

Pre-conference at OWC 2017: “Accelerating Innovation – the Role of Science, Policy and Practice”

November 8, 2017 – Constitution Club of India,
Rafi Marg, Behind Reserve Bank of India, New Delhi, 110001

Background

Organic food and farming systems (OFFS) have great potential to meet global challenges – such as population growth, climate change, environmental pollution and deterioration of natural resources – while being economically attractive to farmers. However, OFFS remain a niche category with less than one percent of the global farmland certified, and only a small share of the global population consuming organic produce. Today, many research institutes and scientists in low- and middle-income countries working on novel knowledge and techniques of OFFS are facing challenges, and allocation of more resource to these areas is needed. Furthermore, OFFS are not adequately considered in the context of international research for development, and there is a growing disparity between smallholder/family farms and industrialised production within OFFS.

Objectives

The main objective of this event is to offer a common platform for dialogue between science, policy and practice. In other words, this event will aim at initiating the development of scientifically informed policy for practice oriented solutions. A series of talks by national and international leaders from the fields of science and policy will prepare the floor for a moderated panel discussion addressing challenges and opportunities of science and policy to transform food systems. The event will explore the potential of innovation platforms to accelerate innovation in OFFS in the current science and policy landscapes of India and other countries of the global South. The afternoon will be dedicated more specifically to innovation platforms; after conceptual inputs, hands-on examples from Africa and India are going to set the scene for a two hour workshop with all participants. The targeted

outcome of the event is a concept and compilation of success stories of bringing about innovation through transdisciplinary processes, and a collection of the most suitable approaches to facilitate such processes in various local contexts. These results will be converted to policy briefs which will be used to initiate the mentioned processes in India and other countries of the global South.

Format

This event will be organized as a full-day pre-conference. After high-level representatives from the Agricultural Policy Commission and the Agricultural Scientist Recruitment Board of the Government of India, as well as the representatives of Swiss authorities will have prepared the floor, thought-provoking speakers will present visionary inputs which are currently being developed at the forefront of respective UN bodies. These contributions will provide the basis for a moderated panel discussion. The afternoon will comprise of a series of talks as well as a workshop specifically dedicated to innovation platforms (see above). Lunch will be provided, and a limited number of sponsorships are available, mainly for participants from countries with a low to medium Human Development Index. Please contact christian.andres@fibl.org for sponsorships.

Names and affiliations of organizers

Prof Dr Urs Niggli, Director Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), President of TIPI
Dr Gurbir Singh Bhullar, Senior Scientist and Theme Leader – Sustainable Agriculture in the Tropics, FiBL
Dr Amritbir Riar, Scientist, SysCom India, FiBL
Dr Brian Baker, Principal Belcain Concerns, Vice-President of TIPI
Christian Andres, Scientist, FiBL, Scientific Secretary of TIPI, christian.andres@fibl.org

