

# ervaUna Quarterly Report 2007-3

Diversified Organic Agroforestry – an Innovation to Rural Development in Southern Bahia, Brazil

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## Resumo

Nesse terceiro trimestre foi instalada a «fazenda modela» Boa Vista na Queimada Grande de Una. Iniciamos a agricultura orgânica com 12 compostos (volume total: 10 m<sup>3</sup>) e com leiras experimentais de pre-culturas de feijão-deporco e amendoim para testar vários adubos orgânicos. Depois serão plantadas hortaliça em culturas mistas para mostrar novas opções para a agricultura familiar. Além disso foram produzidas e plantadas mudas de árvores da mata, árvores frutíferas e piaçava, e recuperadas pastagens com elas. Com a falta da participação e do interesse dos pequenos produtores da Queimada Grande pospomos aconselhá-los. Os contatos com as famílias estão mantidos através visitas regulares. Dois produtores (de 4) estão avançando bem no sub-projeto “Banana-da-Terra” que foi liberado do caminho orgânico pois que uns dos produtores querem voltar para o adubo químico.

Estamos procurando uma nova base local para o projeto ervaUna e já estamos estabelecendo os contatos com duas agro-cooperativas e mais duas ONG's que actuam na região. Foi organizado um curso de campo sobre a melhora do solo com métodos orgânicos no dia 4 de Setembro, com 12 famílias participando (7 da Queimada Grande) e 4 crianças. A professora da escola da Queimada Grande participou também, e sugeriu fazer uma horta com os alunos. O presidente da associação e líder no projeto ervaUna, Senhor Lau, faleceu no dia 18 de Agosto. Foi mais um fato que paralisou e ainda paralisa a associação. A equipe técnica vai analisando a situação do projeto até o fim do ano e decidir sobre a continuação do projeto ervaUna junto com a ONG Vereinigung PRO MATA ATLÂNTICA (PMA) e os doadores.

## Zusammenfassung

Das 3. Quartal 2007 war geprägt durch den Aufbau der Modellfarm Fazenda Boa Vista und die Erprobung biologischer Landbaumethoden auf den im Projektgebiet vorherrschenden kargen Böden. Es wurden 12 Komposte erstellt (Gesamt-volumen ca. 10 m<sup>3</sup>). An Vorkulturen mit Leguminosen (Jackbohne und Erdnuss) werden zur Zeit verschiedene organische Dünger getestet. Auf den Beeten der Vorkulturen folgen Gemüsepflanzen in Mischkultur. Diese sollen als Modellkulturen neue Möglichkeiten der Selbstversorgung für Familienbetriebe aufzeigen. Regenwaldbäume wurden aufgezogen und erste Weideflächen bepflanzt, sowie eine Bananen- und Piaçavapalmkultur angelegt. Die Beratung der Kleinbauern wurde aufgrund deren Desinteresse und Nichtbeteiligung an den Projektaktivitäten zurückgestellt. Der Kontakt mit ihnen bleibt durch regelmäßige Besuche aufrecht erhalten. Das vom Projektkoordinator mit 4 Bauern initiierte Kochbananenprojekt (seit Nov. 2006) ist auf 2 Fazenden auf Erfolgskurs. Der Versuch, das Projekt ervaUna wieder auf eine lokale Basis zu stellen, ist im Gang. Im Projektgebiet sind allerdings nur 4 Bauern aktiv. Am 4. September nahmen 12 Erwachsene (7 aus der Queimada Grande) und 4 Kinder am Kurs über biologische Bodenverbesserung teil, unter ihnen die Lehrerin des Queimada Grande Schulhauses, welche einen Schulgarten einrichten möchte. Zu zwei Bauerngemeinschaften und zwei Nichtregierungsorganisationen sind erste Kontakte geschaffen. Die Vereinigung PRO MATA ATLÂNTICA begrüsst die Weiterführung des Projektes ervaUna bis Ende Jahr, während die Hauptgeldgeber mit ihren Zahlungen zuwarten. Die Projektleitung wird bis Ende Jahr die Bilanz des Vorprojektes (4/2005 bis 3/2007) sowie eine Situationsanalyse der ersten drei Quartale des Hauptprojektes (April bis Dezember 2007) vorlegen, welche als Entscheidungsgrundlage für die Weiterführung des Projektes dienen werden.

## News

The model farm of the ervaUna project, the Fazenda Boa Vista, has been installed and is working as an experimental station, where organic farming, diversification, and reforestation are practised. 12 composts have been produced and 10 experimental fields planted with leguminous species in order to improve soil fertility. Diversification includes vegetables, fruit and rainforest trees. The first results were presented at a field course on how to improve soil fertility by organic methods. With 12 people participating, this course held on September 4th was a success.

Senhor Lau, the president of the smallholders' association, leader in the Queimada Grande and promoter of the ervaUna project from the very beginning, has passed away on August 18th. With his death, the association could possibly further remain in agony for a good while. With the absence of participating smallholders, major investments and expenses have either been postponed or cut. As a result, the expenses of the project (6 months: April - September 2007) are about 50% below the budget. The technical assistance team has been studying the situation in the rural areas of Una carefully. However, we have not come to a final conclusion yet and would like to present our analysis by the end of this year.

4/6 Total number of farmers involved and active **this**/ last quarter; **x** = varying number; **i** = inactive

	Working Plan	Realized Activities ✓ = milestones reached	Comments / Measures to take in the following quarter
<b>Capacity Building</b> with a focus on organic farming (12)/06	<p><b>A.</b> The first results obtained at the model farm "Fazenda Boa Vista" (see <b>C</b>) will be presented to smallholders.</p> <p><b>B.</b> We look for farmers' groups in the Una area with an interest in organic agriculture to re-establish a local basis of the ervaUna project.</p>	<p><b>A.</b> On September 4th, a field course "Improvement of soil fertility by organic methods" was organized and offered to the Associação Queimada Grande and two neighbouring farmers' associations. 12 farmer families participated. (✓)</p> <p><b>B.</b> Contacts to two agrocooperatives and two NGO's could be established. The ways and terms of cooperation and/or their integration into the ervaUna project will be discussed in October.</p>	<p>This field course gave a good impression of how a "living classroom" could work. All participants were satisfied with this practical course on how to improve soil fertility. However, participation was below our expectation. In spite of intensive advertising and personal invitations, only one farmer of the local association COOPERUNA participated. Further field courses will be organised in October and November.</p>
<b>Organic Farming</b> i / i	<p><b>C.</b> The ervaUna technical assistance team will establish model fields at Fazenda Boa Vista to demonstrate the viability of organic methods for successfully improving soil fertility.</p>	<p><b>C.</b> At Fazenda Boa Vista, 12 composts and 10 experimental fields with leguminous pre-cultures are ready to present and teach a variety of methods of organic agriculture. A new system of planting trees is being tested with 200 banana seedlings and 50 rainforest trees. ✓</p>	<p>The organic methods developed at Fazenda Boa Vista will be presented, offered and taught to interested farmers during the 4th quarter. After completing the field experiments, fact sheets will be prepared to make available the successful techniques on the web.</p>
<b>Diversification</b> 03/03	<p><b>D.</b> Diversification into a variety of legumes and fruit trees (including shade trees for agroforestry systems) will be done at Fazenda Boa Vista to set an example to farmer families.</p>	<p><b>D.</b> Vegetables, fruit trees, shade trees and rainforest trees have been planted at Fazenda Boa Vista. However, it is not the right time to make plans for introducing new agroforestry systems (see <b>E</b>). (✓)</p>	<p>Monitoring the growth and yield of new vegetables and fruits will prove their suitability for this region. Good yields might motivate farmers to adopt some of the new agricultural methods and products.</p>
<b>Agroforestry</b> 01/01	<p><b>E.</b> Without activity.</p>	<p>Prospects of long-term plantations of trees are not present in the Queimada Grande area. Such agroforestry systems, for instance, with medicinal plants, require careful, constant and observant maintenance, which is, however, not a typical attribute of a Bahian smallscale farmer.</p>	
<b>Extension Programs</b> 04/06	<p><b>F.</b> The Banana Project will be given further assistance.</p> <p><b>G.</b> The Piaçava Palm Project will further be monitored.</p>	<p><b>F.</b> The bananas are growing well on two sites but are probably lost on the other two farms where maintenance has been absent or the treatment inadequate. (2 farmers participate successfully, however, the 4 farmers of this sub-project have never acted as a group).</p> <p><b>G.</b> The first piaçava seedlings are sprouting. As germination will extend over 18 months, the success of this sub-project cannot be estimated at this point of time. (3 farmers participate)</p>	<p>The Banana Project will from now on be managed by farmers alone because they wished to abandon organic methods and add chemical fertilizers. Each of the 4 farmers has his own way of growing bananas, and they will probably not even co-operate when selling the fruits. A return on investment in order to finance further subprojects of smallholders is not realistic (ervaUna financed the banana seedlings and organic fertilizer).</p> <p>An extension of the planting of piaçava palms is not planned within the next quarter. One farmer could sell piaçava palm fruits for exportation. The hard nuts are used for handicraft.</p>
<b>Summary and Conclusion</b>	<p>Participation of the Queimada Grande smallholders remains very low. The ervaUna technical assistance team, consisting of 4 people, is realising organic farming, diversification and planting of rainforest trees at the model farm Fazenda Boa Vista. We will provide an example of successful model plantations, which may motivate farmers to develop an interest and become active themselves. At the same time, we are establishing contacts to further regionally operating agro-cooperatives and NGO's in order to find a new local basis for the project. The decision whether or not to continue the ervaUna project will be taken in January 2008.</p>		