



Deutscher Tropentag, October 9-11, 2002, Witzenhausen  
“Challenges to Organic Farming and Sustainable Land Use  
in the Tropics and Subtropics”

**NECOFA, “Network for Ecofarming in Africa”**

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**Abstract**

NECOFA is an Internet working platform established by senior agricultural experts from African countries in co-operation with the Food and Agriculture Development Centre (ZEL) of the DSE and the German Institute for Tropical and Subtropical Agriculture (DITSL). NECOFA is designed for the exchange of experience between senior agricultural experts within African countries as well other countries. The presentation will introduce NECOFA (South Africa). NECOFA SA is a young member in NECOFA and its establishment and structure will be described. The important steps in the establishment phase which National Conference will be described and then the Board of Directors and its functions will be explained. NECOFA SA is one of 9 member-countries and therefore the international platform will also be introduced. The international body and its history and general objectives will be described. The presentation is looking in the areas of the background of NECOFA SA, the target-group, the objectives, its activities and services, training and workshops. Thereby the networking aspect and its principles of operation will play a major role. Obtaining information, coordination and output are important issues. Lobbying is also an area of networking. Through the national conference the founding-members developed the policies of NECOFA and the basic constitution for the organisational structure. The constitutions of other member-countries in NECOFA were used as example constitution in the conference. An interim Board of Directors were appointed for a six month-time period. The organisational activities of the founding-members of NECOFA SA as well the practical work and the gained experience in the different areas around the organic farming will be described. The organisational structure is composed of three levels. The CBOs, which represent the activists at the grassroots level and the regional working NGOs for the provincial level. On the national level there are the Government and the nationally operating NGOs. The programmes within NECOFA SA will be described, which include training and exchange of knowledge and experiences. Other areas are workshops training to the farmers, seed-security and the growing and use of medicinal herbs. The forwarded plans for the implementation of the programmes will be introduced and first successful steps will be pointed out. The introduction of NECOFA SA will lead to an evaluation of the already worked areas, for a better support and development of the African Network.

**Keywords:** Internet working for development, NECOFA