

Brussels, 12 June 2023

An ambitious Nature Restoration Law is needed for resilient and productive farming systems

Dear Members and Substitute Members of the Environment Committee,

On Thursday 15 June you are invited to vote on the report on the Nature Restoration Law. This legislation is key to ensure the functioning and health of ecosystems and thus food production in the EU in the long run. The organic movement stresses its support of the Nature Restoration law and highlights the urgent need to reverse the drastic loss of biodiversity and restore degraded ecosystems. We count on your support to help farmers to preserve the natural capital on which we depend to produce food and make EU's farming systems more resilient.

Biodiversity protection and well-functioning ecosystems cannot be seen separately from food production. We depend on fertile soils, clean water, and pollinators to produce food. Biodiversity plays a crucial role for natural pest control and pollination and 84% of crops in the EU depend at least partially on pollination by insects.¹ Biodiversity and climate change are closely interconnected, and healthy ecosystems are a pre-requisite to succeed in climate protection, carbon sequestration and adaptation to environmental stressors.² However, increased extreme weather events, a drastic loss in biodiversity, decline of pollinators and farmland birds and degradation of soils are a reality. This has already major impacts on farmers across the EU.

Organic farmers have been leading the way, showing that nature protection and productive farming systems can go hand in hand. Organic shows that a viable farm can increase soil fertility, preserve biodiversity, protect water bodies and store carbon in soils at the same time.³ These actions are also important in order to make our food production more resilient and adapt to the increasing impacts of climate change. It is urgently needed to support farmers adequately who are farming with nature and not against it and who are preserving nature and biodiversity on their fields.

Organic farmers very much contest this constructed narrative that the Nature Restoration Law would threaten food security, or that it would make the work of farmers more difficult. On the contrary, biodiversity loss and the climate crisis are the biggest threats to food security, and we have the agronomic knowledge necessary to produce food while protecting birds and pollinators, storing carbon in soils, establishing landscape elements and protecting peatlands. Millions of farmers stand ready to adopt more sustainable practices provided they receive the necessary technical agronomic support and provided all operators in the food production chain contribute to this transition of our food systems.

One year ahead of the elections, at a time when every day bring news of environmental disasters and collapses of animal populations, European citizens – and especially younger generations – would not understand that elected representatives vote to reject a law that is a symbol of hope that we could somehow still be able to repair some of the damage that human activities have done to nature. If you consider that this piece of legislation is not good enough, then it is your duty to improve it during the Parliamentary work, not to reject it in order to defend a high input intensive and outdated agriculture model, effectively delaying any meaningful action for at least ten more years.

¹ EEA, 2023. [The importance of restoration nature.](#)

² IPBES-IPCC co-sponsored workshop report on biodiversity and climate change

³ IFOAM Organics Europe, 2022. [Organic agriculture and its benefits for climate and biodiversity](#)



Farmers live and work close to nature. They are the first in line to witness its degradation and to suffer from the impact of the perturbation of the climate and ecosystems services, through droughts, floods and lack of resilience of agricultural systems. Organic farmers believe that all farmers can be part of the solution with appropriate agronomic practices based on functional biodiversity, soil regeneration and synthetic inputs reduction.

The only way to ensure long-term food security in Europe and beyond, is to restore biodiversity and reverse the degradation of ecosystems. Nature restoration helps making our farming systems more resilient and productive and is the basis for food production. IFOAM Organics Europe therefore calls on you to support a Nature Restoration Law with ambitious targets for agricultural ecosystems.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "egall".

Eric Gall
Deputy Director, IFOAM Organics Europe