

Sustainable Farming and Ethical Food production in SA

By

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Prince Charles talks organic farming

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In a visit to Georgetown University, Washington, Prince Charles spoke passionately about environmentally friendly farming.

“The world is gradually waking up to the fact that creating sustainable food systems will become paramount in the future because of the enormous challenges now facing food production. “

“We need to face up to asking whether how we produce our food is actually fit for purpose in the very challenging circumstances of the 21st Century“

“My concern is simply that we seek to produce the healthiest food possible from the healthiest environment possible for the long term and to ensure it is affordable for ordinary consumers. “

“We have to put nature back at the heart of the equation. “



Business as Usual?

- We are globally in the worst Environmental crisis and the worst Health crisis of all time.
- The WHO (World Health Organisation) stated a few years ago that there are now more people dying from the effects of critical clinical obesity than there are people dying from starvation.
- Agriculture plays a large part in both of these statements. Estimates are 34% of the green house gasses come from unsustainable farming practices.
- We cannot keep doing the same thing and expect a different result.

Examples from Africa of sustainable/organic farming

- 18 June 2011: Grolink/IFOAM African Organics conference in Johannesburg.
- Uganda: has 200,000 certified organic farmers and 1million farmers practicing sustainable conservation farming.
- Ethiopia: 110,861 certified organic farmers
- Ghana presentation on East Africa:HELVETAS: supported(training) organic cotton producer organisations in Mali, burkina faso, Senegal and Benin in converting to organic production systems and to access organic and fairtrade markerts. app. 14,000 certified smallholder farms participated.
- South Africa? We have approx. 400 certified organic farmers. We hope to increase this substantially.

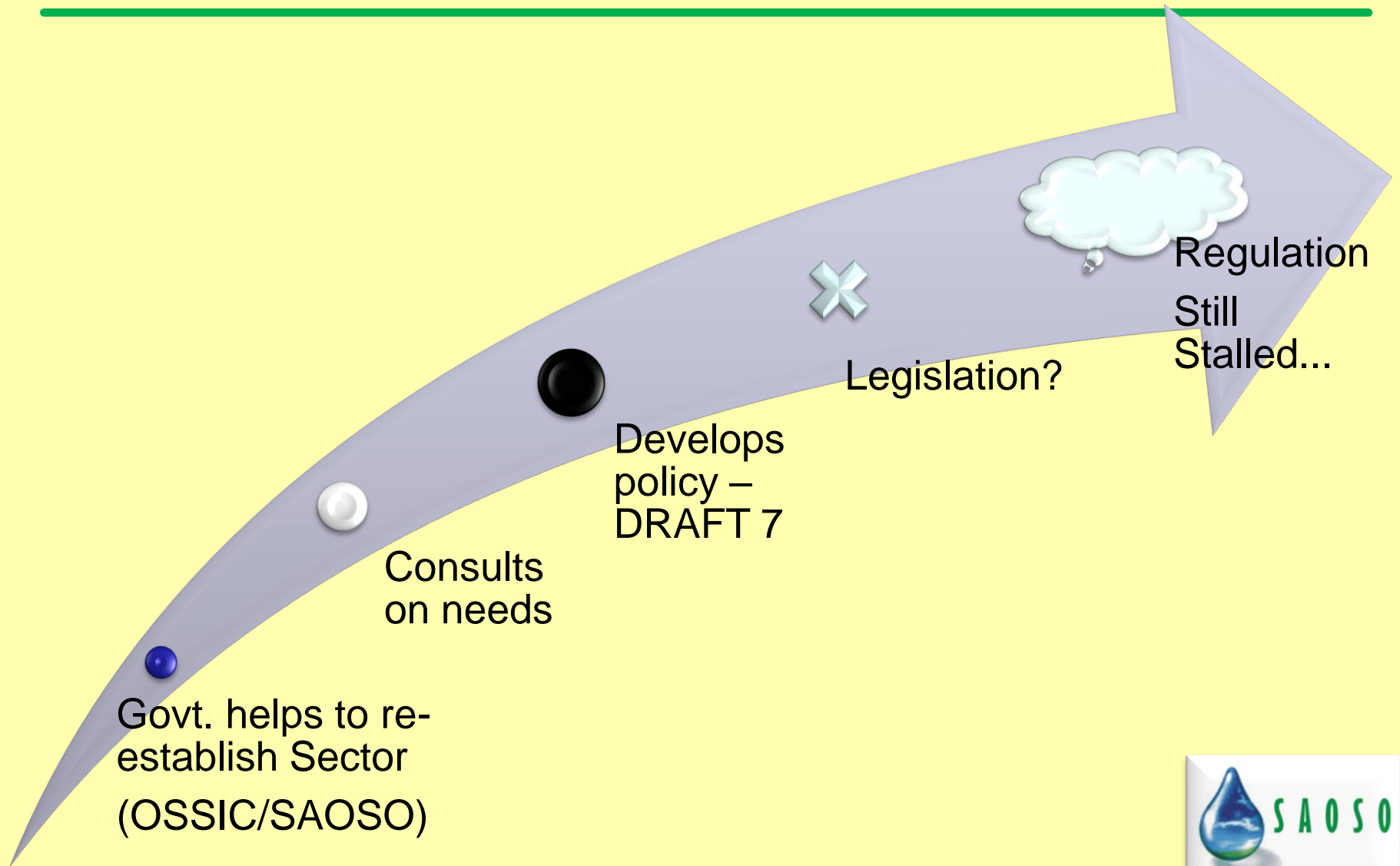
Examples from Europe

- Europe has an exceptionally well developed and supported market culture

Turkey:

- Europe s largest organic supplier
- Average size farm 7hectares. No mono cropping.
- Successfully feeds 80million people yet totally food secure with no imports.
- Each town, village and city has network of farms and market gardens in close proximity. Short supply chain Equals affordable healthier food and low carbon footprint.

SA Sector 2007 - 2011:



Department: Trade and Industry

Department: Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries

Other relevant Government Departments

National Organic Commission

Organic Sector Strategy Implementation Committee (OSSIC)



SAOSO
South African Organic Sector Organisation

Organic Input Suppliers Association

Organic Producers Organisation

Organic Manufacturers Association

Organic Trade Association

What is needed?

- Global warming and climate change is no longer an environmental challenge but rather a holistic sustainable development challenge.
- Food must stop being seen merely as a commodity.
- Conservation farming/organic farming will re-build destroyed eco systems and soil health so that the food that is grown nurtures our people back to health and prosperity.
- Food security and food sovereignty is a fundamental right and in SA there are millions of people who still need to experience that. “Big” has proven to be devastating to our health and our environment.
- We need to get the small farms back, and people back on the land farming sustainably and feeding themselves.
- We need to get back to being true Stewards of our land.