



EcoFarm sugar mill in Mozambique

EcoFarm has been operating a sugar mill with an innovative circular economy in northern Mozambique since 2012. The flagship project for organic cane sugar gives the structurally weak but fertile region on the Zambezi River a long-term perspective. PRONATEC has been the project’s main sales partner for Europe since 2020 and is providing expertise to support it through the demanding certification process.

The Chemba district is one of the poorest regions of one of the poorest countries in the world. Smallholder farmers account for 99% of the agricultural sector and guaranteeing food security is a challenge. As the **most important employer in the region with over 800 employees and 900 associated smallholder farmers**, EcoFarm makes a major contribution to the economic and social stabilisation of the district. Around 3,800 people benefit indirectly from improved living conditions. What began in 2012 with investments in the region’s only sugar mill and a sustainable irrigation system is now a thriving family business

EcoFarm processes organic sugar cane from its own fields and from its longstanding partner cooperatives. **The sugar mill supports the smallholder farmers with infrastructure, harvest assistance and training in organic farming** and provides them with valuable market access. Through the cooperatives, they get additional land to grow corn or beans. This enables them to cover their own needs or bring in additional income on the local market.

PRONATEC has been the main partner of the project since 2020 and has quickly opened up the European market for organic cane sugar from Mozambique. We contribute our expertise profitably and on an equal footing through long-term trade agreements and support with the certification process.



FAIRTRADE PROJECTS 2023

- **Elephant Friendly:** Beehives as natural deterrent against greedy giants
- **Further development:** Composting and liquid fertiliser plant, worm composter
- **Training programmes:** Organic farming practices

Here’s how EcoFarm supports local smallholder families

- **Higher incomes** thanks to the organic/Fairtrade premium and Fairtrade minimum price
- **Higher yields** thanks to irrigation system, organic fertiliser, vermicompost, training, harvest support
- **An entire region benefits** from valuable community projects

EcoFarm at a glance

- Family-run sugar mill since 2012
 - 800 direct employees, 900 members of the cooperatives (including 393 women) across 12 villages
 - A further 3,800 people benefit indirectly from improved living conditions
 - 600 ha directly cultivated, 600 ha cultivated by cooperatives
 - Fairtrade certification of the cooperatives since 2022
 - Aiming for certification for biodynamic cultivation methods (Demeter)
 - CO₂-optimised transport of the sugar containers by rail to the port of Beira for export
 - Half of the area remains untouched – to protect local biodiversity
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With its fertile soils and good rainfall, the Chemba district offers the ideal conditions for sugar cane cultivation. The fields were set up on the banks of the Zambezi River to support irrigation. It has been shown that **the region does not suffer from a shortage of water, thanks to controlled water utilisation (less than 0.07% of the minimum water quantity).**

EcoFarm's sugar cane cultivation meets high ecological standards. To **protect biodiversity**, EcoFarm leaves more than half its cultivation area untouched. In addition, the majority of EcoFarm's fertiliser comes from its own organic cycle and **since 2024, it has been using its own vermicompost.** The sugar cane press cakes are supplemented with other crops and the manure from the **farm's own grass-fed cattle and composted with the help of African Night Crawlers.** This tropical earthworm species **transforms the compost into valuable worm humus**, from which a type of liquid fertiliser is produced. This is spread on the sugar cane fields via an irrigation system. The **microorganisms it contains have a preventative effect against pests and diseases of all kinds** and improve soil fertility. As the soil produces more plants, it also absorbs more CO₂ from the atmosphere.



Since 2023, EcoFarm's sugar has carried the **"Elephant Friendly" label.** In the past, the sugar cane fields were repeatedly raided by elephants, who destroyed around a fifth of the entire harvest, so in 2023, the sugar mill **set up several beehives.** These act as a **natural deterrent against the greedy giants** without causing them any harm.

Partnership with PRONATEC

- Long-term trade agreements since 2020
- Main distribution partner for Europe
- Expertise & support for the certification process
- Payment of organic and Fairtrade premiums



Our products

- Organic raw cane sugar SYRAMENA® "Special Light"
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