

THE LAUNCH OF BIO-DISTRICT TENERIFE AND CANARY ISLANDS IN SPAIN

By Kim Assaël

In September 2016, in Santa Cruz de Tenerife, the event [Tenerifecolaborativa](#) has taken place in order to develop a collaborative ecosystem in Tenerife and the Canary islands. The event has been sponsored by [Commonomia](#) at the [Universidad de La Laguna](#), and supported by [ICCAA](#) (Instituto Canario de Calidad Agroalimentaria).

Among many other guests experiencing a new economic paradigm, the [INNER network of Bio-districts and Eco-regions](#) was invited to attend with the purpose to contribute by presenting the advantages of the participatory methodology of Bio-districts that triggers in organic growing areas, where actors and citizens sign an agreement for the sustainable territorial management of local resources, based on organic production and consumption (short food chain, purchasing groups, organic canteens in public offices and schools).

Tenerife is interesting for the great unused potential of territorial capital and social capital that is reacting, motivated and collaborative, in areas ranging from renewable energies, food and health sovereignty, as a response to the imbalances generated by current development policies. In Tenerife the variety of quality productions, due to the particular geography and climate conditions of the Archipelago, was reflected into the richness of contributions by farmers and breeders during the workshops with the Bio-districts and Eco-region network.

In this framework, a meeting was organized with farmers, producers, and organic processors of many municipalities as Fasnía, Arico, Valle de Guimar and Tacoronte, in order to identify the needs and priorities of organic and agro ecological agriculture in their respective areas. Local associations and many other partners participated at the meeting: [Asociación Valores Agroecológicos A.V.A di Arico](#); [Eco-Eje](#) project, [S.Borondon Association of organic producers](#) in Arico; the [Association Sana](#) and [Rincones del Atlántico](#), that disseminates the beauty and knowledge of the landscape and natural and cultural heritage of the Canary Islands.

In a climate of strong cooperation and common vision, the issues discussed took into account the law on the land and people's rights, consumers education policies, the fair product's price, how to increase the demand, water and energy resources management, as well it has been



valued the role of conservation of the Canary agricultural land that guarantees sustainability of the landscape.

ICCAA and Universidad de La Laguna also organized an introductory meeting with the representatives the INNER network of Bio-districts at *Gobierno de Canarias* in order to foster a working group made of technicians of Regional Government, operators and technicians that from different municipalities have already strongly supported the experience of Eco-comedores, organic canteens at school organized by the ICCA's quality certification office on the development of a green economy sized over Tenerife.

The international network of Eco-regions INNER succeeded to know the resources (agriculture, crafts, food activities) on the island that, considering the 950 organic producers already mapped, provide the basis of the health food and enrich the attractiveness of a territory inserted in an archipelago of biodiversity, thus naturally voted to tourism.

The week of visits and meetings ended with a demonstration of a strong interest and commitment of public administrations to join and support the integrated territorial development of the Bio-districts' innovative methodology by offering a participatory space at Canary islands level in occasion of the next [IV Forum of Agroecology and Biodiversity in the Canaries](#) sponsored by the Canary Islands Government.

The Forum is organized by the Institute Canario de Calidad Agroalimentaria and will be held in the island of Lanzarote from 13th to 16th of October 2016, in collaboration with the institutions of the island of Tenerife, universities, operators from the organic and agro-ecological sector. There are good conditions for the legal establishment of the Bio-district by the end of 2016, also considering the participation of Mesas Insulares who have the role of the coordination of the agro-ecological sector in the islands, building up a Plan for the development of organic production.

The interest on Bio-districts as an integrated territorial development alternative to the current industrial food system is growing internationally, as evidenced by the recent mission in Cilento (Campania Region) of the [Horizon Project Agrispin](#) (June 2016) and by numerous meetings scheduled starting from October 2016, the [Bio-district of Portugal](#) that will be formally constituted in the Minho Valley, and the participation of INNER network at the [Conference of Food 2030](#) Consumers and Global Food Systems.

To know more

www.tenerifecolaborativa.com/p/home.html

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www.avacanaria.org



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