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# MANAGEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY THROUGH ORGANIC AGRICULTURE. CONTRIBUTION OF CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

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## Abstract

The paper examines and argues why environmental issues are matters of security, offering conceptual clarifications upon "environmental security". The range of issues considered as "environmental security" subjects are numerous and diverse and one of these is related to food. Food production, storage, distribution and quality have always been linked to environmental conditions. Food security through organic agriculture contributes to environmental security. Scientists often point to three factors as responsible for environmental state – population, technology, and consumption, but consumption seems to get the least attention. We studied consumer behaviour as source of positive and negative consequences with impact on environmental security. The study case presents the results of a survey targeted on organic food consumers from NW Romania. We found that 73% of subjects believe that organic food helps protecting the environment more than conventional food and 60% believe that animal organic food comes from animals that had better life (than conventional ones). We found a statistically significant difference between people who believe humanity faces natural environment problems which are very threatening and those who do not concerning the strength of beliefs that organic food helps protecting the environment more than conventional food ( $p < 0.05$ ). We observed a direct, strong relationship between the strength of beliefs that organic food has capacity to preserve existence of traditional products and strength of beliefs that organic food has the capacity to protect natural environment [ $r = .506$ ,  $p = .000$ ]. The paper defends the idea that consumers' beliefs such as those related to nature protection or animal welfare through organic food are valuable instruments that help to strengthen the environmental security.

*Keywords:* environmental security, consumer behavior, organic food