

CHALLENGES & CONSTRAINTS

FOR THE ADOPTION OF ORGANIC FARMING METHODS BY SMALLHOLDER FARMERS IN ETHIOPIA



University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna



MOTIVATION

Despite the potential for building resilient farming systems and increasing productivity, Organic Farming (OF) methods are not widespread among smallholder farmers in Ethiopia. Diversified crops, versatile crop rotations, intercropping, green manuring (e.g. legumes), use of manure & compost can be considered key methods in OF. Diversification leads to risk reduction - breaks disease and pest cycles. Increased soil organic matter (SOM) contents raise resilience against drought, a key challenge for Ethiopian agriculture. Additionally, the adoption of OF methods might increase productivity among many farmers (IPES, 2016). This study examined the challenges & constraints for the adoption of OF practices by smallholder farmers in Ethiopia.

METHODS

Standardized **open-ended interviews** and **group interviews** were carried out with farmers, researchers, students and retailers in Ethiopia (March 2016). Interviews were recorded on audio and video. The data was analyzed by using content analysis according to Mayring (2014). From the data analysis derived theses were then compared to the **scholarly literature** by conducting an exhaustive review with selective citation (Cooper, 1988).

RESULTS



THESIS I: Cultural (food) habits are strong and might prevent innovation in terms of diversifying cropping systems and food patterns.



THESIS II: Knowledge about and perception of OF methods is strongly influenced by governmental policies and their support of conventional systems.



THESIS III: Deficit in public support for OF research as well as effective and holistic support for smallholders poses a challenge for greater adoption.



THESIS IV: Deficient innovations in regard to OF methods.



THESIS V: Land tenure insecurity prevents long term investment.



THESIS VI: Deficiency of important inputs for OF.



THESIS VII: Limited availability of organic matter for increasing soil fertility due to use of biomass and dung for other purposes.



THESIS VIII: Due to a strong increase in population farm sizes are decreasing which in return leaves less scope for the farmer to let land regenerate through fallows and/or growing of green manure crops.

■ ■ ■ Low-high support by literature

Bibliographie:

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Authors: Pierre Ellssel, Mia Schober, Anna Porcuna, Benjamin Klappoth, Sarah Oberländer, Paula Flotzinger

Position: M.Sc. Students - Organic Agricultural Systems & Agroecology

Contact: pierre.ellssel@boku.ac.at; anna.porcuna@boku.ac.at

CONCLUSIONS

The challenges and constraints identified for the adoption of OF methods in Ethiopia need to be analysed with a systemic perspective. The deficient implementation of OF methods in Ethiopia have political, economic, cultural and social reasons. With the commitment of state actors many of the elaborated challenges & constraints might be properly addressed and reversed. Strong support of research institutions, capacity building among extension services as well as farmers, farmer field schools and demonstration farms may be path-breaking to establish organic farming practices.