

# *les dossiers* d'**AGROPOLIS** INTERNATIONAL

*Expertise of the scientific community  
in the Languedoc-Roussillon region (France)*



## Family farming



## Standards and family farming

The demand for products that meet sustainable production criteria led to marked development in voluntary standards regarding environmental and social 'good practices'. Is family farming able to benefit from these standards?

Two research projects on voluntary international standards in which UMR MOISA is involved—European NTM Impact project (2009-2011) and the ANR Prigoue project (2011-2014)—have generally highlighted the difficulties family farmers encounter regarding their inclusion in these certified sectors. They benefit little from labelling due to their inability to adapt to the physical and human capital requirements. This situation could also be explained by these farmers' low participation in defining these standards (e.g. multi-stakeholder roundtables for sustainable soybean and palm oil). The hegemony of these standards and differential access to quality assurance generate inequalities between producers (e.g. the exclusion of small Peruvian mango producers from GlobalGap-certified export channels, and the disparity in impacts on different producers of GlobalGap-certified litchis in Madagascar).

The dissemination and adoption of these private standards by smallholders often requires the assistance of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), donors or even industrial operators, indicating that certification sustainability is an issue for family farming. This could be illustrated, for instance, by the fact that many litchi producers in Madagascar lost their certification, especially following the departure of donors, that chocolate manufacturers are pervasively present in the organization of



▲ An increase in the number of voluntary sustainability standards.

the Rainforest Alliance certification of Ivorian cocoa, and that Amazonian communities in the Forest Stewardship Council lost their certification due to the mismatch between NGO support and that of local public institutions.

Finally, family farmers should form collective organizations to gain access to the benefits of certification through the adoption of standards that are tailored to local realities and practices (e.g. organic rice in Laos), and by adopting less expensive certification strategies (e.g. participatory certification in Latin America).

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**For further information:**

- NTM Impact project: [www.bioeconomy-alcue.org/eg](http://www.bioeconomy-alcue.org/eg)
- Prigoue project: [www.prigoue.cluster1.easy-hebergement.net](http://www.prigoue.cluster1.easy-hebergement.net)

## Strengthening smallholder farmers' capacities for better market access



▲ A wholesale market at Alexandria.

The access of smallholder farmers in developing countries to agricultural markets is a strategic lever for enhancing their livelihoods and reducing rural poverty. Sustainable market integration of these farmers depends on the implementation of institutional arrangements—contracts, bundled sales, information systems on prices—to reduce asymmetries which constrain them, and on the formulation of public policies to facilitate implementation of these institutional arrangements.

The Empowering Smallholder Farmers Into Markets (ESFIM) project, funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), supported farmers in 11 countries (Benin, Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, Madagascar, Peru, Bolivia, Uruguay, Costa Rica, India and the Philippines) in their appeal to public authorities and donors to improve their access to markets. With the support of researchers from three AGRINATURA institutions (Wageningen University & Research Centre, CIRAD and Natural Resources

Institute), farmers' organizations identified priority issues and supervised studies conducted by local experts. The findings of these studies have furthered these organizations' reflection on the market access issue, while substantiating their arguments and strengthening their claims in the public debate.

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**For further information:** [www.esfim.org](http://www.esfim.org)