

MEPs call for strong 2nd Pillar – but remain vague on sustainability

Brussels, 23/06/2011 – The European Parliament has today adopted a resolution on the Common Agricultural Policy 2020-2014, the so called “Deß report”, named after the draftsman Albert Deß. The IFOAM EU Groupⁱ welcomes the fact that the European Parliament made a clear statement for adequate funding of the 2nd Pillar in the next financial planning period.

“A strong 2nd pillar is of utmost importance to shape agriculture and rural areas to meet future challenges”, comments Marco Schlüter, Director of the IFOAM EU Group, on the vote. “The members of the European Parliament already showed in the debate that they are aware of the need for adequate funding of the 2nd Pillar is needed in order to meet the challenges the rural areas are facing. We urge the Commission and the Council to follow the Parliament in its commitment to create a strong rural development policy to improve the viability of rural economies and rural societies, to maintain and restore bio-diverse landscapes. The EU needs to further develop and establish food and farming systems with a comprehensive approach towards sustainability. In this respect organic farming can be seen as an advanced and European-wide certified model that can meet this commitmentⁱⁱ.”

“Whereas we compliment MEPs for their clear commitment to an adequately financed 2nd Pillar, we still do not see enough commitment to channel spending towards a more sustainable model across both Pillars”, criticises Antje Kölling, Policy coordinator IFOAM EU Group. “While MEPs generally agree that challenges such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and migration to the cities threaten the future of our food systems and rural areas, there is still not the political will to significantly shift CAP spending towards farm practices that improve the resilience of our food systems to climate change and deliver significant improvements on animal welfare and biodiversity protection. **We call on MEPs to be more courageous in the next roundⁱⁱⁱ of the CAP decision process in seeking to meet our environmental and social challenges.** European citizens will demand that public money is spent on a sustainable future!”

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NOTES:

The IFOAM EU Group calls for a fundamental reform of the CAP. The currently predominant agricultural practices continue to cause environmental harm, which places a considerable economic burden on society, whereas sustainable farming practices are neither supported consequently, nor remunerated for the public goods they deliver. This market distortion has to be ended by setting an appropriate political framework aiming at redefined CAP objectives: Sustainability must be mainstreamed in the new CAP. Organic farming as comprehensive approach to meet sustainability challenges, the only one with an EU-wide regulated certification system in place, offers a model for a system of best practices. Organic farming deserves particular consideration under all measures and axes: It should be the leading measure of the Agri-Environmental measures and a bonus for organic farming should be foreseen in all the other axes.

Source: IFOAM EU position paper (2010): CAP post 2013 - Smart change or business as usual? http://www.ifoam-eu.org/positions/Papers/pdf/Position_IFOAMEU_CAP_final_7.05.2010.pdf

IFOAM EU Group in Alliances – Civil society organisations for a fundamental change in the CAP:

Proposal for a new EU Common Agricultural Policy, Common position paper Birdlife, EEB, EFNCP, WWF and IFOAM EU Group, 2009, http://www.ifoam-eu.org/positions/publications/pdf/Proposal_for_a_new_common_agricultural_policy_FINAL_03.2010.pdf

The Agricultural and Rural Convention (ARC) is a civil society platform that agreed "A Communication from Civil Society to the European Union Institutions on the future Agricultural and Rural Policy" in November 2010; or more information: www.arc2020.eu

ⁱ The **IFOAM EU Group** represents more than 300 member organisations of IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements) in the EU-27, the EU accession countries and EFTA. Member organisations include: consumer, farmer and processor associations; research, education and advisory organisations; certification bodies and commercial organic companies.

ⁱⁱ Organic food and farming – **a system approach to meet the sustainability challenge**, IFOAM EU Group 2010: www.ifoam-eu.org/workareas/policy/pdf/IFOAMEU_dossier_organic_farming_system_approach.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ Legislative Proposals expected October 2011, Co-Decision procedure to follow.