

PRESS RELEASE

NEW IFOAM EU REPORT HIGHLIGHTS THE ROLE OF CAP ECO-SCHEMES TO INCENTIVISE SUSTAINABLE FARMING PRACTICES

BRUSSELS, 10 FEBRUARY 2020 – [The newly introduced CAP Eco-scheme](#) has a great potential to drive transition to more sustainable farming systems, according to a new report by research institutes FiBL and IEEP, commissioned by IFOAM EU.

While the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) is currently being negotiated in EU institutions, Member States have begun to define their priorities through the CAP Strategic Plans. The Eco-scheme is one of the main innovations of the new CAP proposal, but many uncertainties remain about its content, funding and implementation.

According to Jan Plagge, IFOAM EU President: "if adequately programmed, Eco-schemes would represent a huge opportunity for farmers to be remunerated for the public goods they provide. This success depends on financial incentives, which go hand in hand with IFOAM EU's first recommendation to ringfence 70% of the CAP budget for environmental and climate action".

IFOAM EU's [new guide 'Using Eco-schemes in the new CAP'](#) provides support to policy makers, Member State officials and all stakeholders in the public or private sector involved in programming processes of the CAP Strategic Plans. It allows to get a better understanding of this new policy tool, its strengths and weaknesses, but also includes more technical support for implementation, such as choosing the payment model and finding the most appropriate measures.

A wide range of interventions that could be eligible for Eco-schemes are presented in the publication, including systems-based approaches such as organic farming, conservation agriculture, the protection and maintenance of High-Nature Value (HNV) farmland areas or agroforestry. Recommendations also cover support to identify the main problems and barriers to develop effective and efficient measures, as well as guidance for the monitoring and evaluation of Eco-schemes.

Dr. Matthias Stolze, Head of the Department of Socio-economics at FiBL and a co-author of the report, said: 'The full potential of Eco-schemes has not yet been recognised. There is a scope to use sustainability assessment tools to focus actions on real needs and to monitor outcomes on farms. For Eco-schemes to achieve their full potential, there is a need to ensure the allocation of sufficient resources and political support for the implementation of innovative approaches.'

For the organic movement, Eco-schemes could help the uptake of system-based and agroecological approaches if they are planned in coherence with other policy developments, such as the Green New Deal, the Farm to Fork Strategy, the EU Strategy for Biodiversity and a new Organic Action Plan.

For more information please contact:

Léna Brisset, Policy Officer on CAP

Lena.brisset@ifoam-eu.org

Eva Berckmans, Communications Officer

+32 (0)2 416 52 32, eva.berckmans@ifoam-eu.org

Or visit www.ifoam-eu.org

IFOAM EU represents more than 210 member organisations in the EU-28, the EU accession countries and EFTA. Member organisations span the entire organic food chain and beyond: from farmers and processors organisations, retailers, certifiers, consultants, traders and researchers to environmental and consumer advocacy bodies



Rue du Commerce 124 - 1000 Brussels - Belgium - Phone: +32-2-280 12 23 - Fax: +32-2-735 73 81 - Email: info@ifoam-eu.org

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