



## TECHNICAL REPORT OF THE

### 1<sup>st</sup> AFRICAN ORGANIC RESEARCH CONFERENCE (AFROREC)

HELD PHYSICALLY AT THE INTERNATIONAL  
CONFERENCE CENTRE, UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN,  
NIGERIA AND VIRTUALLY AT <https://bit.ly/2022AFREREC>  
BETWEEN 6-8 DECEMBER, 2022



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**2022 AFRICAN ORGANIC RESEARCH CONFERENCE (AFROREC)  
COMMUNIQUE**

We, the over 113 physical and virtual participants, representing various stakeholders of Organic and Agroecological Agriculture from about 19 countries, covering all regions of Africa and some countries outside Africa that attended the 1<sup>st</sup> African Organic Research Conference held in Ibadan, Nigeria from 6th to 8th December 2022, met to deliberate on the theme ‘Unfavorable Climate and Food Systems in Africa: **Organic and Agroecology Solutions**’. The event is the continental conference of the Network of Organic Agriculture Researchers in Africa (NOARA). The participants of the conference represented, researchers, farmers, journalists, policymakers and business actors in the fields of organic agriculture and agroecology. The conference witnessed presentations of a keynote address, six lead papers, 28 scientific papers and two multi-stakeholders’ dialogue sessions. The presentations cut across different aspects of organic and agroecological agriculture; from production (crop and livestock) to business aspects.

***We AGREE***

- That Organic Agriculture and Agroecology play key roles in sustainable development, food security and food systems, climate change adaptation, human health, preservation of indigenous knowledge, biodiversity of plant varieties and animal breeds, as well as socio-cultural development.
- Several research results confirmed that proper adoption of organic agriculture and agro-ecological practices can significantly mitigate climate change effects and increase food production in Africa.
- Organic Agriculture and Agroecology are climate smart, as they produce lower emissions and also provide much greater resilience in times of climate extremes such as drought and heavy rain fall.
- Organic Agriculture and Agroecology play important roles in fulfilling the African Union's Agenda 2063 and contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the transformation of national and regional economies.

- That organic agriculture and agroecology positively contribute to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and United Nations Biodiversity Conference (COP15)

***WE APPLAUD*** the great efforts made by all national, regional, continental and international organizations working in support of the development of Organic Agriculture and Agroecology in Africa.

***RECALLING***

- That Africa subscribes to the United Nations’ SDGs, especially number 1, 2 and 15.
- The commitment of African governments in support of the African Union Agenda 2063 and its potentials for sustainable agricultural development in the continent, through the promotion of Organic Agriculture and Agroecology sectors.

***WE RESOLVE THAT***

All African countries that NOARA represents should strive to develop a vibrant organic agriculture and agroecology sector to provide feasible solution to mitigating climate change effects and improve the food systems for a flourishing legacy for future generations.

***WE ACKNOWLEDGE***

That organic agriculture and agroecology efforts in Africa are pivotal to solving challenges of food insecurity, climate change and improvement in livelihoods of the citizens of the continent.

***WE CALL FOR***

1. African appropriate arms of the governments in Africa to invest more in organic agriculture and agroecology research.

2. That the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) and its regional partners like CORAF, CCARDESA, ASARECA and others should include organic agriculture and agroecology research into their activities.
3. Establishment of Regional Centres of Specialization in Organic Agriculture and Ecology in Africa.
4. More research activities to be conducted in on entrepreneurship in organic agriculture and agroecology in Africa for promotion of the feasibility of the sectors.
5. Increase awareness on organic agriculture and agroecology in Africa to ensure information are properly disseminated to the grassroots.
6. Capacity building of NOARA members in terms of fundraising, research methodology and exchange of results.
7. Research on exotic vegetable production and management be increased to increase diversification of income for African farmers.
8. Research on organic food processing for value addition in Africa be increased.
9. Need for farmers, journalists and policy makers to be actively incorporated into organic agriculture and agroecology the research activities in Africa.
10. More funding or support for development of demand driving research activities on organic agriculture and agroecology in Africa to improve productivity of African farmers.
11. Integration of market linkages and certification of organic agriculture produce and products into organic agriculture and agroecology research in Africa.
12. Scaling-up of application of NOARA research results to solving challenges of practitioners in African organic agriculture and agroecology sectors.
13. Intensification of research activities for weed control in organic agriculture and agroecology to alleviate challenges of shortage of labour force in production.

***WE URGE THAT***

- National governments through their agricultural research councils should include organic agriculture and agroecology research into their activities.
  - FARA to include organic agriculture and agroecology research into her activities, as well as and encourage her regional partners to do likewise.
  - Research in the aspect of organic agriculture business in Africa should be increased.
  - More research activities go into development and adaption of implements and equipment for organic agriculture and agroecology production (e.g. solar irrigation facilities), to ease production activities of the farming systems
  - Research on appropriate and efficient quality guarantee of organic produce/products through certification programmes for uptake of appropriate governmental and non-governmental organizations be stepped up.
- Development partners within and outside Africa support the Network of Organic Agriculture Researchers in Africa (NOARA) and other bodies with similar focus to develop organic agriculture and agroecology research in Africa.
  - Producers be supported with research outputs to conserve indigenous seeds and sustainable conversion from conversional agriculture to organic agriculture or agroecology.
  - Research on organic agriculture and agroecology be stepped up resilience and productivity of farm lands, e.g on-farm composting

***WE PLEDGE THAT***

The organic agriculture and agroecology research sectors, as presented during this conference, will work hard and in harmony with all public and private sectors to achieve the resolutions of the 1<sup>st</sup> African Organic Research Conference (1<sup>st</sup> AFROREC).

### ***APPRECIATING***

- The Continental Secretariat of Network of Organic Agriculture Researchers in Africa (NOARA) based in the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, the Local Organising Committee, the Continental Planning Committee and the following partners; West Africa Cluster of Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) Initiative, Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) Initiative in Nigeria, West Africa Organic Network (W AfrONet), Inter-continental Network of Organic Farmer Organizations (INOFO) Africa, Journalist Go Organic and African Organic Network (AfrONet) for the successfully organizing the 1<sup>st</sup> African Organic Research Conference (AFROREC).
- The support from the Swiss Agency for Cooperation and Development (SDC), through Biovision Africa Trust, African Organic Network (AfrONet) and other organizations that supported participants of the conference.
- The African Union Commission (AUC) and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Commission for providing leadership in advancing the implementation of the decision of the African Heads of State and Government on Organic Farming (Doc. EX.CL/631 (XVIII) and active roles toward the success of the 1<sup>st</sup> AFROREC.
- Distinguished participants at the event (from within and outside Africa)

### ***CONGRATULATING***

Mr. Ernest Aubee (retired Head of Agriculture, ECOWAS Commission), for being honoured by the West African stakeholders, as a Champion of Organic Agriculture and Agroecology in the region, during the conference.

***WE AGREE*** to have the 2<sup>nd</sup> AFROREC in 2025.

## **About AFROREC**

African Organic Research Conference (AFROREC) is an initiative of the Network of Organic Agriculture Researchers in Africa (NOARA) with participation of diverse regional and international multi-stakeholder organizations (farmers/producers, researchers, manufacturers/marketers, policy makers, etc.) in organic and agroecology sectors. The 1<sup>st</sup> AFROREC that took place in Ibadan Nigeria from 6-8th December, 2022 was the maiden edition by NOARA and first of its kind in Africa. This event was a hybrid of virtual and physical participation. This conference is a contribution of NOARA to the decision of the African Heads of States and Governments on organic farming [EX.CL/Dec.621 (XVII)] as well as the demand by stakeholders of the organic and agroecological sectors of Africa, for research interventions to improve their operations.

The importance of organic and ecological agriculture in national food security, health, biodiversity, environment conservation and fight against poverty is increasingly being recognized in Africa and all over the world. Despite on-going efforts of the African Union Commission led-Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) Initiative, Agence Française de Développement (AFD), Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) of German Government, Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), IFOAM Organics International, Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA) and some other in the organic agriculture and agroecology sectors of Africa, there is still a gap of appropriate research interventions to strengthen efforts of these organizations in Africa. Thus, NOARA through the 1<sup>st</sup> AFROREC with the theme - Unfavorable Climate and Food Systems in Africa: Organic and Agroecology Solutions, was held to provide a platform for multi- stakeholders (agencies, organizations, civil societies, projects and individuals) of organic and agroecological research in Africa to showcase their research results/innovations as solutions to stakeholders' challenges.

The conference also created interactive and networking opportunities, as well as information sharing among the diverse participants of the event. During the three-day event, there were interaction among participants through plenary speeches, research paper presentations, dialogue of researchers with farmers, producers and input merchants and policy makers, journalists, as well as exhibition of organic products and projects. The event also provided opportunities for regional and continental meetings related to organic agriculture and agroecology, as well as a field trip to an organic farm for scientific interventions into their challenges. There were opportunities for consultation and Press conference during the event. The Network of Organic Agriculture Researchers in Africa (NOARA) as a major stakeholder in disseminating organic agriculture research outputs within and outside Africa was privileged to coordinate this important event.

### **Opening and Goodwill messages**

The first African Organic Research Conference (AFROREC) was held at the International Conference Centre, University of Ibadan, Nigeria between 6-8 December, 2022. The conference had in attendance over 113 physical and virtual participants. Day 1 started with registration of participants and the opening ceremony commenced with singing the Nigerian National Anthem after which

Goodwill messages from partners of the Network of Organic Agriculture Researchers in Africa (NOARA) was delivered. Chief Salimonu, the leader of Ajibode Organic Farmers delivered goodwill message on behalf of organic farmers group. Prof. Simplicie D. Vodouhe, the President of the West African Organic Network (WAFRONET) also delivered his goodwill message after which NOARA Continental Coordinator, Dr. Olugbenga O. AdeOluwa gave the overview of the 1<sup>st</sup> African Organic Research Conference (AFROREC). He noted that the theme of AFROREC 2022 “Unfavourable climate and food systems in Africa: Organic and Agroecology solutions to all stakeholders” was timely for Africa as she is still suffering the effect of climate change on organic agricultural production systems. He further reiterated that AFROREC seeks to enhance research methodologies in Organic Agriculture through proper interactions among stakeholders and encouraged participants to make the most of the event.



NOARA Continental Coordinator, Dr Olugbenga AdeOluwa giving the overview of the 1<sup>st</sup> African Organic Research Conference (AFROREC)

### **Keynote Address**

The Keynote Address was delivered by Prof Raymond Auerbach of South Africa on “Towards a Climate-change Resilient Typology of Ecological Organic Agriculture in all 55 African Countries”. The Conference Opening Declaration was done open by the Chairman, West Africa Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) Initiative, Mr. Ernest Aube. He affirmed that AFROREC 2022 was expected to:

- Proffer realistic solutions that will benefit all stakeholders
- Develop relevant policy briefs and advocate for policy makers to invest more in Organic Agriculture and Agroecology in Africa
- Enable researchers/scientist to carry out evidence-based researches that are relevant with regards to; food security, poverty alleviation and improvement of livelihood of Africans

and

- Address practical challenges in organic agriculture and agroecology value chain, standards, packaging, marketing and consumers' acceptability

Vote of thanks was done by the representative of the Chairman, Local Organizing Committee of AFROREC, Dr. Olajumoke Fayinminu who appreciated members of the high table and all participants (both online and on ground) for their efforts towards the success of AFROREC 2022. She emphasized that AFROREC 2022 would be fulfilling as sessions were line-up to promote organic agriculture and agroecology in Africa. A group photograph of physical participants was taken after which there was inspection tour of exhibition stands led by Dr. Ernest Aubee who also declared the exhibition open.



A group photograph of physical participants on Day 1 of the Conference

### **Lead scientific paper presentations**

Lead Scientific Paper Presentations began with presentations by Dr Never Mujere from Zimbabwe and Dr Jules Kazungu from Rwanda on Inclusive development in the context of pfumvudza farming programme among vulnerable households in Africa. The case of Bikita District in Zimbabwe and Contribution of regenerative in policy frameworks: Rwanda as a case study respectively. Other lead presentations were Analyse de la rentabilité des alternatives EOA à l'utilisation du Glutamate dans la transformation du soja en fromage by Fifanou VODOUHE et Silvère TOVIGNAN from Republic of Benin, Overview of organic research: South Africa as case study by Prof Raymond Auerbach, Innovation in Private Sector Engagement - An Impact Model for Delivery and Partnerships in the Nature Based Solutions for Agriculture by Prean Naidoo, Benin Republic and Capacity assessment of lecturers in agriculture and related disciplines to teach organic agriculture: Nigeria as case study by Olugbenga O. AdeOluwa, Continental Coordinator of



the Network of Organic Agriculture Researchers in Africa (NOARA). Six other scientific presentations were made physically by researchers after Health break.

**Exhibition of Organic Products**

Part of Day 1 event also included Inspection Tour to the Exhibition Stand . The tour was led by Dr. Ernest Aubee who also declared the exhibition open. Ibadan Go Organic Cooperative exhibited their farm produce at the conference. Dr Olufemi Ayanfeoluwa addressed the participants on behalf of the cooperative. He mentioned that Ibadan Go Organic was established in 2017 with the goal of making organic farm produce available for consumers at least three times a week. The cooperative consists of different organic agriculture stakeholders in Nigeria and they have different sales outlets within Ibadan Metropolis. Organic produce/products available for sale at the conference included; toasted cassava (garri), mango ginger, oranges, banana, cucumber, mushrooms, radish, among other fruits and leafy vegetables including *telferia*, *amaranthus*, *corchorus* and spinach.



Display of organic produce/products by Ibadan Go-Organic Cooperative Society during the Conference

**Organic Farmers- Researchers’ Dialogue**

Organic Farmers-Researchers’ Dialogue aimed at giving the farmers opportunity to channel issues encountered during field production for researchers to proffer research based solutions was moderated by Dr Julius Orimoloye after the exhibition. Challenges of organic agricultural production were highlighted by farmers while probable evidence-based solutions were provided by researchers. Some of such challenges and proffered solutions included:

S/N	Challenges (by farmers)	Probable Solutions (by researchers)
1	Pest management	Use of neem extract with ash and pepper,

		Agroecology practices
		Planting of resistant crops e.g mints, sunflower, marigold, Push and pull method of cultivation
2	Weed control	strategic weed management, organic and agroecology practices
3	Insufficient organic input	Provision of organic seed banks, production of local herbicides by farmers using on-farm resources, Agroecology practices to enhance soil fertility
4	Market for organic produce/products	Coalition of farmer groups to establish organic markets in different localities, certification of organic produce/products
5	Inadequate knowledge of organic principles and standards	More awareness on organic principles and practices, regular training of organic farmer groups
		Availability of organic standards to farmers and other stakeholders across the value chain

Mr Ernest Auree- Chairman, West Africa Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) Initiative gave the closing remarks and reiterated the following from the dialogue:

- a. Researches that will enhance the production of inputs for farmers in organic agriculture should be prioritized.
- b. Farmers are encouraged not to lose sight of indigenous knowledge/ practices such as composting, farming systems and agroecological practices that enhance production in organic agriculture.
- c. Stakeholders of organic agriculture are encouraged to implement organic agricultural policies and standards to local, national, continental and international levels.
- d. Researchers are expected to simplify all findings of organic agriculture and agroecology research to the understanding of all strata of organic agriculture stakeholders.

### **Scientific paper presentations**

There were five (5) other physical scientific presentations after the lead presentations on day 1 of the conference after which there were questions for presenters who responded accordingly.

### **Summary of Day 1 activities**

Day 2 event commenced with overview of the previous day event by Mr. Wole Gbadamosi after which the fourth session of scientific papers was done by physical and virtual presenters.

### **Lead scientific paper presentations**

Three lead presentations were delivered by Prof. Raymond Auerbach from South Africa, Prean Naidoo from Benin Republic and Dr Olugbenga AdeOluwa, The Continental Coordinator of NOARA. The fifth technical session was done afterwards including questions for the presenters who responded accordingly.

### **Side Event of the West African Cluster for Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) And West African Organic Network (Wafronet)**

The side event of the West African Cluster for Ecological Organic Agriculture (EOA) And West African Organic Network (Wafronet) was also featured on day 2 of the conference.

The EOA West Africa Cluster supported different stakeholders including farmers, policymakers, journalists, country lead organizations among others from the EOA Initiative' implementing countries (Mali ,Nigeria, Senegal and Benin) to attend the event (in-person and virtually). Participants had the opportunity to discuss, share best practices, lessons, challenges among other topical issues with other key stakeholders within the Ecological Organic and Agroecological Agriculture in West Africa. Some of the activities observed during this session were:

- 1) **Decision on the host of 7th West Africa Organic Conference (WAOC):** The meeting recommended that each of the country should submit detailed proposals for consideration of the Extraordinary General Assembly of WAfrONet. Deadline for submission of the proposals - 7 Jan 2023. The 7<sup>th</sup> West African Organic Conference (WAOC) is to hold in 2024.
- Registration of WAfrONet: Benin Republic was given the right to register the West Africa Organic Network (WAfrONet)
- Honouring Mr.Ernest Aube as a Champion of Organic Agriculture and Agroecology in West Africa



Mr Ernest Aube receiving the award as Champion of Organic Agriculture and Agroecology in West Africa during the West African Cluster Side Events

### **Field Trip to Ajibode Organic Farm**

Day 3 of the conference featured Field Trip of participants to the Organic Farm at Ajibode along University of Ibadan axis. The field trip was projected electronically so that the virtual participants could also benefit from it. Participants were taken around the farm by Chief Salimonu, the lead farmer of Ajibode Farm. Different organic agricultural practices utilized by the farmers including compost application, use of neem, ash and marigold for pest management as well as surface irrigation were demonstrated to participants. Crops cultivated on the farm included leafy and fruit vegetables like *amaranthus*, *celosia*, *corchorus*, spinach, okra and cucumber. Participants asked questions relating to organic production, pest and weed management, organic input generation, processing and marketing of organic produce/products which were provided responses by the farmers.

### **Scientific Paper Presentations**

The afternoon session of day 3 featured poster presentations of technical papers. Questions and contributions from the displayed presentations were entertained and concerned authors responded accordingly.

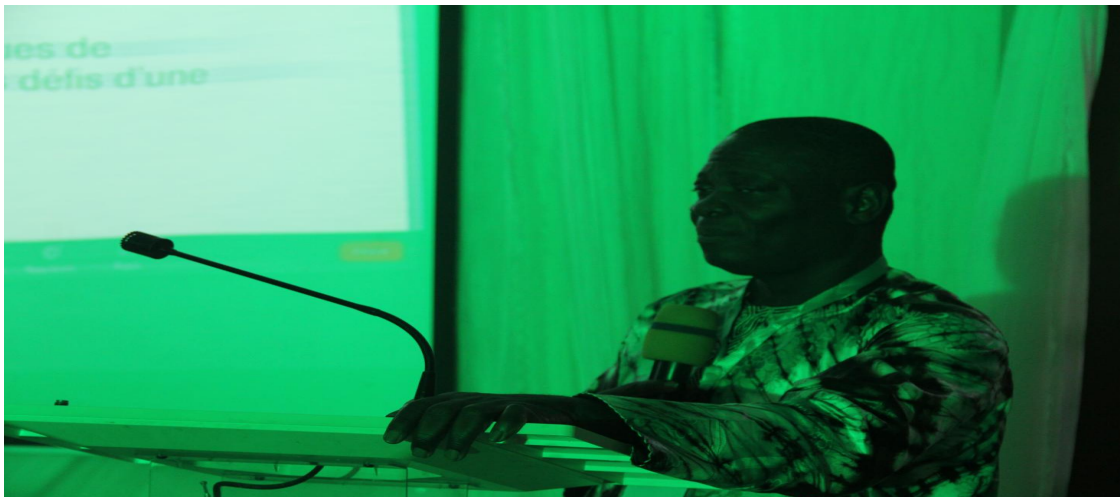
Summary of resolutions, emerging issues and Communiqué was anchored by Prof. Simplice from Republic of Benin which focused on Issues Emerging from Organic and Agroecology practices.

### **General Assembly of NOARA and Election of the Governing Council**

The last activity featured on Day 3 was the General Assembly of the Network of Organic Agriculture Researchers in Africa (NOARA). The Continental Coordinator mentioned that the Governing Council of NOARA should comprise of 12 elected/nominated members and one non- elective member by the

assembly according to the constitution and that only registered members can contest for any post except the Country Contact Persons (CCPs) due to their official responsibilities as NOARA African regional representatives, who are automatically full members and can be nominated.

Dr. Adewoyin from Federal University of Oye-Ekiti, Nigeria suggested that an election should take place instead of involving the CCPs who are busy already. It was however concluded that the CCPs should be nominated since the call had been made and some members already applied for the positions who had already been engaged with responsibilities. Call for the next host of AFROREC was made by the Continental Coordinator, who suggested that the interested country should not be from West Africa and would still have opportunity to indicate their interest through official writing to the continental secretariat within the next one month. Dr. Silvere gave the closing remarks. He thanked the Continental Coordinator, Dr. AdeOluwa O.O. for the positive development he has brought to NOARA. He also commended every participant for their positive inputs in making sure that the Conference was a huge success.



Dr. Silvere giving the closing remarks during the General Assembly of NOARA

#### **Vote of Thanks/Closing Remarks**

The vote of thanks was given by Dr. Olugbenga O. AdeOluwa, Continental Coordinator, NOARA and the conference was declared close till 2025 for the next AFROREC.

**APPENDIX**

**PHOTO SPEAKS @ 1<sup>st</sup> AFROREC**



Chief Salimonu giving his good will message from the farmers' group at the opening ceremony of the 1<sup>st</sup> AFROREC.



Prof. Simplicite D. Vodouhe, President West Africa Organic Network(WAFRONET) giving his welcome address at the Conference.



Dr. O.O AdeOluwa (Continental coordinator, NOARA) delivering his keynote address during the conference



**Some of the Presenters during Technical sessions at the conference**





Some of the AFROREC LOC members