

Dear members and friends,

Our work to have a proper and suitable regulation from 1st of January 2009 is always very intense with the ongoing discussion on the Implementing Rules of the new regulation. After the Organic Congress in December 2007 the visibility and the reputation of the IFOAM EU Group is even increased and so is the availability of the Commission to meet with us and discuss the new Rules.

We will have new areas in the scope of the regulation - aquaculture and wine. These will be regulated after 2009 and IFOAM EU Group is active on this as well, having set up a working group on aquaculture and being involved as a partner in the EU-funded research project ORWINE. The project will provide the technical information to the Commission for political and regulatory decisions, which are to (finally) secure recognised rules for the production of "organic wine".

The Group also presented to the EU Commission a position paper for the CAP (Common Agricultural Policy) health check, which requires the Commission to have more courage and decisiveness in recognising organic farming as the model for future sustainable farming in Europe, able to perform better than the conventional farming in respect to climate change.

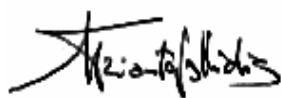
In synthesis we are asking for:

- ❖ Obligatory modulation (up to 20 % by 2013) of the first pillar budget to the second pillar (rural development).
- ❖ Recognition of OF as a model of sustainable farming in the second pillar, also in relation to climate change mitigation.
- ❖ Strengthening Organic Farming as a strategic policy goal for the CAP in the first pillar.

A lot to do is ahead of us, but in three months time we will have the opportunity to meet, discuss but also enjoy good organic food and wine during the IFOAM General Assembly in Italy.

We are looking forward to meet and host you in Modena this June.

With best regards,



Alessandro Triantafyllidis
/Vice-President, IFOAM EU Group/



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1. Activities of the IFOAM EU Group

1.1 IFOAM EU in public

► IFOAM EU Group seminar in Bulgaria

The next seminar of the IFOAM EU Group will take place in Plovdiv, Bulgaria, from April 3 to 4, 2008 with an additional optional excursion to organic farmers and processors.

The topic of the seminar is 'The future of Organic Food and Farming in the context of the European Organic Action Plan and the CAP Health Check'. The seminar is jointly organised by the IFOAM EU Group and Agrolink and is co-financed by the European Community, Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development. Representatives of the Bulgarian Ministry of Agriculture, the Agricultural University in Plovdiv and Bulgarian stakeholders will join the seminar and the public presentation.

► IFOAM EU presentation at BioFach

IFOAM EU Group was represented through its vice president at the IFOAM information bazaar and with its staff members - at the IFOAM booth. Further to that, the Group organised different workshops to inform about its work in Brussels. The most important events was the workshop on the new organic regulation with Commission representatives from DG Agriculture and DG Fish who gave an update on the regulation work and answered questions related to the practical implementation of the new rules.

The presentation can be downloaded [here](#).

1.2 The new Organic Regulation – IFOAM EU Group work on the Implementing Rules

► Recent input on the Implementing Rules

The IFOAM EU Group provided further input in the ongoing stakeholder consultation on the New Implementing Rules on Organic Farming (NIROF), issued by the European Commission in January this year. The Group submitted its [comments](#) and a [letter](#) stating IFOAM EU's priority problem areas with regards to the Implementing Rules. This was followed, on March 4th, by a whole-day meeting between IFOAM EU and Unit F5 Organic Farming of the Commission.

The Commission is currently reviewing the stakeholder and member state comments. The next version of the Implementing Rules will be put forward for discussion at the next SCOF (Standing Committee on Organic Farming)

meeting on April 15 and 16. The aim of the Commission is to have a vote on the final version of the Implementing Rules at the SCOF meeting on May 27 and 28. The Commission has expressed however that it cannot change the current version of the Rules radically.

► **Implementing rules - Aquaculture**

The newly formed Aquaculture Expert Group of the IFOAM EU is in the process of preparation of its position on the Implementing Rules in their part on aquaculture. A Commission working document in this area is expected from DG Fish by April 2008.

► **New organic logo**

The Commission developed a new logo which was then approved by SCOF. However, the property rights of the new logo need to be clarified as the new logo might be too similar to the organic logo of the German discount supermarket ALDI. This has caused a delay in the planned publication of the logo and it is now not even certain how the final logo will look like. The IFOAM EU Group urged the Commission to speed up the effecting of a new logo: it is important for the organic operators to clear the situation soon as the industry has to print new packages for its products. In the meantime there was a statement in public on the part of the Commission that there will be an interim period where old packages can be used.

1.3 Policy

► **IFOAM EU joins an action against cloning of animals for food**

IFOAM EU Group and 11 other organisations sent an open [letter](#) addressed to the EU Commission President Barroso in the beginning of March. The letter calls on the Commission and the EU Member States to introduce a ban on the cloning of animals for food production, and on the import and sale of imported food products from cloned animals and their offspring. The text is provided [here](#).

► **Non GM seed threshold**


DG Environment of the European Commission has implemented an impact assessment on the question how to set up a labelling threshold for non GM seed. Currently, the suggestion is in discussion within the different services of the Commission. The IFOAM EU Group forwarded again the arguments for setting the labelling threshold at the detection limit. It is expected that more intensive political discussion will follow throughout the year.

1.4 Research

► Organic research vision 2025


The IFOAM EU Group and ISOFAR initiated a process for drawing up a vision for innovative research activities for organic agriculture and food systems. After consulting on the subsequent drafts of the 'vision paper' over the last 9 months, an internal steering group will work out by the end of March and present for consultation a final draft, giving again to the interested stakeholders an opportunity to express opinions about the research priorities in organic farming.

You can see and download [presentation](#) about the vision and the [last vision draft](#) from the IFOAM EU website.

►  : The organic wine project ORWINE presented its latest results in a workshop during BioFach 2008 which focused on the question: 'European rules for organic wine – how to ensure harmonisation and regional flexibility?'.
The logo for ORWINE features the word 'ORWINE' in a stylized, serif font. The 'O' is large and contains a smaller 'R' and 'W' inside it.

The session was moderated by Otto Schmid, FIBL, and consisted of the following contributions: Oenological research and quality wines (Doris Rauhut, SRI Geisenheim; Piergiorgio Comuzzo, Udine University), stakeholder requests and proposals for the EU regulation on organic wine-making (Uwe Hofmann, Ecovin; Cristina Micheloni, AIAB) and market studies on organic wine (Monique Jonis, ITAB). The workshop was attended by about 40 participants, among them Jean-Francois Hulot, Head of Unit of Organic Farming of DG Agriculture and Maria Fladl, policy officer in the Organic Farming unit of DG Agriculture. You can find all presentations of the workshop at www.orwine.org.

EPAC: the second European Project Advisory Committee (EPAC) meeting within the ORWINE project will take place in Venezia on May 26 and 27, 2008. Its purpose is to discuss the comments and the opinions gathered from stakeholders and to produce a draft document to be presented to the EU Commission, which plans to work on the Organic Wine Regulation before the end of 2008. Interested participants in the EPAC can still send their letter of candidature to epac@orwine.org

►  **The EU Project - ORGAP** - is currently searching, in close cooperation with the IFOAM EU Group and other project partners, to collect information about the National Organic Action Plans in the different Members States. Provisional results are already internally available. The final results will be presented in the next ORGAP News Issue (No 5th), due to be published in end-March. This issue will be devoted to the last progress made in the project and important updates about the current situation with the
The logo for ORGANIC ACTION PLAN features the words 'ORGANIC ACTION PLAN' in a green, sans-serif font. 'ORGANIC' is on the top line, 'ACTION' is on the middle line, and 'PLAN' is on the bottom line.

National Organic Actions Plans in the EU. It will be available at the [ORGAP website](#) soon.

1.5 IFOAM EU Group will patron the Organic Marketing Forum'08



The IFOAM EU Group is happy to announce that it agreed with the organiser EkoConnect to be patron of the 3rd International Meeting on Processing and Marketing of Organic Food – or Organic Marketing Forum 2008 - in Warsaw on 26 and 27 of May.

Being a big success in 2006 and 2007, the Forum will be held for a third time now to gather European business people, experts in marketing and organic production and decision-makers. The organisers from EkoConnect – the International Centre for Organic Agriculture of Central and Eastern Europe, expect around 350 participants from all over Europe. The IFOAM EU Group hopes to strengthen the organic development between East and West Europe and the Forum is an excellent opportunity in this regard.

The Marketing Organic will be a place for exchange of business ideas and contacts between companies which seek further development in their regional markets as well as companies and entrepreneurs interested in a closer cooperation between East and West Europe. The [programme](#) and the designated [website](#) will give you more detailed information. You can also request information from Ms. Agnieszka Bolek (phone: +49 351 456 8039).

Find more at: <http://www.organic-marketing-forum.org>

1.6 IFOAM EU Group/office in Brussels & internal structure

► IFOAM EU Group General Assembly 2009

The IFOAM EU Group will hold its General Assembly next year one day before the start of BioFach in Nuremberg on February 18, 2009. All IFOAM members in the EU are asked to reserve this day already in their agenda.

► **Current members of the IFOAM EU Brussels office staff:** Monika Styczek (PL), European Volunteer Service-funded trainee, will work in the office until mid-June. Until September will stay our other EVS trainee, Andrzej Szeremeta (PL). The office is expecting in April a new trainee – Michaela Senek

from Sweden. Camilla Mikkelsen (DK) and the three permanent staff members make up the rest of the staff.

► **IFOAM Head Office – new appointment:** Anita Deppe joined the IFOAM Head Office in Bonn at the beginning of March 2008 in the capacity of Senior Manager of Outreach. Her experiences in public relations, advocacy of rural development & food security projects as well as management of events contributes to a promising start as head of the expanding Outreach Department of IFOAM.

2. Decisions/reports concerning organic farming

Standing committee on Organic Farming - Short reports of the meetings of the Standing Committee on Organic Farming:

- 71st meeting on [16-17/01/2008](#)
- 72nd meeting on [26-27/02/2008](#)
- 70th meeting on [27/11/2007](#)

3. Calendar of Events/Other news

3.1 Calendar

Time (2008)	Event
March 27	Organic Business in the CEE - International Conference on Organic Food Marketing and Sales, Prague/Czeck Republic http://www.organic-europe.net/events/2008-03-27-biosummit.doc
April 10-12	International conference on the organic sector development in Eastern European and Central Asian countries, Kyiv/Ukraine http://www.organic-services.com/deutsch/news/index_news_dt.htm
April 17-18	International scientific conference "Organic agriculture and climate change: the contribution of organic agriculture", Lempdes/France www.abiodoc.com , www.enitac.fr
April 22-23	International Forum on Global Aspects of Farm Animal Welfare, Brussels/Belgium www.animalwelfareandtrade.com
May 12-16	Planet Diversity – World Congress on the Future of Food

	and Agriculture, Bonn/Germany http://www.planet-diversity.org
May 26-27 	Organic Marketing Forum 2008, Warsaw/Poland http://www.organic-marketing-forum.org/index.php?lang=english
June 16-20	The 16th IFOAM Organic World Congress, Modena/Italy http://www.ifoam.org/events/ifoam_conferences/owc/Organic_World_Congress.html *
September 3-5	Bioacademy 2008 – 8 th European Summer Academy on Organic Farming, Lednice/Czech Republic http://www.pro-bio.cz/bioak/info.php?lan=eng <i>Under the patronage of the IFOAM EU Group.</i>

* **The Organic World Congress 2008**, organised by IFOAM now for a 16th time, will take place from June 16 to 24th in Modena/Italy. The Congress, organised every three years, is the most important organic agriculture event in the world. In 2008, it will be about the Principles of Organic Agriculture: ecology, fairness, care and health.

[Registration](#) for the event begun in February and is available online through the IFOAM website where you can also find an overview of the [congress programme](#). The supporting [cultural programme](#) offers you many possibilities for leisure time and cultural enrichment. The link to the IFOAM [General Assembly](#), which will take place on June 22-24, is an important link for the IFOAM members. The [Programme for Sponsored Participation](#) allows participation of representatives of organic movements from developing countries – it will be closed on 24th of March. The congress website also gives information about the congress as a [Sustainable Event](#) and about the existing [Sponsorship opportunities](#).

3.2 Other news

► **Biodiversity under threat:** An EU framework for Invasive Alien Species (IAS) is to be adopted by the end of the year, the European Commission has announced. This coincides with the launch of a web-based consultation to help policy makers decide how best to address the issue at EU level. Species from abroad such as knotweed, muskrats, Zebra mussels & giant hogweed play havoc with the natural flora & fauna of an area, cause considerable environmental damage & economic losses, and are one of the major threats to biodiversity, officials state.

See: <http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ipm/forms/dispatch?form=Invasive>



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International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements – EU Regional Group

► The Fair Trade Advocacy Office in Brussels (our 'office neighbors' as IFOAM EU is sharing working space with FTAO in its office on rue du Commerce) has announced a vacancy for a Fair Trade Advocacy Coordinator available from June 2008. Full details are provided in the [Job description](#).

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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Please send any comments on the newsletter to info@ifoam-eu.org. For further information contact your national board member or the office in Brussels.

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