and on the web.