ANNUAL REPORT 2011
International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements
European Union Regional Group
IFOAM EU Group

WORKING FOR ORGANIC FOOD AND FARMING IN EUROPE
IFOAM EU Group is the European umbrella organisation for organic food and farming. From our Brussels office and through our wide network of experts, we fight for the adoption of ecologically, socially and economically sound systems based on the principles of organic agriculture – health, ecology, fairness and care.

With more than 300 member organisations our expertise spans the entire organic food chain, from farmers’ organisations, certification bodies, trade and research organisations and consultants, to companies, processors, retailers and environmental and consumer advocacy bodies.

Our activities

» We promote the values and benefits of organic agriculture and position the sector in EU policy and regulations.

» We collaborate with researchers, farmers, certifiers and processors to promote the development and implementation of innovative organic practices, and to build the appropriate capacities.

» We provide a platform on which the European organic movement can define its positions, promote related research and facilitate information transfer between organic actors.

Editor: Lena Wietheger
English Editor: Alastair Penny
Design & layout: Diana Jastrzębska, Heroldart
‘Getting the organic voice heard in Brussels and defining IFOAM EU’s future,’ that’s how I would summarise IFOAM EU Group’s activities in 2011. Our extensive lobby work has proven to be highly effective and could for example ensure that the EU Ecolabel has not been introduced for food. Another major success was the inclusion of production criteria for organic wine production in the organic EU regulation: the Commission adopted a position that was nearly identical to the content worked out by the IFOAM EU experts on organic wine.

Our networks within the EU institutions enabled us to influence a very hot issue on the political agenda: for the first time in 2011, the European Commission’s legislative proposals for CAP reform included organic food and farming.

In 2011 our outreach also enjoyed a breakthrough. We were invited to an informal council of agriculture and environmental ministers during the Hungarian EU Presidency. Together, our president and I advocated for the interests of organic stakeholders at this high-level forum. Our 5th European Organic Congress took place in Hungary and has been described by experts as the most important meeting for the organic sector so far in Central Europe. During the Polish EU Presidency in the second half of 2011, we held our first conference on organic processing which attracted more than 100 stakeholders.

Internally IFOAM EU Group is preparing itself for the future by fundamentally reforming its membership system. Country-based membership payments were replaced by a system of individual membership fees. 89% of the delegates to the IFOAM EU Group General Assembly in November 2011 voted for this change in membership fees and thereby paved the way for future financial stability.

Representatives of our office have also used 2011 to intensify collaboration with our parent IFOAM World and with organic movements in European countries. We especially wanted to meet with those who have less opportunity to participate in European meetings and therefore visited organic farmers and organisations in Latvia, Bulgaria, Greece and Cyprus.

You can find more detailed information on our activities and achievements in 2011 in this Annual Report. Enjoy your reading!

Marco Schlüter,
Director IFOAM EU Group
Amending EU regulations on organic agriculture

IFOAM EU position helps define new EU wine making rules

Lobbying by IFOAM EU Group and the organic wine sector has paid off. Following just a relatively short hiatus after the withdrawal of its initial proposal in early 2010, the European Commission restarted its work for the adoption of implementing rules for organic wine processing.

The biggest challenge was to agree on the maximum levels of sulphites used in organic wines. The Commission accepted the position prepared in July 2011 by IFOAM EU Group with the support of the European Organic Winemaking Carta, and in November 2011 it integrated this in its draft proposal for the organic wine production implementing rules. In early 2012 the legislation based on IFOAM EU’s input was adopted. From now on, this is the binding legal standard for organic wine making.

First Guidelines for Pesticide Residue Contamination

With the publication of its Guideline for Pesticide Residue Contamination for International Trade in Organic, the IFOAM EU Group produced a long-awaited reference document. The Guidelines will contribute to the harmonised development of the organic sector in the EU and it provides a practical tool for assessments whenever residue contamination occurs in an organic trading and processing company.

IFOAM EU position on organic processing

IFOAM EU Group repeatedly brought it to the attention of the European Commission that, with the exception of one small adaptation, its detailed technical requirements for processed organic foods, as set out in the EU regulations, have not been revised for several years. IFOAM EU Group considers this a shortcoming, as the list of additives and processing aids permitted in the production of organic foods is out of date. Most importantly, many of these additives are now available in organic form so the regulations should be amended to make their use in this form mandatory. Likewise, flavourings and microorganisms can be derived from organic agriculture and should be used wherever they are available. A register should be prepared in order to publicise the availability of

IFOAM EU Group activities

In 2011, IFOAM EU Group drew on its expertise and its network to ensure that new EU regulations controlling the legal context for organic food and farming in Europe were designed in the best interests of the organic movement.


I share many things with IFOAM EU. As well as representing the organic farming movement, it upholds values of commitment and professionalism to support organic farmers, companies and consumers. I also acknowledge the sensitivity and the human skills that are essential in their daily work.

José Luis García Melgarejo, Managing director of CAAE Association
these organic substances throughout the EU. IFOAM EU Group also lobbied for it to be made obligatory to evaluate the ecological performance of processing and trade operations. These points were addressed in discussions at the IFOAM EU Group conference on organic food processing in Poland, in October 2011. In front of almost 120 participants from across Europe, some 20 speakers (scientists, organic processors, certifiers and traders) presented their views on the most keenly debated issues affecting organic food processing today: imports, pesticide residues, food additives and the sector’s ecological performance.

The Commission’s report to Council and Parliament on organic regulation
IFOAM EU Group lobbied for the word ‘organic’ to be given adequate protection in the catering, cosmetics and textiles sectors. As yet, no EU regulations exist to control the use of the term in these fields, so many different private interpretations are possible for what constitutes organic catering, cosmetics and textiles – to the great confusion of consumers.

IFOAM EU Group stressed this issue when it responded to a questionnaire from the Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI). The survey involved 27 Member States plus additional stakeholders, including IFOAM EU Group. The responses to this questionnaire formed the basis for a report on the state of the organic regulation, which DG AGRI was to deliver to the Council and Parliament by the end of 2011.

Call for flexibility of Member States
It should be possible for Member States to develop their organic sectors at different speeds, and different practices should be permitted to reflect their particular national situations. This flexibility will accommodate differing national traditions, cultures and potentials, as well as the different levels of experience in the various organic farming communities. This, in turn, will facilitate the wider take-up of organic practices. The standards can be made gradually more demanding as organic farming develops in each country, with the ultimate aim of adherence to the full principles of organic agriculture.

In 2011 an IFOAM EU Group Flexibility task force advocated this flexible approach to the European Commission, drawing on a position paper issued in July.

Regulation of greenhouse production at EU level
IFOAM EU Group set up an expert group on protected cropping and greenhouse production. The group’s aim was to produce a proposal for a position on greenhouse production that can be integrated into the existing Regulation (EC) No 889/2008. The group met several times and drafted a position paper that was adopted at the Board meeting in Brussels in November 2011, and was published early in 2012.

Better EU rules for organic poultry production
As the EU rules on organic poultry production are still insufficiently developed, IFOAM EU Group worked on a new Position paper on Organic Poultry Production and Rearing, which it published in May 2012. The position paper outlines areas in which the current regulation needs improvement, for example, in the control of stocking densities, length of pop holes, use of disinfectants and access to pasture and verandas.

The IFOAM EU Group position will be taken up by DG AGRI’s Expert Group for Technical Advice on Organic Production, and subsequently discussed by the European Commission and the Standing Committee on Organic Farming.

Organic livestock feed to be obligatory, according to availability
IFOAM EU Group reacted to a set of draft amendments published by the European Commission concerning the requirements for animal feeds. These include a proposal to reduce the proportion of non-organic content in feed for monogastric animals to one per cent (originally five per cent) and to increase the minimum proportion of feed that must be sourced in the holding or local area to 60% from 50%.

IFOAM EU Group’s concern regarding this proposal was that, while the changes are ultimately desirable, they are not immediately practicable in some Member States, which have a shortage of suitable protein sources and are unable to produce sufficient organic feed in the region.

IFOAM EU Group therefore set up a task force and expressed its position in letters dated 27 September and 20 October. IFOAM EU Group recommended that up to four per cent conventional content should be allowed in the feed, until the end of 2015, and called for the removal of all unprocessed grains from the list of permitted conventional feed components. It also voiced concern about additional rules being applied to the feed for young animals, and about the use of synthetic amino acids in organic feeding.

Controls on imports
In 2011 the process of improving the rules that control the importation of organic products into the EU gathered pace. At the IFOAM EU Conference on organic processing in October 2011, the EU processes and plans were hotly debated. The sector’s concerns regarding the process resulted in the creation of an IFOAM EU task force on imports. The task force is to publish its recommendations for improving the system in 2012. IFOAM EU Group included its initial views about the changes in its contribution to consultations with the Commission for report to council and parliament.
Influencing key EU policies

New legislation on novel foods

Experts from IFOAM EU Group have been monitoring the updates made to the novel foods legislation in three main areas of concern.

» Nanotechnology

Before any decision can be made about the use of nanotechnologies in the food sector, a proper impact evaluation must be carried out, together with a detailed risk assessment regarding the effects of nano-particles on human and animal health, and on the environment.

In general, IFOAM EU Group views nanotechnology as being incompatible with the principles of organic agriculture. Even though nanotechnology has not been outlawed under the EU’s organic regulations, a number or private organisations have already banned it in their standards and producers are avoiding its use.

» Animal cloning

IFOAM EU Group called for a ban on animal cloning for food production in the EU, and also for a ban on the import and sale of food products originating from cloned animals or their offspring.

Currently only the organic regulation (EC) No 834/2007 prohibits the cloning of animals.

» Labelling of animal products from animals fed with GMOs

IFOAM EU Group also stressed the need to label animal products that have been produced from livestock fed on genetically modified feeds.

In March 2011, after three years of discussing the Commission proposal, negotiations taking place in the Conciliation Committee on novel foods failed. This Committee, which consists of representatives from the European Parliament and Council in equal number, found no consensus on the inclusion of food derived from the offspring of cloned animals. The European Parliament had argued for the inclusion of rules commensurate with the IFOAM EU position, whereas both the Council and the Commission were reluctant. Their arguments against a ban included its technical feasibility and practical implications.

EU Ecolabelling – not for organic produce!

The EU Ecolabel is a voluntary label that is meant to identify products and services that have a reduced environmental impact.

IFOAM EU Group positioned itself clearly against the EU Ecolabel for food, which was being pushed by DG Environment, as well as the conventional food industry and retailers. Extending the EU Ecolabel to food would result in two competing labels (Organic and Ecolabel) based on similar characteristics and attributes (absence of chemical fertilisers, pesticides and GMOs, good animal welfare, etc.). This will evidently be confusing to consumers. Moreover, IFOAM EU Group also argued that a legal barrier exists, since terms such as ‘eco’, ‘ekó’ or ‘óko’, which are used for organic products, are protected under EU legislation.

The advocacy work of IFOAM EU Group paid off. In early 2012 the Commission decided to not introduce the Ecolabel for food!

For a green, fair and smarter Common Agricultural Policy – IFOAM EU on the CAP

Through targeted lobbying and by participating in key policy events and debates, IFOAM EU Group successfully highlighted the important role organic farming plays in the overall context of European food and farming systems, whether through the production of high quality food or the protection of natural resources and promotion of sustainability. It clearly demonstrated that organic farming needs to be presented accordingly in the structures of the new CAP.

IFOAM EU Group submitted a response to the Commission’s consultation process on the CAP. In its letter to the Commission it also emphasised the importance of making the CAP much greener as a whole and stressed the need for a strong budget for the second pillar, with special emphasis on the environment and rural communities.

Significant events (a selection)

» January: Contributions to a specially enlarged Commission Advisory Group on the CAP Towards 2020, the Quality Package and Milk

» May/June: Host of the 5th European Organic Congress on Organic Farming as an opportunity for European Agriculture, in Gödöllő, Hungary

» June: Participation in the informal meeting of the Agriculture Council in Debrecen, Hungary; organisation of a workshop on organic farming during the informal meeting of Rural Development Directors in Eger, Hungary

» October: Seminar on The future of food and farming jointly organised with the European Network of Organic Agriculture Students (ENOAS), in Lyon

Significant publications (a selection)

» Fact sheet series The Truth behind the CAP: 13 reasons for green reform, in cooperation with other NGOs

» Cartoon Our long term food Security is in your hands in partnership with other civil society organisations; published in The Parliament Magazine

Common Agricultural Policy – The policy context in a nutshell


» March: a majority of Member States ratified the Hungarian EU Presidency Conclusions

» June: the European Parliament adopted the so-called Dess Report

» October: the European Commission published CAP Legal Proposals

For the first time, the legislative process entered into a joint decision making stage involving the Council and the Parliament. Final agreement on the reform is expected in mid-2013, with the new CAP coming into effect on 1 January 2014.
Organics to be prioritised in promotion measures for agricultural products!

IFOAM EU Group welcomed an attempt by the European Commission to reinforce the promotion of European agricultural products and stressed that organic products deserve to be given priority in this promotion campaign.

In July 2011, the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Commission issued a Green Paper on promotion measures and information provision for agricultural products: a reinforced value-added European strategy for promoting the tastes of Europe. The purpose of this document was to open a debate pending a fundamental review of the current information and promotion measures for agricultural products, which form one of the instruments of the CAP. All the stakeholders – consumers, producers, distributors and authorities – should be involved in shaping a new promotion and information strategy. Such a strategy could considerably improve the benefits derived from the considerable resources available in Europe’s farming and agri-food sector.

IFOAM EU Group reacted to the Commission’s Green Paper with a letter, in which it stressed that the organic sector can enhance and can play a key role in the promotion of sustainable production and consumption of food.

Resource efficiency – the role of organics

In 2011 the main theme of the European Commission’s environmental policy was the increasing scarcity of natural resources. In September, the Commission published the ‘Roadmap to a Resource-Efficient Europe’ as part of its flagship initiative for a resource-efficient Europe under the Europe 2020 strategy.

IFOAM EU Group picked up on the issue of resource efficiency and highlighted the part organic farming plays in ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources.

» May: IFOAM EU exhibition stand at the Brussels ‘Green Week’ for resource efficiency

» 8 November: Round-table discussion in DG Environment. Five representatives of IFOAM EU Group joined a roundtable with Commission officials from the Directorates General for Environment, for Agriculture, and for Climate. A presentation by Carlo Leifert, Professor for Ecological Agriculture at Newcastle University, underlined IFOAM EU Group’s position by showing the expected dramatic decline in farm input resources such as phosphorus, and explaining why organic farming practices can help improve the resilience of our food system to this challenge.

» 9 November: In cooperation with TP Organics and the Greens/EFA, IFOAM EU Group held the conference ‘Resource efficiency and food security – opportunities and challenges for sustainable food systems’. This event addressed a number of crosscutting issues related to resource efficiency in agriculture, such as Europe’s protein deficit, the impacts of European livestock production on third-party countries, the depletion of vital nutrients, the role of consumers, the need for a paradigm shift, and the role of innovation and the knowledge-based bio-economy.

» December: Publication of the brochure ‘Resource efficiency and organic farming - facing up to the challenge’.

Promoting organic aquaculture

In 2011 IFOAM EU Group strengthened its relationship with the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs and Fisheries. To present the position of the organic sector, IFOAM EU Group participated in meetings dealing with aquaculture, fish, shellfish and molluscs, organised by the Advisory Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture (ACFA). IFOAM EU Group’s main contribution was to promote organic aquaculture and seaweed as ways of making aquaculture sustainable, both in Europe and worldwide. The organic approaches should be recognised in the EU’s upcoming aquaculture policies, and in the reforms to the Common Fisheries Policies.
Biodiversity

In its policy activities, IFOAM EU Group stressed the importance of biodiversity as the foundation of all agriculture.

- CAP - For measures which support the conservation and restoration of biodiversity to succeed, strong support must be provided for the second pillar of the CAP. This was a recurring issue in informal talks and meetings involving European environmental and agricultural ministers, and rural development directors. The point was underlined during the European Organic Congress in Hungary, especially as part of the CAP discussion.

- Agro-biodiversity - In its reaction to a Commission stakeholder consultation, IFOAM EU Group emphasised the importance of revising legislation on the marketing of seed and plant propagating materials to include measures for the protection of biodiversity. At a roundtable meeting, European Commission officials and seed experts from the organic sector (breeders and farmers) discussed the specific problems related to this legislation, and also talked about other measures to maintain and further develop agro-biodiversity.

- Seeds - Representatives of the IFOAM EU Group’s ‘Seed’ task force spoke at the conference ‘Seeds for a sustainable future’ in the European Parliament.

Selected positions and publications

- Press release on the 2020 biodiversity strategy
- Press release on the conclusions of the EU Biodiversity strategy
- Article ‘How to make farms rich in biodiversity’, published in the newsletter of the European Parliament intergroup on biodiversity

Organic farming and climate change

IFOAM EU Group used several events in 2011 to raise awareness about the potential benefits of organic agriculture for climate change mitigation and as a buffer against the negative effects of climate change.

- February: At the international organic trade fair BioFach, IFOAM EU Group cooperated with IFOAM World and the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) in organising a workshop and presented the joint IFOAM and IFOAM EU advocacy strategy on climate change.

- October: IFOAM EU Group organised and participated in the Round Table on Organic Agriculture and Climate Change (RTOACC). The meeting included discussions with representatives of the European Commission’s Directorates-General for Agriculture and Rural Development, for Development and for Climate.

- October: On 18 October, in a seminar entitled ‘Agriculture in times of climate change’ held at the European Parliament, IFOAM EU Group explored the role of organic agriculture in mitigation of, and adaptation to climate change.

Genetically modified organisms (GMOs)

IFOAM EU Group achieved a major lobbying success with respect to GMOs when Director Marco Schlüter was able to present the views of the organic sector during a hearing of the European Commission in October. He outlined the socio-economic costs for the organic sector of GMO cultivation. Often the introduction of GMOs can threaten the very existence of organic farms in the same locations. Strict rules are therefore needed to prevent any contamination of the GMO-free food chain.

GMO-free seed

Leading an alliance of farmers’ groups and associations of food businesses, seed producers and beekeepers, IFOAM EU Group wrote a letter to the MEPs serving on the Agriculture and Environment committee, advocating the maintenance of GMO-free seed, when they were required to vote on the Lepage report.

This lobby work was very successful. Any attempts in the final text to weaken the standards controlling the use of GMO in seed were abandoned.
Stakeholder consultation on GMO risk assessment

IFOAM EU Group provided inputs in response to a consultation on the environmental risk assessment (ERA) of GMOs, which was launched in March by the Commission’s Directorate-General for Health and Consumers. The consultation procedure followed draft guidelines on ERA published by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). IFOAM EU Group criticised EFSA’s relationship with the agro-industrial sector, as a result of which the supposedly neutral organisation had presented documents that failed to adequately observe the precautionary principle.

IFOAM EU Group also lobbied for the integration of socio-economic impacts of GMOs in the impact assessment of genetically modified products.

National bans on GMO cultivation

On 5 July the European Parliament voted to allow Member States to restrict or prohibit the cultivation of GMOs in their territory. IFOAM EU Group welcomed the plan to enact EU legislation which will at last oblige all Member States to take appropriate measures to avoid the unintended presence of GMOs in other products. It also underlined the need for EU-wide legislation that provides full protection for the environment and for human and animal health, and which will ensure the economic viability of the GMO-free food and feed sector.

Animal welfare – Screening of ‘Pig Business’

The IFOAM principles of organic farming insist that animals should be provided with living conditions that accord with their physiology, natural behaviour and well-being. At the Brussels screening of the film ‘Pig Business – the true cost of cheap meat’, IFOAM EU Group’s policy manager, Antje Kölling, spoke out in support of sustainable farming approaches which respect animal welfare, and called for the necessary changes to the CAP to achieve this. The event at the European Parliament was attended by more than 200 MEPs, assistants and NGO representatives.

Supporting EU research & innovation policies

In 2011 TP Organics participated in a number of high-level European events, to advocate the inclusion of organic food and farming in EU research policies.

» 22 March: BECTEPS (Bio-Economy Technology Platforms) closing event: Unlocking the potential of the bio-economy

» 8–11 May: BtoBio International Exhibition, Milan

TP Organics and its Italian arm, PT Bio, held a workshop entitled Opportunities in innovation and technological development for Italian organic companies. This looked at how to deal with the challenges facing the organic sector, such as consumer demand, GMOs and direct marketing.

» 27 April: Realising the ETP ambitions through cooperation with EUREKA in the area of agro-food and bio-based economy, a conference in Brussels examining how European TPs could benefit from cooperation with the EU Commission platform, EUREKA, for European entrepreneurs dealing with research and development. TP Organic’s interest was to establish just such a cooperation arrangement.

» 4–5 May: Sustainable food consumption and production in a resource-constrained world, a conference in Budapest, Hungary, organised by DG Research & Innovation and the Hungarian EU Presidency, where the report from the Third Standing Committee on Agricultural Research (SCAR) was presented. The purpose of this committee was to refocus efforts on the necessary transition towards agriculture and food systems in a resource-constrained world. The conference conclusions were summarised in the Budapest Declaration.

» 22 June: Sustainable food chains for a European Strategy and Action Plan towards a sustainable knowledge-based bio-economy by 2020, a conference in the European Parliament, organised jointly by IFOAM EU Group and its partners as a contribution to the discussion about appropriate areas for future research.

» 13 July: Stakeholder Consultation Workshop on the Common Strategic Framework (CSF) for Research and Innovation (Horizon 2020), organised by the European Commission. TP Organics raised the need for more bottom-up approaches to refocus efforts on the necessary transition towards agriculture and food systems in a resource-constrained world.
up approaches, and stronger interdisciplinary and crosscutting research work, and highlighted the importance of continuity in research activities.

- 13–14 September: Knowledge based bio-economy towards 2020, a conference organised by the Belgian EU Presidency. The bio-economy concept groups together all sectors of the economy that produce and process biological resources from both land and sea, under a single umbrella. The bio-economy strategy and action plan are intended to encourage greater coherence between the various policies and funding instruments.

- 11 November: Resource Efficiency and Food Security: Opportunities and Challenges for Sustainable Food Systems, a conference organised by IFOAM EU Group, TP Organics and Martin Häusling, Member of the European Parliament. Experts from scientific and political backgrounds shared their thoughts on the question of how a growing population can be fed without placing a greater burden on the environment.

Policies, policy processes, and the activities of TP Organics

Commission: European Strategy and Action Plan towards a sustainable bio-based economy by 2020. April and May 2011 were a crucial two months for the definition of future EU research concepts, including the 8th Framework Research Programme for the period 2014 to 2020 and of the knowledge-based bio-economy. In accordance with the aims of IFOAM EU Group, TP Organics worked to ensure organic food and farming would be included as an important aspect of innovation in the research programmes that were scheduled to be adopted by the end of 2011.

The Directorate General for Research conducted two public consultations. TP Organics participated in these consultations by way of the standard questionnaires. However, it also took the opportunity to submit its own concepts and suggestions in consolidated papers.

Green Paper on a Common Strategic Framework for future EU research and innovation funding. As well as completing the Commission’s questionnaire, TP Organics responded to this consultation with a position paper which aimed to provide some more general suggestions and comments on the Green Paper, and to make some clear proposals regarding the structure of the future EU Research Framework Programme. In particular, TP Organics also wanted to address the Commission’s proposals for the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF).

Bio-based economy for Europe: state of play and future potential. TP Organics’ position paper in response to this consultation outlined the ways in which organic farming and agro-ecological approaches might interact with a European bio-economy. TP Organics stressed the need for a bio-economy concept that unequivocally promotes the truly sustainable development of agriculture, forestry and fisheries and the related industries.

Horizon 2020. In November 2011 the European Commission presented a package of measures intended to improve research, innovation and competitiveness in Europe under the Horizon 2020 framework. This new funding programme will run from 2014 to 2020 and has a budget of EUR 80 billion. It unites all the EU’s research and innovation funding in a single programme.

The Commission has stepped up its financial support for the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT). This body is intended to bring together higher education institutions, research centres and businesses to encourage entrepreneurship in the future. Funding for the European Research Council will rise by 77% and there will be further support for international cooperation as part of Horizon 2020.

TP Organics contributed its own inputs regarding the relevant proposals issued earlier in the year, prior to the release of this package. It specifically advocated measures in support of research projects on eco-functional intensification as well as socioeconomic research, and it highlighted the importance of diversity through the whole food chain. Following the release of the package of measures, TP Organics established an ad hoc working group in order to analyse the document in detail and to propose amendments to it.

Education & Innovation Action Plan. TP Organics started work on an Education & Innovation Action Plan, which acts as a guide for education in the field of agriculture. The plan should establish a strategic framework with which to appraise current education projects and propose improvements that will enhance agricultural education outcomes. The plan aims to create an ‘effective agricultural education model’.

Priority topics for 2013. In September, TP Organics delivered to the Directorate General for Research and Innovation a list of topics that should be considered as high priority for the 7th Framework Programme and the working programme 2013. These topics relate to the ongoing debate on how organic farming systems can help overcome the major challenges of food production, including weakened food security, the loss of biodiversity, and climate change. They also support the improvement of livelihoods in rural areas at a time of diminishing natural resources and the contribution of organic farming to preventing modern diseases, such as allergies.

Innovation is crucial for farmers to react to future environmental challenges and to make their living on changing food markets. IFOAM EU Group reminds EU policy makers regularly that innovation must be a comprehensive concept which includes new approaches of farmers’ cooperation, participatory research and breeding, diversification of incomes, crop rotations, marketing as well as farm organisation and management.

IFOAM EU Group highlights the importance of organic farming as a source of innovative practices to EU policy makers, giving important inputs for the decision making process on the new EU research framework Horizon 2020 and European Innovation policies.

Paolo de Castro, Chair of the Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development in the European Parliament.
People

Executive board

President:
Christopher Stopes (UK)

Treasurer:
Jose Luis Garcia Melgarejo (ES)

Vice-president (processing):
Bavo van den Idsert (NL)

Vice-president (policy):
Thomas Fertl (AU)

Vice-president (regulation):
Sabine Eigenschink (AU)

Vice-president (research):
Otto Schmid (CH)

Vice-president:
Thomas Dosch (DE)

Vice-president:
Karolina Dyertova (CZ)

Check our website for more information on the executive board.
### IFOAM EU Group board

1. Austria  
   Sabine Eigenschink  
   Thomas Fertl
2. Belgium  
   Leen Laenens  
   Sylvie Morcillo
3. Bulgaria  
   Albena Simeonova  
   (Interim appointment as observer until elected)
4. Cyprus  
   Savvas Mouzakis  
   Marinela Sofokleous
5. Czech Republic  
   Karolina Dytrtova  
   Katerina Nesrstrova
6. Denmark  
   Sybille Kyed  
   Evald Vestergaard
7. Estonia  
   Merit Mikk  
   Aini Vetema
8. Finland  
   Elina Niemi  
   Mikko Rahtola
9. France  
   David Peyremorte  
   Cécile Frissur
10. Germany  
    Alexander Gerber  
    Alexander Beck  
    Jan Plagge
11. Greece  
    Konstantinos Dritsas  
    Sotiris Babagiouris
12. Hungary  
    Éva Sándorné Ács  
    Gunnar Gunnarsson
13. Iceland  
    Olafur Dyrmundsson  
    Gunnar Gunnarsson
14. Ireland  
    Evelyn Gill  
    Grace Maher
15. Italy  
    Andrea Ferrante  
    Antonio Compagnioni  
    Riccardo Cazzo
16. Latvia  
    Maiira Bluma  
    Dzidra Kreismane
17. Lithuania  
    Antanas Svirskis
18. Luxembourg  
    Raymond Aendekerk
19. Malta  
    John Portelli  
    Mario Salerno
20. Netherlands  
    Marijn Blom  
    Bavo van IJssel
21. Norway  
    Gerald Alstena  
    Grete Sørvik
22. Poland  
    Dorota Mecerka  
    Ewa Rombalkowska
23. Portugal  
    Jaime Manuel Carvalho Ferreira  
    Alexandra Maurer da Costa
24. Romania  
    Damian Dragomir  
    Ion Tonce
25. Slovakia  
    Zuzana Lehocka  
    Marta Klimekova
26. Slovenia  
    Anamarija Slabe  
    Boris Fras
27. Spain  
    Victor Gonzalez  
    Jose Luis Garcia Melgarejo  
    Evelyne Alcázar Marin
28. Sweden  
    Marianne Schonning  
    Kjell Sjödahl-Svensson
29. Switzerland  
    Otto Schmid  
    Hans Ramsee
30. Turkey  
    Seda Orhan Defranceschi
31. United Kingdom  
    Chris Atkinson  
    Lawrence Woodward

### Office staff 2011

**Director:**  
Marc Schüter

**Horizontal functions:**
- **Head of Communication:** Lena Wietheger  
  Communication assistant:  
  - Stephen Turner (from September)
  - Project Coordinator:  
    - Cinzia Tegoni (until April)
    - Josefine Johansson (from April)
  - Project Assistant:  
    - Maya Hernandez (from October)
  - Financial Officer:  
    - Sevelina Todorova (until January)
  - Financial and Legal Officer:  
    - Elzbieta Kaminska (from January)
  - Office and Events Coordinator:  
    - Angela Morell Perez

**Policy unit:**
- **Policy Manager:** Antje Kolling
- **Policy Assistant:**  
  - Stephen Meredith (from November)
  - Rishi Kukreja (from September)

**Policy & Regulation Area:**
- **Food Legislation Coordinator:**  
  - Andrzej Szeremeta

**Regulation unit:**
- **Regulation Coordinator:**  
  - Camilla Mikkelsen (until July)
  - Interims Regulation Coordinator:  
    - Andrzej Szeremeta
  - Regulation Advisor (Freelancer):  
    - Keith Ball

**Research unit:**
- **TP Organics Coordinator:**  
  - Eduardo Cuoco

For more information about the board of the IFOAM EU Group, please visit the IFOAM EU website.

### Trainees 2011

**Audrey Malherbe**  
(BE)  
October 2010–February 2011:  
Project and Research trainee

**Cyrille Cornerotte**  
(BE)  
November 2010–April 2011:  
Regulation, Research and Administration trainee

**Sofia Baruffol**  
(BE)  
January 2011–July 2011:  
Policy trainee

**Josefine Johansson**  
(SE)  
January–April 2011:  
Policy and Research trainee

**Stephen Turner**  
(IA)  
January–August 2011:  
Communication trainee

**Christoph Furtschegger**  
April 2011–September 2011:  
Policy Manager

**Maya Hernandez Calvo**  
(ES)  
April–October 2011:  
Regulation trainee

**Stephen Meredith**  
(IE)  
May–October 2011:  
Policy Trainee

**Pierre Sultana**  
(FR)  
April–October 2011:  
Policy Trainee

**Benny van de Velde**  
(BE)  
September 2011–April 2012:  
Regulation trainee

**Silvia Schiavon**  
(IT)  
December 2011–June 2012:  
Research trainee

For the contact information of IFOAM EU staff check the website.
Annual Report 2011 | IFOAM EU GROUP

Finances

Income and costs

Structure of IFOAM EU Group’s income in 2011

- operational grant: 2%
- MS fees: 11%
- projects (EU/private): 23%
- sponsoring: 4%
- donations: 7%
- subrent: 4%
- other: 9%

Total: 44%

Structure of IFOAM EU Group’s costs in 2011

- salaries and related services: 0.3%
- services: 7%
- travels: 7%
- overheads: 16%
- rent: 12%
- financial charges: 58%

Total: 100%

New membership system

At the General Assembly in November 2011, the membership fee system of IFOAM EU Group was fundamentally reformed. Whereas in the past, membership fees were collected by the individual European countries and paid as a ‘country contribution’, the new system relies on individual payments from organisations. That means that each member organisation now pays directly to IFOAM EU Group, according to its turnover.

The new membership system entered into force on 1 January 2012, from when there will be a transition period of three years during which the fees will be gradually raised. The targeted earnings from membership fees amounting to EUR 260,000 per year should be achieved from 2014 onwards. In the future, membership fees should cover about 40% of IFOAM EU Group’s core budget. At present they account for just 23% of the budget. The change in the fee payment system was voted for by 89% of the delegates to the IFOAM EU Group General Assembly.

For more information on IFOAM EU Group’s membership system please contact our financial and legal officer, Elzbieta Kaminska: +32 2 280 12 52

“Wealth with the new online newsletter IFOAM EU Group has made a big jump forward in easy and efficient communication with its followers. I congratulate IFOAM EU on putting communication more in the centre of its work!”

Dusan Milenkovic, kides design, Designer of the EU-bio-leave

I congratulate IFOAM EU on putting communication more in the centre of its work!”

Dusan Milenkovic, kides design, Designer of the EU-bio-leave

‘“

With the new online newsletter IFOAM EU Group has made a big jump forward in easy and efficient communication with its followers. I congratulate IFOAM EU on putting communication more in the centre of its work!”

Dusan Milenkovic, kides design, Designer of the EU-bio-leave

‘“
Proud to be part of it’ – that is really how I’ve experienced the intensive cooperation with IFOAM EU over the last years as a key sponsor. All the important work and lobbying, most of it hidden, that is being done for the organic movement will become more and more important. It is therefore time that organic companies start to provide substantial support for this, it is time for them to be part of it as well, and to join and support IFOAM EU.

Ronald van Marlen, Ariza