

# Best Practices for Organic Policy

**Dr. Sophia Twarog  
UNEP-UNCTAD  
Capacity-Building Task  
Force on Trade,  
Environment and  
Development (CBTF)**



# UNEP-UNCTAD CBTF study

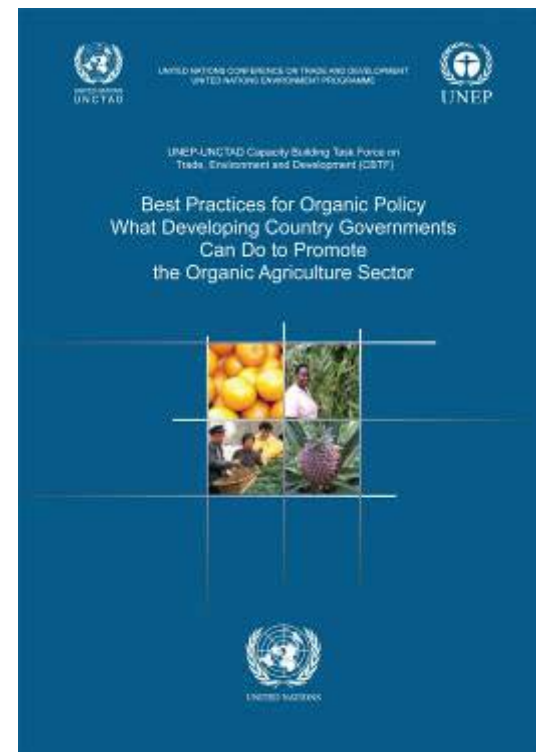
- **35 actionable recommendations**

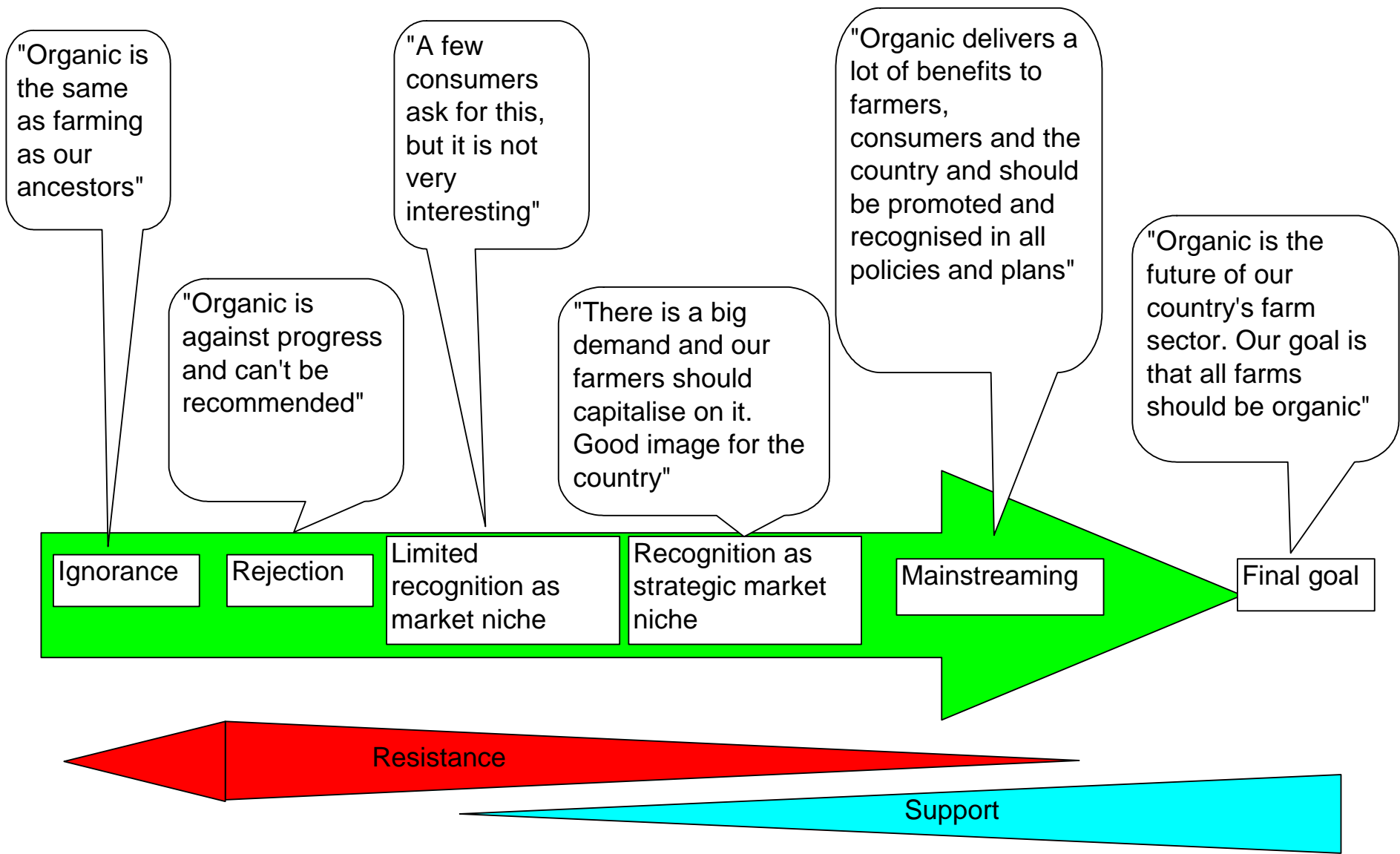
**based on:**

- **Case studies of 7 countries**

- **Chile**
- **Costa Rica**
- **Denmark**
- **Egypt**
- **Malaysia**
- **Thailand**
- **South Africa**

- **Other experience**





"Organic is the same as farming as our ancestors"

"Organic is against progress and can't be recommended"

"A few consumers ask for this, but it is not very interesting"

"There is a big demand and our farmers should capitalise on it. Good image for the country"

"Organic delivers a lot of benefits to farmers, consumers and the country and should be promoted and recognised in all policies and plans"

"Organic is the future of our country's farm sector. Our goal is that all farms should be organic"

Ignorance

Rejection

Limited recognition as market niche

Recognition as strategic market niche

Mainstreaming

Final goal

Resistance

Support

# Policy Basics

- 1. Set sustainable agric as a priority**
- 2. Assess current situation professionally**
- 3. Link to main agric policies**



4. Involve and listen to stakeholders

5. Recognize the diversity in the sector



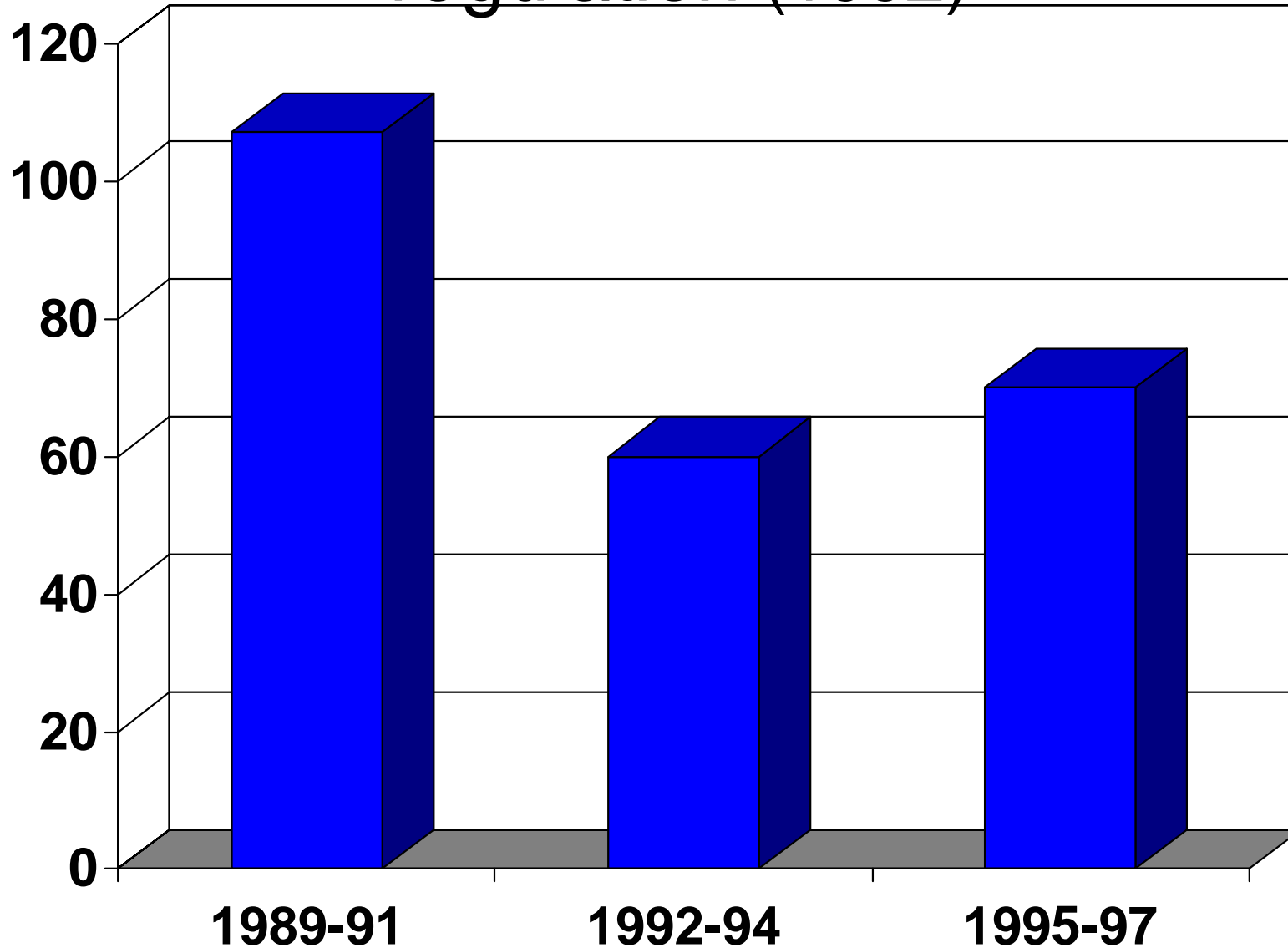
# Action Plan

- **Follow policy with clear plan**
- **Formulate clear targets and assign accountability for progress**
- **Assign lead agency**
- **Install permanent National Organic Committee**
  - **Organic stakeholders & government institutions**
- **Monitor: collect data**

# **To regulate or not to regulate?**

- **Pre-mature regulation of the term “organic” may hurt sector: first priority should be on promotion**
- **Use general consumer protection / fair trade practices regs**
- **For exports it is always quickest to use the standards of the importing countries – this is what is happening today**

# EU Organic growth rate pre- & post regulation (1992)





# What can **governments** do I

- 1. Recognition-credibility**
- 2. Domestic Markets i.e. consumer education, local mkts.**
- 3. Public procurement**
- 4. Promote ONE label**



# What can **governments** do

## II

- 1. Support farmer transition & certifi.**
- 2. Facilitate farmer organization**
- 3. Support market information systems**
- 4. Protect organic from GMOs**
- 5. Integrate organics into mandate of TPOs**

# Extension services

- **Integrate organic**
- **Build on indigenous knowledge**





# Education

## **Integrate in curriculum**

- agriculture schools**
- primary and secondary schools**
- higher education in organic**
- specialised institutions to drive competency**

# Research

- **Based on priority of the sector**
- **Participatory**
- **Integrate traditional knowledge**
- **Inputs researched and possibly controlled**
- **Centres of excellence**

# **Link with energy**

- **Explore integration of organic agriculture and renewable energy, particularly biogas**

# Removing obstacles and disincentives

- **No subsidies for agro-chemicals or GMOs**
- **In all agriculture policies & programs consider effect on OA**

# Regional and international

- **Regional cooperation**
  - **Standards, mkting, R&D, info sharing**
  - **Pacific & East Africa example**



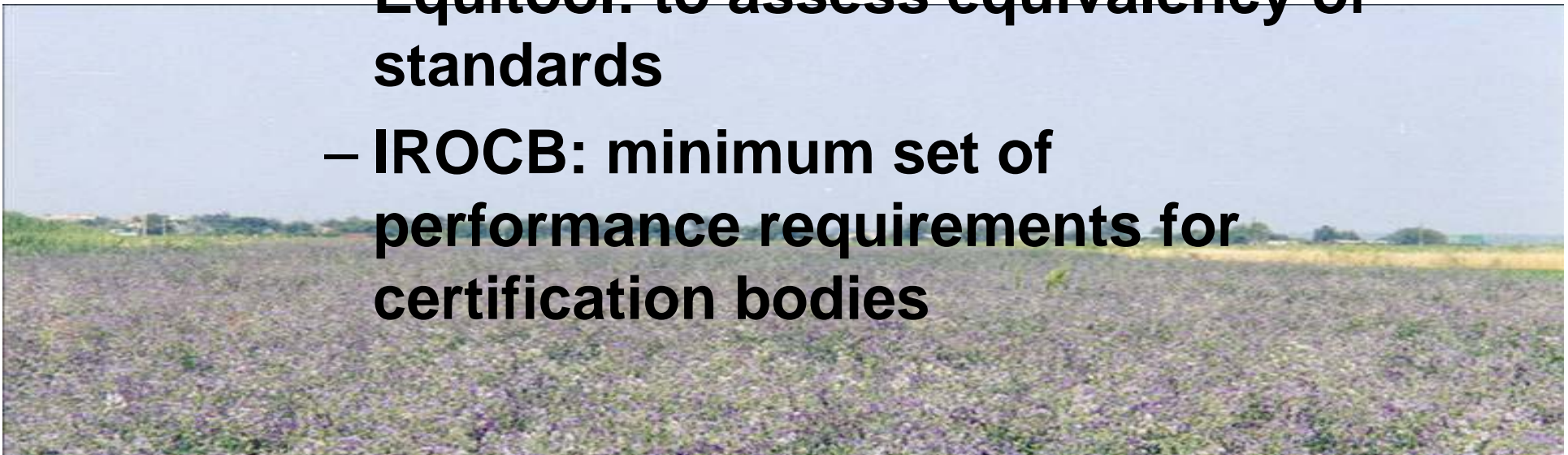
- **Participation in Codex, IFOAM**



# Regional and international

## Use ITF rec's and tools:

- import approvals based on intl standards and equivalency
- **Equitool**: to assess equivalency of standards
- **IROCB**: minimum set of performance requirements for certification bodies



Priority-  
setting  
and proper  
sequencing

Private  
sector  
participation  
is critical

