

IFOAM EU Regional Group: Work plan 2006-2008

POLICY

Person responsible (committee chair)	Alexandra Pohl
Other persons involved	IFOAM EU Group board IFOAM EU Group office (Marco Schlüter, interns, assistants), experts
Countries involved	All EU and EFTA countries
Estimated working effort	3 board meetings/year plus topic related work efforts

Background

CAP/Rural Development

- New regulation for Rural Development, including strategic guidelines
- Special needs for RD measures in new Member States

GM seed, GM coexistence, GM "organic thresholds"

- National Coexistence rules being developed in accordance to EU Coexistence guidelines
- EU-wide Coexistence legislation in discussion
- Thresholds for seeds (GM-contamination) still not decided
- Revision on EU Regulation 2092/91 – broad discussion about thresholds for organic products
- Strong GMfree Regions movement

EU presidency (Austria Jan-June 2006)

- Austrian EU presidency Jan-June 2006
- Austria as one of the leading "organic countries" in Europe – high interest of Austrian policy to promote organic farming

Lisbon Strategy

- Lisbon strategy (EU growth and competitiveness until 2010) is the main overarching strategy of the European Commission
- Organic farming needs to be strategically positioned in regards to the above strategy

Biodiversity

- The Countdown 2010 campaign aims to halt the loss of biodiversity until 2010
- Several official statements declare the same aim
- The Green Week 2006 in Brussels is focussing on biodiversity
- The link between organic farming and biodiversity needs to be emphasised

EU Action Plan

- The European Action Plan for Organic Food and Farming was launched in June 2004
- The action plan can be considered as a first step and needs a follow-up by approximately 2007-08

Background continued

Further topics

- Animal Welfare Action Plan
- Climate Change

Finance and Organisation

- Policy topics are complex and it is difficult for national board members to be engaged on an European level due to time capacities

Objectives

CAP/Rural Development

1. Analysis of existing "old" and new RD programmes in Europe
2. Recommendations for new RD programmes and interesting measures for Organic Farming
3. Analysis of implementation of the CAP reform in Europe
4. Development of tools for organic farming for the next revision of the CAP (including the results of the analysis of old and new RD programmes)

GM seed, GM coexistence, GM "organic thresholds"

1. IFOAM EU Group speaker on GM-Conference in Vienna in April 06
2. Involvement of IFOAM EU in development of strict EU-wide coexistence rules to provide GM-free production
3. Seed thresholds to be set EU wide at lowest possible level (detection level)
4. Clear common European organic (IFOAM EU) position on thresholds for organic products

EU presidency (Austria, Jan-June 2006)

1. Organic reception at the Austrian representation in Brussels along with Agri Council in May 06
2. Organic week in EU canteens in Brussels

Biodiversity (intensity depends on extra funds)

1. Ensure that the link between organic farming and biodiversity is well recognised
2. Play a prominent role in the campaign 2010 and convince other participants of the benefits of organic farming

EU Action Plan

1. Ensure that organic farming remains a public topic
2. Ensure that the Commission starts a procedure for a next action plan

Lisbon strategy

Ensure that the Commission recognises that organic farming plays an important role for future development of the Lisbon strategy

Finance and organisation

3. Ensure sufficient finance for the different activities
4. Improve organisation of policy committee
5. Involve external knowledge

Additional topics have to be identified by following up political processes.

Deliverables

CAP/Rural Development

- 1a Overview of old and new RD programmes (2006)
- 1b Analysis of the old and new programmes and measures (2006)
- 2a "Catalogue of recommendations" (2007)
- 3a Overview on implementation of CAP reform 2003 (2007)
- 3b Analysis of implementation with regard to impact on Organic Farming (2007)
- 4a First position for revision of CAP, ("Organic farming as a tool for future agriculture in Europe") – 2008
- 4b Proposals for new CAP (2008)

GM seed, GM coexistence, GM "organic thresholds"

- 1a IFOAM EU Group speaker invited (Jan 06)
- 1b IFOAM EU Group invited as participants (Feb 06)
- 2a Report on national coexistence regimes – reaction (Feb/March 06)
- 3a On-going process, lobby for minimum thresholds on the basis of the IFOAM EU position
- 3b Coordinate farmers' letter campaign for minimum threshold
- 3c Study on impact of seed thresholds on farmers, processing
- 4a "Task force" – and networking with other NGOs

EU presidency (Austria, Jan-June 2006)

- 1a Reception with involvement of IFOAM EU (May 06)
- 2a Organisation Organic week in conjunction with Austrian Presidency (May 06)
- 3a "Organic day" in Europe – earliest possible: 2007

Biodiversity

- 1a Take part at Brussels Green Week 2006 on Biodiversity
- 2a Become prominent participant in the Countdown 2010 campaign
- 2b Develop strategy to place organic farming prominent within the Campaign 2010

EU Action Plan

- 1a Analyse implementation of current action plan
- 2a Analyse appropriate follow up steps of current action plan
- 2b Hold conference on new action plan (2007 or 2008)

Lisbon strategy

Publish position paper on OF and Lisbon strategy

Finance and organisation

- 1a Research for funding opportunities
- 2a Apply for different projects and funds to ensure appropriate finance of activities and coordination
- 3a Invite external experts to board meetings and include research results into the discussions

Interactions / Relationships

CAP/Rural Development

- IFOAM EU Group – national experts on RD, CAP; NGOs

GM seed, GM coexistence, GM "organic thresholds"

- Cooperation with European NGOs (FoE, Greenpeace, Zukunftsstiftung Landwirtschaft, etc.), national governments, MEPs

EU presidency (Austria Jan-June 2006)

- Austrian Ministry for Agriculture, Austrian representation Brussels, ...

Biodiversity

- IUCN, Countdown 2010 Secretary Office

Public relations and communications

CAP/Rural Development

- Publication of "catalogue" in 2007 (as a service for organic farming organisations)
- Position for revision (internal)
- Press releases

GM seed, GM coexistence, GM "organic thresholds"

- Press releases, press conference

Annual report, newsletter, webpage

Date/status: final draft