

Natural Resource Management

## Strengthening Organic Agriculture in the South Caucasus



### Background

The situation of the rural population in the South Caucasus is difficult. Agricultural production and commercialisation are deficient and need to be strengthened. Much support is needed to help poor farmers to sell their products in an organised way, and to increase their income and improve their living conditions.

Through certified organic production, farmers and farmer groups can gain access for their products to new markets on local, regional, and international markets, which will thereby increase their incomes. In this context, certification of organic products is an important means to turn low productivity production into sustainability and profitability for the poor farmers.

### General Information

Project region:  
**South Caucasus**

Project duration:  
**2005-2007**

Total budget: **CHF 1'852'000**  
SDC: CHF 1'416'000  
EPER: CHF 436'000

Project partner:  
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### Overall objective

Through commercialisation and production of certified organic products, farmers can increase their income and improve their living conditions.

#### Project objectives:

Production: organic farmers have access to high quality extension service and their products are ready for organic certification

Promotion: organic products are sold on local and international markets

Policy dialogue: governmental bodies are informed and ready to support organic agriculture in their respective countries

Certification: Certification offices to be functional; multi-site accreditation to be made acceptable

### Expected results and activities

- farmers are organised into small groups to facilitate extension and storage of organic products;
- increased amount of organic farmers are ready for certification;
- a defined market strategy are implemented
- awareness about organic agriculture and certification are raised among the public, and traders;
- cooperation among other stakeholders are established and maintained;
- contacts are established at political levels, and possible strategies are discussed;
- certification bodies are operational in the three countries and the regional entities are accredited through multi-site accreditation mechanisms.

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