

Dear members,

These are crucial times for organic food and farming as a lot of political issues are currently discussed that will set the scene for the future political environment that organic food and farming has to operate in.

First of all, the process of defining the future design of the Common Agriculture Policy within the EU gained full speed. Agriculture Commissioner Ciolos decided to organise a consultation process and a huge stakeholder conference in July where the IFOAM EU Group participated with a strong delegation. The Commission raised with the started stakeholder consultation huge expectations and is now in duty to take comments receive properly into account. The IFOAM EU Group will continue to follow the process closely.

Further, the European Union discusses its strategy post 2010 to halt the loss of biodiversity and it seems that within the strategy agriculture and food production will be one of the sub-targets. Consequently, the IFOAM EU Group is actively involved in the process providing input in the consultation process and request the EU to place organic prominently in its future strategy as it is the only defined production system at EU level providing clear benefits for biodiversity protection. The Belgium EU Presidency will organise a conference on this topic in September.

On the other hand the European Commission moved on regarding the issue of GMOs. It published non binding coexistence guidelines of GM crops with conventional and/or organic crops and a proposal to give member states more possibilities to ban GMOs. Whilst the IFOAM EU Group welcomes the possibility to increase the possibility for member states to ban GMOs it highlights that the situation is not solved at all, in particular for countries that decide to grow GMOs and where a GM-free production is under threat. The EU has to ensure binding rules to protect GM-free production in all member states in the EU.

The IFOAM EU Group made good progress in its approach to the new European Commission. In July, it met with Commissioner Dalli, responsible for Health and Consumer Policy and Commissioner Ciolos, responsible for Agriculture and Rural development. In future, these contacts will be intensified.

After an August summer break the IFOAM EU Group will be there again for you and organic food and farming in Europe.



/Marco Schluter, Director/



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## 1. Activities of the IFOAM EU Group

### 1.1 Policy

#### ► IFOAM EU meets Agriculture Commissioner Ciolos

An IFOAM EU Group's delegation met on July 26 with the Agriculture Commissioner Dacian Ciolos. IFOAM EU used the opportunity to present the organisation and to discuss important issues at stake.

The delegation which included the Director, the President and members of the board of IFOAM EU followed up on the European Commission's CAP conference from July 19-20 in Brussels and underlined that organic production deserves to play an important role in the future shape of the CAP.

The IFOAM EU Group underlined that support for sustainable system approaches such as organic farming under all axes/pillars should be provided (find the latest IFOAM EU position paper on CAP [here](#)).

IFOAM EU also handed over to Commissioner Ciolos its new strategy paper [Shaping Agriculture and Food Systems to Future Challenges](#) outlining the strategic role of organic food and farming. In this paper the IFOAM EU developed recommendation for the EU institutions how to implement a coherent political framework to further develop organic food and farming in Europe.



July 26 at the premises of Agriculture Commissioner Ciolos: from left to right Alessandro Triantafyllidis, member of the board of IFOAM EU Group, Thomas Fertl, Vice President, Marco Schluter and Christopher Stopes, Director and President of IFOAM EU Group, Dacian Ciolos, EU Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development, Dorota Metera, member of the board of IFOAM EU.

► **IFOAM EU published organic strategy paper**



The IFOAM EU Group published its paper “[Shaping Agriculture and Food Systems to Future Challenges](#)”. It outlines the strategic role, organic food and farming could play and how the EU can profit from organic systems to achieve multiple policy goals. As a leading sustainable food system, organic farming offers a ‘learning camp for sustainability’ - generating knowledge, technologies and practices which are relevant for other food production systems too. The strategic role of organic production goes far beyond the benefits provided by the organic food system itself.

The paper further outlines a coherent policy framework to support the organic sector with concrete actions. It is available [in English and Hungarian, and the Executive summaries in French/Spanish](#).

► **IFOAM EU takes part in Commissions Stakeholder Conference on CAP post-2013; public consultation report published**



CAP Stakeholder Conference: The Agriculture Commissioner Dacian Cioloș (in the center) expressed will to maintain the two-pillar architecture of CAP, but not to insist on maintaining the current schemes.

The EU Commission held a conference on 19 and 20 July to listen to stakeholders and civil society representatives and to further discuss the results of the public online consultation on the CAP. A diversity of stakeholders was present and contributions covered a broad range of opinions.

Urs Niggli, Director of FibL Switzerland and member of the IFOAM EU Group delegation, spoke in the workshop “Environment and provision of public goods by agriculture” about the needs to address environmental challenges in the new CAP and the role organic farming may play in this respect. Arie van den Brand, President of the Group de Bruges, stressed that “Organic is our best laboratory for sustaining conventional agriculture” in the workshop “The future role of the CAP in promoting the quality and diversity of food supply”. Michael Dower presented a statement of principles prepared by the [ARC2020](#) platform (where the IFOAM EU Group is member), calling for a paradigm shift in agriculture.

In his conclusions, the Agriculture Commissioner Cioloș expressed his will to maintain the two-pillar architecture, but not to insist on maintaining the current

schemes. He wants to make the 1<sup>st</sup> pillar an instrument to meet the challenges that are common to all EU agriculture – but also wants to see quantifiable and yearly visible results. The 2<sup>nd</sup> pillar should serve the development of the sector, while also enhancing environmental sustainability. Commissioner Ciolos underlined that sustainable resource management is not only an environmental, but also a socio-economic challenge (his speech can be found [here](#)).

Whereas good approaches came out of the conference, it is now crucial to push for a serious implementation of these ideas, by going for a real reform instead of further minimal modulation; by mainstreaming sustainability in the CAP – also in the first pillar if it is maintained – and by improving support for sustainable system approaches such as organic farming under all axes; at the same time fairness must be put into practice on European and international level.

Find more information at: [IFOAM EU Group – CAP webpage](#), [Commission webpage – CAP post-2010 conference](#) and [www.arc2020.eu](http://www.arc2020.eu)

The stakeholder conference comes after the Commission's public consultation on the CAP post-2013 was closed and its [summary report](#) published. From an 'organic point of view' it is certainly interesting that many stakeholders of the European Network for Rural Development (ENRD) call for increased support for organic farming. Also amongst the general public and the think tanks there were many calls to encourage sustainable food production and organic farming. Reference to regional occurrence in favour of organic farming is made on page 25: *Arguments in favour of organic farming were evenly spread across EU countries except for Austria and Germany where a bundle of similar contributions towards the end of the debate period indicated concerted action on this issue. Support for organic farming was fairly frequently expressed by respondents in the new member states.*

#### ► **GMO-free Regions Conference on 16-18 of September**



An upcoming event, co-organised by the IFOAM EU Group, is the GMO-free Regions Conference on 16-18 of September. The GMO-free Regions Conference 2010 is going to take place in Brussels and Ghent. Starting with discussions between EU politicians, the European Commissioner in charge of GMO John Dalli, stakeholders and practitioners – a discussion scheduled for 16 of July in the European Parliament in Brussels, the two following days in Ghent give space for presentations and in-depth discussions in workshops. Issues such as the upcoming political battles for GMO-free seed and feed, the costs of co-existence, the establishment of GMO-free regions and also the role of the new Common Agricultural Policy in this regard will be debated. Programme and registration at: [www.gmo-free-regions.org](http://www.gmo-free-regions.org)

To spice up debates, there is a rather pro-GMO event taking place the days before in Brussels and Ghent, organised by the Belgian EU presidency: [Knowledge Based Bio-Economy towards 2020](#).

► **Commission proposals on GMO cultivation**

On 13 of July The Commission published a Communication, a Recommendation for Guidelines and a Proposal for the modification of the Directive for the Deliberate Release of GMO into the Environment to give member states more possibilities to ban GMOs. You can find these documents as well as some background information on the [Commission's biotechnology page](#).

The IFOAM EU Group takes a critical stand towards these proposals. Whereas the concrete content may bring some improvements for those member states that ban GMOs, the proposals fail to guarantee the European GMO-free food and feed sector the right to stay GMO-free in those countries where GMOs are and will be grown. The IFOAM EU Group urged in a meeting with the Health and Consumer Commissioner John Dalli for more protection for the GM-free sector and a EU wide binding coexistence legislation with obligatory minimum standards. The IFOAM EU Group also calls on member states to reject all attempts to loosen GMO approvals in the future.

More at: [PR – IFOAM EU – GMO Nationalisation, 13/07/2010](#) and [PR – IFOAM EU – GMO Nationalisation Proposals, 22/06/2010](#)

► **Novel food – 2<sup>nd</sup> reading of the European Parliament**

The members of the European Parliament maintained their position with the 2nd Reading vote on the revision of the Novel Foods Regulation on 7 of July; the MEPs request a ban on food products derived from cloned animals, an exclusion of food from cloned animals and their offspring from the scope of the Novel Foods Regulation and adoption of specific legislation for those issues.



July 1, IFOAM EU Group meets with the EU Commissioner for Health and Consumer Protection John Dalli. From left to right: Bavo van Idsert, Marco Schluter – Vice President and Director of IFOAM EU Group, John Dalli, EU Health and Consumer Commissioner, Christopher Stopes and Thomas Dosch – President and Vice President of IFOAM EU Group.

The MEPs also call for a risk assessment of foods produced using nano-technology, ask for specific labelling of nano-ingredients and a ban on such ingredients until nano-technology is proven as safe. An amendment calling for the compulsory labelling of food products derived from animals raised on GMO feed was however rejected.

If the Council rejects the 2nd reading position of the Parliament, which is likely to be case, a conciliation procedure is expected to be started in Autumn.

Earlier this year IFOAM EU Group communicated its position through a [Letter on the novel food \(nanotechnology, cloning, GMO\)](#).

### ► **Biodiversity Strategy post-2010**

The EU is currently defining its post-2010 strategy to halt the loss of biodiversity. The EU Commission will open an online consultation very soon for an eight-week period. The IFOAM EU Group is committed to being actively involved in the process, and has already formulated its [initial input](#) in a first stakeholder consultation. One further milestone will be the Belgium EU Presidency [conference "Biodiversity post-2010 - biodiversity in a changing world"](#). The IFOAM EU Group will actively participate in it; further to that it is planning to organise its own Biodiversity Conference on 18 of November 2010 in cooperation with Jo Leinen, Chair of the Environmental Committee in the European Parliament. It will release at this occasion its best practices manual.

More: [IFOAM EU – biodiversity webpage](#)

## **1.2 Organic Regulation 834/07 and Implementing Rules**

### ► **Greenhouse production**

The IFOAM EU Greenhouse Task Force has been working on formulating a position on detailed rules for greenhouse production throughout 2010 to amend the Implementing Rules of 889/2008. On June 22 and 23 the task force met in Rome during the [4th European Organic Congress](#). After a visit to a biodynamic greenhouse south of Rome, it continued the discussions on the preparation of a position paper. The discussions will continue after the summer break, with the aim to finalise the paper at the November board meeting of IFOAM EU Group.

### ► **Letter on rosemary, ion exchange and glycerol**

The IFOAM EU Group sent on 22 of July a [Letter on rosemary extract, ion exchange and glycerol \(organic certification of additives, restricted use of organic additives\)](#) to Mr. Jean-François Hulot, Head of Organic Farming Unit, DG AGRI, European Commission.

**► Organic logo award ceremony**

On 19 of July, the designer of the EU organic logo was given his award and the organic logo was presented by Commissioner Dacian Cioloş and Deputy Director General Loretta Dormal Marino. The award ceremony was part of a 2-day conference on the future CAP and a 'European Rural Fair' organised in Brussels by the European Commission and the Belgian Presidency.

The logo is in force since 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2010 after a long process including a withdrawal of the previous design for logo and an open competition for a new design. IFOAM EU Group has commented or explained

questions around the logo with numerous positions and publications, the latest of which is [„10 Questions and Answers to the new organic production logo of the European Union”](#).



The Director of IFOAM EU Marco Schluter and Deputy Director General Loretta Dormal Marino.

**► The organic sector is generally selling itself at less than fair value' – interview with the designer of the new EU logo for organic produce**

Dusan Milenkovic, 31, is the winner of the EU-wide competition in the creation process for a new EU logo for organic produce. 63% of the 130.000 voters chose for his 'euro-leaf'. In an interview with IFOAM EU he tells about the creation process of the logo, his connection to the organic sector and its recommendations for the public presentation of the organic movement. You can find the whole interview at [www..ifoam-eu.org](http://www..ifoam-eu.org).

**► Poultry production**

The IFOAM EU Group poultry experts have been working on developing a position paper on poultry production and rearing. The last undecided points were up for a consultation among the board members in June, and in July the Executive Board of the IFOAM EU Group decided on the final scope of the paper, which will be sent to the European Commission, DG Agriculture, in the beginning of August and will be made available on the IFOAM EU Group's [webpage](#).

**► Cosmetics**

Private standards and markets for organic cosmetics and personal care products are developing rapidly. Within the past months the IFOAM EU Group met with two of

the major players on European standards for organic and natural personal care - COSMOS and NaTrue - to discuss future cooperation. Both have recently set up or revised standards for organic personal care products and have established a presence in Brussels.

### 1.3 TP Organics

#### ► Stakeholder Forum

On 12 of July the TP Organics held its Stakeholder Forum bringing together SMEs, civil society organisations, researchers, representatives of public institutions, and other stakeholders from all over Europe. The aim of the forum was to discuss organic research in the context of EU Research Framework Programmes, SME involvement in research, high priority topics in organic food and farming, and the development of the Implementation Action Plan for Organic Food and Farming.

In her presentation “Organic Research Topics in EU Research Framework Programmes” Cristina Micheloni (AIAB) emphasised the need for more research in organic food and farming, as organic farming provides not only high quality food, but also delivers many public goods such as clean water and air, biodiversity, and healthy soil. Elke Denys (Bioforum) presented the results of a study made among organic processors in Belgium, carried out by BioForum. The study confirms the difficulties of SMEs’ involvement in research and the lack of financing. Susanne Padel (TP Organics Scientific Coordinator) introduced the upcoming work of TP Organics. Otto Schmid (FiBL) presented priority research topics in organic food and farming for the coming years. The Stakeholder Forum provided fruitful discussions, the outcome of which will be taken into account by TP Organics for developing the Implementation Action Plan.



TP Organics’ Stakeholder Forum, July 12. The forum provided opportunity for discussions, the outcome of which will be used for the development of Implementation Action Plan for Organic Food and Farming.

▶ **TP Organics opens consultation on research priorities in FP7**

TP Organics is planning to submit to DG Research 10 to 12 high priority topics for consideration within the 2012 Work Programme of the 7<sup>th</sup> Research Framework Programme. The consultation will run from July 30 to September 12 on the TP Organics website ([www.tporganics.eu](http://www.tporganics.eu)). You are invited to take part in the consultation and influence the European research topics for organic food and farming.

## **2. Decisions, links, reports, announcements concerning organic farming**


▶ **Standing Committee on Organic Farming** - short reports from the meetings of SCOF:

- [92<sup>nd</sup> meeting on 16-17/06/2010](#)
- [91<sup>st</sup> meeting on 18/08/2010](#)
- [90<sup>th</sup> meeting on 26/04/2010](#)

▶ The European Commission, DG Agriculture and Rural Development, has published the report: [\*\*An analysis of the EU organic sector\*\*](#)

### 3. Calendar of events and other news

#### 3.1 Calendar of events

Date (2010)	Event
August 22-27	<a href="#"><u>Symposium of the 28th International Horticulture Congress on Organic Horticulture: Productivity and Sustainability</u></a> , Lisbon/Portugal
 <p>Student meeting 2010 August 23-29 <b>TURKEY</b></p>	<p>IFOAM EU is patron</p> <p><a href="#"><u>ENOAS - "Sowing the Seeds of Sustainability in the Land of Diversity"</u></a> - Students' meeting organised by the European Network of Organic Agriculture Students in cooperation with Association Bugday, Istanbul - Küçukkuyu - Canakkale – Istanbul/Turkey</p>
September 3-6	<a href="#"><u>International Conference in Landscape Ecology</u></a> , Brno/Czech Republic
September 8-9	<a href="#"><u>Biodiversity post-2010 – biodiversity in a changing world</u></a> – conference under the Belgian EU Presidency, Ghent/Belgium
September 9-12	<a href="#"><u>SANA 2010 - 22nd International Exhibition of Natural Products</u></a> , Bologna/Italy
September 16-17	<a href="#"><u>OrganicEdunet conference</u></a> , Budapest/Hungary
September 16-18	<a href="#"><u>GMO free regions conference</u></a> Brussels and Ghent/Belgium
September 17-18	<a href="#"><u>3rd International conference on the Organic Sector development in Central/Eastern European and Central Asian countries</u></a> , Astana/Kazakhstan
September 23-24	<a href="#"><u>Soil, Climate Change and Biodiversity – Where do we stand?</u></a> – DG Environment and Joint Research Center conference on soil and its links to biodiversity and climate change, Brussels/Belgium
October 1-2	<a href="#"><u>First International Conference on Animal Welfare Education</u></a> , organised by the EU Commission and the Belgian Presidency of the EU, Brussels/Belgium See also website on animal welfare education: <a href="http://www.animalwelfare-education.eu"><u>www.animalwelfare-education.eu</u></a>

### 3.2 Job vacancies

The European Environmental Bureau (EEB) is now recruiting a Policy Officer to work on the dossiers of biodiversity, water and soil. The position involves facilitation and co-ordination of the EEB's experts work, networking with EEB-members and partners to promote activities to influence EU decision-making, co-ordinating the working on water, on biodiversity and on soil protection, preparing and communicating EEB positions on relevant issues and more. Interested candidates can check for details the [EEB website](#) and/or e-mail [personnel@eeb.org](mailto:personnel@eeb.org). Applications will be accepted by 6 September 2010.

### 3.3 Other news

#### ► **Public consultation: definition of "nanomaterial"**

The Commission's independent Scientific Committee for Emerging and Newly Identified Health Risks (SCENIHR) launched a public consultation on a pre-consultation opinion on the scientific basis for the definition of "nanomaterial". All interested parties are invited to submit their comments by 15 September 2010 on the scientific basis and conclusions proposed by the SCENIHR. With the increasing use of nanotechnology, there is a need for a common basis to define the term "nanomaterial" in different EU legislative areas. A key issue addressed in the opinion is the arbitrary nature of the nanoscale which is currently commonly assumed to range from 1 to 100 nanometres. SCENIHR points to the absence of a scientific basis for the scale's upper limit of 100 nanometres.

*Further details on the consultation can be found [here](#).*

#### ► **BioBio: FP7 project sets indicators for biodiversity in organic and low-input farming**



Organic and low-input farming systems are important to farmland biodiversity, but a generic indicator system to assess these benefits is still lacking. BIOBIO is a European FP7 Project, which will produce a set of guidelines for the implementation of biodiversity indicators focussing on the European level – and even beyond. The BIOBIO project is designed to reach the following goals: 1) Conceptualization of criteria for a scientifically-based selection of biodiversity indicators for organic/low-input farming systems; 2) Assessment and validation of a set of candidate biodiversity indicators in representative case studies; 3) Production of a handbook with factsheets for validated indicators and a sampling design for biodiversity monitoring in organic and low-input farming systems across Europe.

The work on the project started last year with a careful literature review to establish the state of the art of indicator development for genetic, species, habitat

and farm management indicators related to farming systems. 2010 is the year devoted to extensive data gathering through case studies. Case study regions include Pannonian, Alpine, Boreal, Atlantic and Mediterranean grassland systems (both organic and/or low-input), rain fed organic farms under temperate and Mediterranean conditions, mixed organic farming, organic special crops and low-input tree/agro-forestry systems. In addition representative case studies are situated in Uganda, Ukraine and Tunisia. If IFOAM/IFOAM EU members wish to be involved, they can do so by bringing proposals for case studies to the project coordinators. For this and to subscribe to the BioBio newsletter, please email [marion.bogers@wur.nl](mailto:marion.bogers@wur.nl) and/or check the project website [www.biobio-indicator.org](http://www.biobio-indicator.org).

► **EFSA report on pesticide residues:** Some 3.5% of food samples on the EU market analysed by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) exceeded the legal Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) in 2008 – representing a 0.7% reduction on the previous year, according to the [2nd annual report on pesticide residues in food, published by EFSA](#) in July. Since Sept 1 2008, MRLs for all active substances used in plant protection products that have the potential to enter the food chain have been harmonised at EU level. Analysing more than 70 000 samples of nearly 200 different types of food, the 162-page report shows that the number of food samples complying with MRLs is on the increase and the number of samples entirely free of pesticide residues also reached a high of 62.1% in 2008 – compared to the figure of 52.7 - 58% for the years 2005-2007. In terms of imports from outside the EU, the report notes that they were found to exceed MRL levels in many more cases – 7.6% (from outside EU) as opposed to 2.4% (EU products).

► **Birdlife International report: CAP spending intensity does not reflect any level of nature conservation** and does not specifically support High Nature Value (HNV) farms, according to a *Birdlife International* report published in the beginning of July. The 50-page report entitled '[Reality Check - Are Common Agricultural Policy subsidies paying for environmental quality?](#)' concludes that significant EU funds are channeled to farms that are engaged in unsustainable environmental practices and deliver "virtually no public goods". The report notes that the historic reference of payment – in most 'old' Member States – continues to produce a "perverse link between subsidy intensity and poor environmental performance", whilst the flat-rate payment system – in most 'new' Member States - fails to adequately differentiate between 'best' and 'worst' farm practices.

► The European Food Sustainable Consumption and Production Round Table published its [Guiding Principles on 'The Voluntary environmental assessment](#) and communication of environmental information along the food chain, including to consumers'.

► **Friends of the Earth Europe makes proposals on measuring Europe's resource use:** In June FoEE organised a conference in the European Parliament on 'Measuring Europe's Resource Use: A vital tool in creating a resource efficient EU', hosted by the MEPs Sirpa Pietikainen and Chris Davies. A full write-up of this event,

including the presentations, is now available on the [Friends of the Earth Europe web site](#).

Resource use and resource efficiency are now high on the European political agenda, with the Environment Commissioner Janez Potočnik recently announcing that he intends to focus on resource efficiency in 2011, including the publication of a resource efficiency 'roadmap'. The proposals of FoEE on measuring Europe's resource use are meant to be a key tool in such a road map.

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**This newsletter exists to inform IFOAM members about the work of the IFOAM EU Group and its liaison and coordination office in Brussels. The IFOAM EU Group is the European Regional Group of the worldwide umbrella organisation IFOAM and is responsible for all matters related to organic farming with a Europe-wide scope. Information IFOAM EU Group:**

<http://www.ifoam-eu.org>

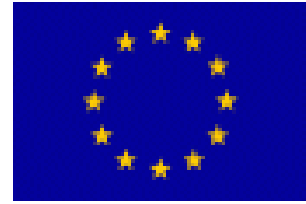
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***The IFOAM EU Group acknowledges the financial support of the European Community, DG Environment. The sole responsibility lies with the IFOAM EU Group and the Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided by IFOAM EU Group.***



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