



MAKING EUROPE MORE ORGANIC

2014 ANNUAL REPORT

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR AND PRESIDENT

The cohesiveness of the organic sector and the strength of our networks has often been a key to success of IFOAM EU's advocacy work. This is reflected in the successes we have achieved throughout 2014.

IFOAM EU continued its work across many areas ranging from greening the Common Agricultural Policy to ensuring greater biodiversity on Europe's farmland, from fighting for the right to a GMO-free Europe to demonstrating the role of organic farming in mitigating climate change, from advocating for the preservation of biodiversity in seed to making sure that the EU research agenda takes up the needs of organic and agroecological agriculture.

Representing the organic movement and preserving its place as the only EU regulated food and farming system, across EU policies and regulations, is at the core of our work. In 2014, a large part of our work was therefore focussed on the proposal for a new EU organic regulation. The Commission's draft proposal was unacceptable for the organic sector. IFOAM EU and its members have worked tirelessly to make sector concerns known to the Commission, Parliament and Council. Our hard work paid off and played a part in the Agriculture Commissioner admitting that the Commission's proposal was unworkable as it was, the Visegrád group issuing a statement raising concerns about the Commission proposal, significant advances in the Council under the Italian Presidency and European Parliament rapporteur, Martin Häusling, publicly stating: "We don't want a complete revision of the EU organic regulation, but a reform that will work in practice."

In addition to work on the organic regulation, IFOAM EU has also dedicated much of its time to demonstrating how organic is a front-runner when it comes to safeguarding biodiversity and the environment in agriculture, as well as showcasing the innovative spirit of the organic agricultural sector through several projects. This was achieved for example through the SOLMACC project which aims at demonstrating that farming can be climate-friendly by applying a combination of optimised organic farming practices. Another project that demonstrates innovative environmental practices of organic farmers is the SUSTAIN GAS project which defined standards for organic biogas and informed farmers of the opportunities gained by producing biogas on their farms. The project entered its final phase during 2014 and was very successful: the participants of the project were very enthusiastic, a number of farmers have set up biogas installations on their farms and many people were eager to be informed.

Two successful events were also held: our annual European Organic Congress – organised in collaboration with the Italian Council Presidency – and the bi-annual 3rd Organic Processing Conference. These events were well-attended by representatives from the entire European organic sector: experts and policy-makers from EU institutions, Member States, regions as well as delegates from civil society, control bodies, sector organisations, farmers and other organic operators.

You can find more detailed information on our activities and achievements from 2014 in this annual report.

Enjoy the read!



Christopher Stopes
IFOAM EU President



Marco Schlüter
IFOAM EU Director

Organic in Europe

Europe is a front-runner when it comes to organic agriculture. There's agricultural support enshrined in the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), an EU organic regulation – entailing labelling requirements and legal protection – strong consumer demand, a well-developed organic sector with strong institutions, private organic standards and labelling and some Member States have national and regional organic action plans in place.

Holding 27% – or 11.5 million hectares – of the world's organic land, Europe is the second largest region when it comes to total land area dedicated to organics

In the EU, 5.7% of farmland is organic. This number is divided unequally across Member States. Between 2012 and 2013, this share rose with 0.3 million hectares, or 3%. Following the USA, the EU market is the second largest single market, accounting for 22.2 billion EUR or 40 % of retail sales.

In 2013, 10.2 million hectares or 5.7% of the EU's agricultural land were managed organically by more than 260.000 producers.

ABOUT IFOAM EU

ON TOP OF EVERY ASPECT OF ORGANICS IN THE EU

Who are we?

IFOAM EU is the European umbrella organisation for organic food and farming. 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 160 member organisations our work spans the entire organic food chain and beyond: from farmers and processors, retailers, certifiers, consultants, traders and researchers to environmental and consumer advocacy bodies.

We represent the entire organic food chain at the European level: we aim to facilitate the uptake of organic in all relevant policies and regulations. Moreover, IFOAM EU hosts the secretariat of TP Organics – the European Technology Platform for organic food and farming – thus playing a key role in highlighting where the focus of research and development funding should be placed.

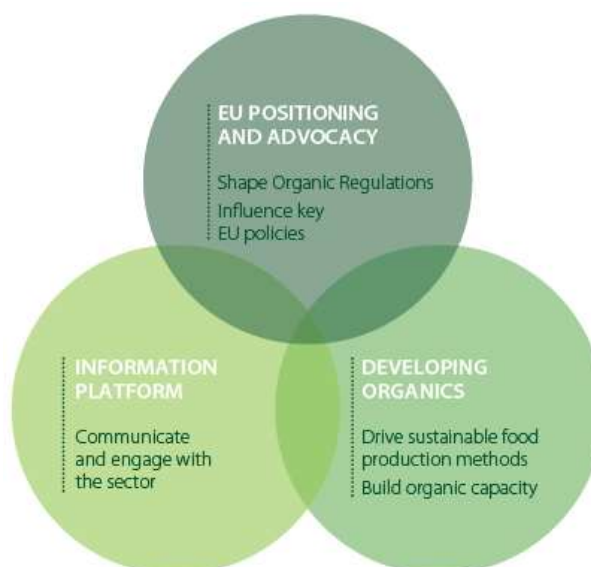
IFOAM EU has ties with key agricultural, environmental and technical decision-makers at local, national and European level and is recognised by the EU institutions as the leading advocate for organic food and farming on EU policy.

Our activities

Located at Brussels, the beating heart of European Union, IFOAM EU works on positioning organic at the European level and influencing EU policies so they take organics into account. Intense contact with decision-makers at European level and NGOs working on similar issues at EU-level are our key activities. As advocacy organisation, we are in contact with policy-makers and technical departments at relevant Directorate-Generals of the European Commission, MEPs from all political groupings and European Member States. We also maintain good relationships with current Council Presidencies, including the joint organisation of key political events.

IFOAM EU also strives to continuously develop organics. We do this in cooperation with our network encompassing our members, like-minded NGOs, civil society organisations, environmental and agriculture umbrella organisation at national and EU level and of course policy-makers at local, national and European level.

Last but not least, we serve as information platform. As the European umbrella organisation for organic food and farming, IFOAM EU has a strategic place in the European organic movement and brings together sector representatives at various occasions such as face-to-face meetings of our working groups, task forces and expert groups and our events such as the annual European Organic Congresses and the biannual Processing Conference.

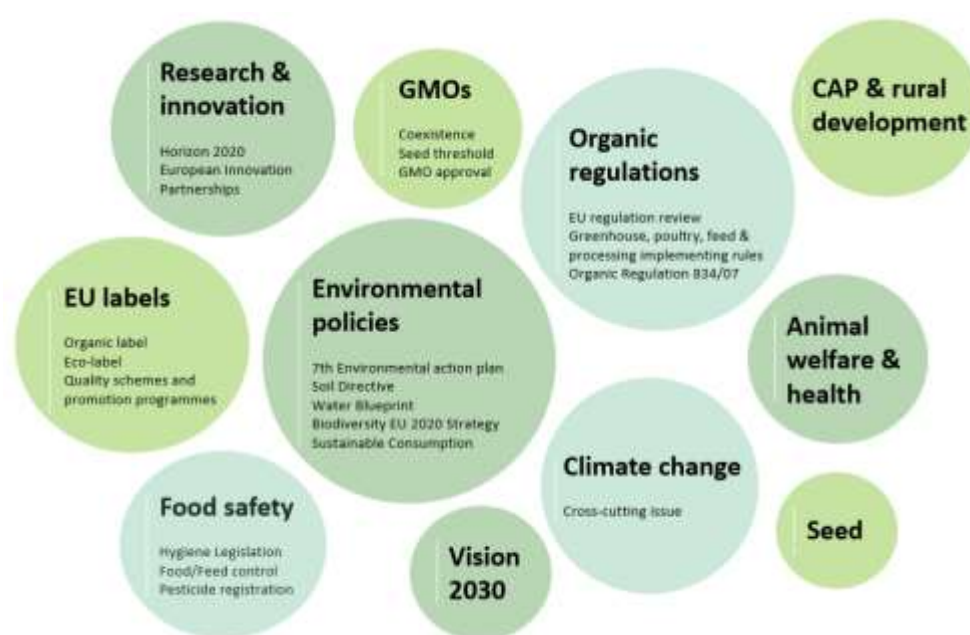


To perform our activities the best way possible, IFOAM EU has formed alliances with environmental, agricultural, animal welfare & development groups and NGOs on the CAP, GMOs and research & innovation policy.

IFOAM EU is continuously networking with a wide array of stakeholders across the organic movement. We do this at various events – as organiser, co-organiser, organisers of workshops and more. In 2014, this included , BioVak, International Green Week, Natura Food, Nordic Organic Food Fair, Organic Marketing Forum, Sana, Sustainable Foods Summit, the IFOAM World Organic Congress, BioFach (where we held our 7th General Assembly and organised Science Day in collaboration with IFOAM – Organics International and held various workshops on the organic regulation & the Common Agricultural Policy) and many more.

What topics are we working on?

IFOAM EU covers the diversity of policies relevant to organics at EU policy and regulatory level. Not only do our members span the entire organic food chain, we're also actively working on the following topics:



The future of organics in Europe: Vision 2030

As organic moves beyond a niche, the organic movement needs to take stocks of what organic has become and what the future holds for us all. The movement needs to be prepared to cope with future political developments, environmental challenges and market trends. IFOAM EU initiated a participatory vision process to prepare the movement to proactively face the future.

We have been taking time to collectively set our own agenda, aiming towards a vision for organic in Europe to 2030. Our aim is to define where the organic sector and movement want to be in 2030 and what strategies are needed to get there.

Moreover, the movement is preparing itself for the future through shaping its vision on a global scale – Organic 3.0 – and on the European level: Vision 2030. For this process we launched a Europe wide stakeholder consultation and several workshops leading to a vision for the EU organic movement to be published in 2015.

OUR KEY AREAS OF WORK

PREVENTING GMO CONTAMINATION IN ORGANICS TO PRESERVE THE EU'S GENETIC BIODIVERSITY

IFOAM EU has actively followed the debate about GMOs at the European level – both the Commission's proposal allowing Member States to ban the cultivation of GMOs on their territory as well as the possible authorisation of new GMOs for cultivation. We did and continue to do this through collaborating with likeminded NGOs and civil society organisations and through our new project "[Keeping GMOs out of food](#)".

The "[Keeping GMOs out of food](#)" project's (2014-2016) aims are twofold: gathering different stakeholders of the GM-free sector to debate the current and future challenges regarding the prevention of contamination from GMOs and developing positions and coordinate advocacy work for a legal framework to aid food chain operators in remaining GMO-free at a reasonable cost

What did we do?

"KEEPING GMO OUT OF FOOD" PROJECT

- Start-up meeting of the "Keeping GMOs out of food" project, gathered experts from regional governments, research institutes, NGOs, farmers organisation, processing food companies and individual experts on the prevention of GMOs in the food chain
- Developed a concept note "Socioeconomic impacts of GMO production on organic supply chains in the EU", based on data obtained on interviews in different countries
- Published a report providing an overview of existing national "coexistence" measures in the EU's Member States aimed at preventing contamination by GMOs and showing that banning GMOs is the most effective way to prevent GMO contamination and to avoid extra costs for the food industry, public authorities and the organic sector

The report is part of the advocacy pillar of the project and is to be used as advocacy material for the organic sector on its effort towards European and national institutions on enacting GMO bans.

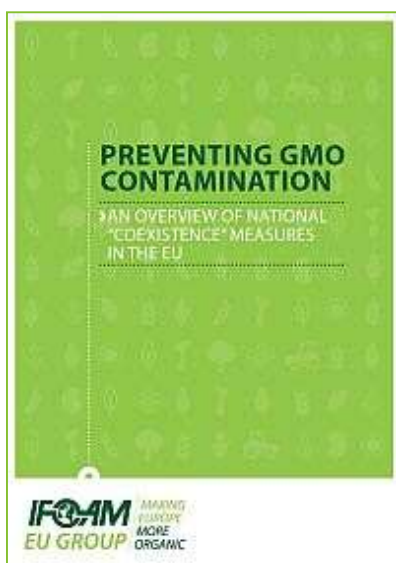
URGING POLICY-MAKERS TO REJECT GMOS IN EUROPE

- Lobbied decision-makers to reject the Commission's proposal in its original form and work towards a workable compromise joint advocacy and lobby meetings together with other organisations like Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth Europe
- Wrote a joint NGO letter with Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth Europe, SlowFood Europe and Corporate Europe Observatory that was sent to MEPs encouraging them to vote for the amendments that would enable Member States to get stronger legal grounds to justify the ban of GMO crops on their territory, include mandatory liability rules and mandatory "coexistence" measures
- Published a report providing an overview of existing national "coexistence" measures in the EU's Member States aimed at preventing contamination by GMOs and showing that banning GMOs is the most effective way to prevent GMO contamination and to avoid extra costs for the food industry, public authorities and the organic sector
- Advocated together with IFOAM EU members

What did we achieve?

URGING POLICY-MAKERS TO REJECT GMOS IN EUROPE

On 11 November, the members of the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) committee of the European Parliament adopted amendments to the "opt-out" proposal, including most of the voting recommendations that IFOAM EU and other organisations proposed in a joint letter to MEPs. This coalition of NGOs worked to minimize the role of the applicant company in the decision-making process.



The report is part of the "advocacy pillar" of activities of the project. It is to be used as advocacy material for the sector to advocate European and national institutions on enacting GMO bans



Several MEPs tabled amendments proposed by IFOAM EU and like-minded organisations on key questions such as the importance of mandatory coexistence measures and liability regimes to be included in the new directive allowing Member States to ban the cultivation of GMOs on their territory

Our lobby work proved to be successful as the socioeconomic impacts of GMOs were included in the list of considerations which member states can use to justify national bans in the new directive on importing GMOs for food and feed in the final piece of EU legislation.

Our members' advocacy work toward their national MEPs helped to raise the issue in national parties, namely in Austria, Germany, France and Bulgaria.

LOWERING GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS FROM ORGANIC FARMING THROUGH ON-FARM BIOGAS PRODUCTION

To help reach the European target of 20% renewables by 2020 – as stated in the 20-20-20 target in the 2020 climate and energy package – IFOAM EU and partners launched the [SUSTAIN GAS project](#). The aim of the project is to enhance sustainable biogas production in organic farming and help to turn the EU in a resource-efficient, green and competitive low-carbon economy.

What did we do?

IFOAM EU and its partners engaged and informed various stakeholders throughout 2014 organising:

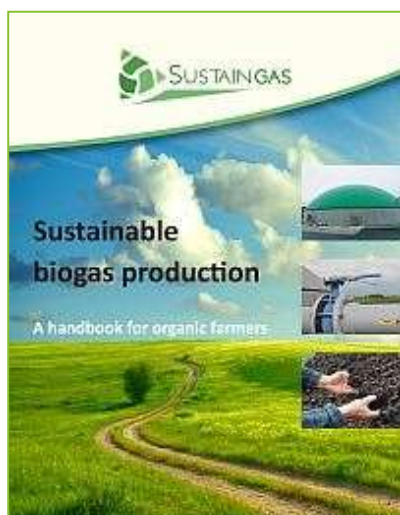
- Live webinars and workshops targeted at organic farmers, biogas consultants and associations, green energy companies and interested consumers during January and February
- A workshop "Production of Sustainable Biogas in mixed crop and livestock farms" on 14 March in Silleda, Pontevedra, Spain at the Galician Agriculture fair GandAgro 2014
- Organised a conference "Impacts and achievements of IEE Bioenergy projects" on 22 May 2014 in Brussels
- Free, open and online training modules in six languages in October 2014 to transmit know-how on the technical, economic and environmental aspects of biogas production in organic farming

We also published reference materials aimed at various stakeholders:

- [A handbook on sustainable biogas production](#) describing the benefits of organically produced biogas for the environment and the farmer, focussing on getting started, including best practice examples. This handbook was launched at BioFach
- Held a roundtable on the potential of sustainable biogas production on organic farms in the European Parliament on 8 April where the "Sustainable biogas production" andbook was presented and where it was shown how biogas can contribute to reaching the EU's 20-20-20 target set out in the EU's 2020 climate and energy package
- Bi-annual [project newsletters](#) in May and October
- Guidelines for sustainable biogas production in six different languages exploring the production of biogas on organic farms. These guidelines are for people who want to learn more about biogas production and those already working with biogas plants but want improve the sustainability of biogas production in their farms and introduce new practices

What did we achieve?

The SUSTAIN GAS project was a great success and attracted interest from a wide range of stakeholders. The project develop sustainability criteria for organic biogas production. Participants from all over the EU attended the workshops, conference and online training modules. A number of farmers have installed biogas plants on their farms.



The cover of the Sustainable biogas production handbook

SHOWING SUPPORT FOR AGRO-BIODIVERSITY BY SUPPORTING A MORE ROBUST SEED LEGISLATION

There is an urgent need to change the European seed legislation, which is tailored to industrial farming and is a barrier to increasing agro-biodiversity. The proposed Commission text for a new regulation on the marketing of plant reproductive material was rejected by the European Parliament in March, and eventually withdrawn by the new Commission in December. IFOAM EU raised awareness about this issue and supported partnering organisations to remind Commission and Parliament of their responsibility towards agro-biodiversity and conserving the EU's natural capital.

What did we do?

IFOAM EU urged its network to send Commissioners and MEPs organic seeds with a message. This was part of Arche Noah's campaign during the revision of the Commission's proposal by the Parliament and Council.

At various conferences, seminars and working groups we extensively consulted our membership, discussed the issue of seed legislation and communicated the importance of safeguarding the EU's biodiversity:

- A conference by Demeter International – under IFOAM EU patronage – addressed key questions about the future of organic breeding
- IFOAM EU was invited to present on seed law reform at an event by the Greens-EFA Group "Concentration of market power in the EU seed market" in the European Parliament on 29 January
- We co-organised a joint seminar at BioFach with AIAB to inform the organic sector about the legislative and other future challenges for organic breeding and the seed work of farmers, and give participants the opportunity to voice their needs and concerns
- IFOAM EU was invited to a working group on plant propagating material and seed with Commission officials to discuss constructive approaches to come to a better new legislation
- IFOAM EU organised a meeting of its seeds expert group
- IFOAM EU sent proposals for amendments to the Parliament, and contributed to the Commission consultation in September

What did we achieve?

IFOAM EU contributed by highlighting the problems with the Commission's proposal and by improving the proposal through amendments tabled by MEPs. We clearly communicated the needs of the organic sector in the review process to the European Commission and Parliament.

Moreover, we also managed to build a common position among the members of the IFOAM EU seed expert group, as well as with other groups despite the diversity among the actors and their national situations.



MAKING EUROPE MORE CLIMATE-FRIENDLY THROUGH ORGANIC FARMING - DEMONSTRATION PRACTICES

Strategies for organic and low-input farming to mitigate and adapt to climate change (SOLMACC) – a project by IFOAM EU and partnering organisations running 2013-2018 – is about demonstrating that farming can be climate-friendly by applying a combination of optimised organic farming practices to respond to climate change. Across Europe, 12 demonstration farms have been selected with farmers adjusting their agriculture techniques over the course of five years under close scientific monitoring and supervision. Modelling will allow for predictions about the long-term impact on soil, biodiversity and climate to be made with the project's results used to develop transferable approaches for other farms, be they organic or conventional.

What did we do?

The first organic farms to participate in the five-year long application of climate-friendly practices were found. In March, a group of Italian farmers gathered for training on optimised crop rotation, nutrient recycling, tillage and agroforestry practices to apply on their farms. In the months thereafter, the Swedish and German farmers received training.

From autumn 2014 on, the 12 participating demonstration farms adjusted their farming methods to become more climate-friendly; the impact has been and is closely monitored by farm advisors and scientists. The outcomes of the project and the data gained will make it possible to transfer the practices to other farms.

In light of the project a project website was launched and an introductory video to the project was created.

What did we achieve?

Farmers from the countries contributing to the project started implementing climate friendly farming practices. This way they are making their farms more resilient to the effects of climate change and at the same time reducing their greenhouse gas emissions. A final evaluation can only be done at the end of the project but the practices will contribute to making Europe more effective in addressing the challenge of reducing agriculture's greenhouse gas emissions.

CHALLENGING THE EU TO INCREASE ITS EFFECTIVENESS IN ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE

The organic sector is a forerunner when it comes to improving the carbon sequestration of soils and has proven time-and-again that its innovative farming practices contribute to reducing its emissions. IFOAM EU challenges the EU institutions to support organic solutions on climate action and supports like-minded organisations in their climate initiatives.

What did we do?

- Promoted Climate Action Network's initiatives, including an initiative rating MEPs' environmental efforts in the run-up to the elections of the European Parliament
- Appealed to the Hungarian government to keep the Kishantos organic demonstration farm in operation
- Brought together leading scientists, policymakers and civil society groups to discuss approaches in the fight against climate change at [two panel discussions](#) at the 'Countering Climate Change with Organic Agriculture' event
- IFOAM EU, IFOAM and RTOACC started developing a strategy on how to mainstream organic farming and agroecological approaches in the international climate change negotiations
- IFOAM EU and FiBL published a report "Mitigating the impact of agriculture on air quality and climate change: Solutions for improved nitrogen management"



The introductory video of the SOLMACC project can be found on IFOAM EU's YouTube channel

What did we achieve?

By promoting climate mitigation and adaptation activities to its stakeholders and network, IFOAM EU promotes better EU climate governance and performance. Moreover, we keep appealing to the EU to recognise the value and contribution of organic food and farming to tackling climate change. This was recognised at the 'Countering Climate Change with Organic Agriculture' event where Jerome Mounsey from DG Climate Action at the European Commission acknowledged that all farmers could learn a lot from the organic farming practices.

SAFEGUARDING THE FUTURE OF ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS IN EUROPE BY OPPOSING THE TRANSATLANTIC TRADE DEAL

We continued to follow the developments regarding the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) which could have significant effects on food and farming in Europe in view of preparing a unified position of the organic movement. The GMO debate should, in part, be considered in the context of these negotiations. As well, EU food safety rules and standards, not to mention the democratic principle of transparency may be at risk.

What did we do?

Besides attending events such as one on 13 March entitled "Untangling the trade talks: What are the likely consequences of an EU-US trade deal for our food and environment?" where we outlined that while IFOAM EU was in favour of trade based on fairness and the principle of food sovereignty, it had serious concerns about the negative implications the trade deal could have on European-wide food standards and the environment, we monitored the developments of the negotiations from a distance and help partnering organisations communicating their messages when they start campaigns on the subject.

We also communicated partners' campaigns and attended their events such as Friends of the Earth's Trojan Horse Treaty campaign and the self-organised European citizens' initiative against TTIP and CETA.

What did we achieve?

The TTIP is still being hotly debated and the results are still unclear. However, thanks to intensive campaigning in the EU and the US, policy-makers have started to take matters more seriously.



GREENING THE EU THROUGH THE CAP: FIGHTING FOR TRANSITION TOWARDS MORE AGROECOLOGICAL PRACTICES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF ORGANIC AGRICULTURE & MORE

Rules setting out the details and conditions for the implementation of the new CAP in Member States and regions were ready by mid-2014. The implementing rules included delegated acts and implementing acts to lay down further details on certain parts of the basic legislation of the new CAP.

For IFOAM EU the key points were the delegated acts related to the relationship between the Pillar 1 greening recognition for organic farmers, and the calculation of Pillar 2 organic production support under the rural development regulation. Another key priority was the need to close a loophole in the direct payment regulation which could permit the use of synthetic pesticides and fertiliser on ecological focus areas under Pillar 1 greening when nitrogen-fixing crops are grown.

What did we do?

SUPPORTED GREEN CAP IMPLEMENTATION – ENGAGING WITH DECISION-MAKERS

Throughout 2014 IFOAM EU actively engaged in the European Commission Agriculture and Rural Development advisory groups and successor Civil Society Dialogue (CDG) groups ensuring that the sustainable food and farming voices were part of key policies discussions on CAP and other policies.

IFOAM EU called on the Commission to use the CAP delegated acts to ensure that Member States take account of local circumstances and that only specific greening overlap relevant to organic farming be considered when calculating Pillar 2 organic farming support. Efforts sought to make certain the greening recognition sent a clear signal about the EU's commitment to sustainability and organic farming as failing to provide full support via Pillar 2 would have sent the opposite message. To safeguard the EU's natural capital, IFOAM EU called on EU and national decision-makers to ensure that these harmful inputs are excluded from ecological focus areas in a common letter sent with other NGOs. Moreover, we have called on the Commission to use the Rural Development Programmes to maximise the impact of the actions and recommendations set out in the EU organic action plan.

IFOAM EU and other civil society groups called on farmers and citizens to remind their Agriculture Ministers that agrochemical use and biodiversity management are not compatible and must not be permitted when growing nitrogen-fixing crops on EFAs under Pillar 1 greening of the CAP direct payments.

EXCHANGE ON INNOVATIVE COOPERATIVE APPROACHES - ENGAGING WITH FARMERS

While organic farmers have helped to pioneer knowledge exchange and innovative production techniques, finding information about support opportunities for which they may be eligible is not always immediately or widely available. To make full use of these new opportunities, IFOAM EU and seven farming organisations who are part of the IFOAM EU farmers group explored current best practice in Belgium and Spain that could inform new policy frameworks such as EU Rural Development Programmes (RDPs). A special emphasis was placed on how relevant RDP measures for capacity-building and cooperation can be applied in different Member States and regions.

These activities were part of an EU project called Closing Knowledge Gaps and Improving Skills & Competence for Sustainable Farming Enterprises (KSC4Farmers) which seeks to increase farming associations' understanding of the opportunities available to support cooperative approaches for the development of organic production under new RDPs.



Watch the videos created during the “Mind the CAP” campaign



Order your copy of Organic in Europe: Prospects and Developments at the IFOAM Bookstore



Read the factsheets on water on the IFOAM EU website

IMPROVING WATER QUALITY THROUGH CAP INSTRUMENTS

- IFOAM EU remains committed to supporting the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive (WFD) including the utilisation of relevant RDP measures such as conversion to and maintenance of organic farming and agri-environment-climate practices as well as knowledge transfer and advisory services
- IFOAM EU actively participated in meetings of the European Commission Expert Group on the WFD and Agriculture
- IFOAM EU launched [an online toolkit](#) highlighting best practice examples in farming in France and processing in Germany as well as information on relevant policies from EU Directives on Water and Pesticides, to the Common Agricultural Policy

MIND THE CAP CAMPAIGN

- RAISED AWARENESS ABOUT THE CAP

Throughout its “Mind the CAP” campaign, IFOAM EU raised awareness about the current state of play on the CAP reform and political and implementation processes. This helped to increase the understanding of the Common Agricultural Policy among farmers and citizens from the perspective of the organic movement.

- HIGHLIGHTED THE POTENTIAL OF EU ORGANIC FOOD & FARMING

The publication: “Organic in Europe: Prospects and Developments” highlighted the latest production trends, consumer demand, and the potential for organic food and farming if the new CAP is implemented in an effective way that supports greener and fairer farming across Europe.

What did we achieve?

- IFOAM EU greatly contributed to discussions in the European Commission’s Agriculture and Rural Development advisory groups and was successful in increasing the representation of the organic sector in the new Civil Dialogue Groups guaranteeing the interests of the organic movement were heard.
- Strong pressure towards the European Commission played an important role raising awareness of the potential ineffectiveness of new CAP greening instruments to deliver sustainable outcomes for farmers and rural areas. Furthermore, interested citizens and stakeholders were informed through the ‘Mind the CAP’ campaign.
- Outreach to organic stakeholders played a significant role in make sure that support for organic production is available in almost all Rural Development Programmes and helped to ensure that the voice of organic farmers was taken into account by the European Commission.

Beyond support for conversion and maintenance payments, organic farming associations within the IFOAM EU farmer groups shared best practices for organic cooperation and capacity-building under new Rural Development Programmes. This included visits to organic farms and businesses in Belgium and Spain in June and November 2014 respectively. The findings and outcomes of these exchanges will be used to develop a training manual for organic farming associations, agricultural advisors and educators will be published in June 2015.

REGULATION – REPRESENTING THE ORGANIC MOVEMENT DURING THE EU INSTITUTIONS’ LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

Organic is regulated in all EU countries by regulation (EC) No 834/2007. This regulation is currently being reviewed and IFOAM EU is actively providing the European movement’s input to the EU institutions.

The European Directorate-General for Agriculture presented and submitted a legislative proposal for a new organic regulation to replace the current legal organic framework (EC 834/07) to the European Parliament and the Council. At the same time a new European organic action plan was published in March 2014. IFOAM EU welcomed that the Commission took up the call from the organic sector at the IFOAM EU 7th European Organic Congress to draft a new European Organic Action Plan.

IFOAM EU believed and continues to believe that the current legal framework provides a solid basis for organic production and consumer confidence. Moreover its implementation potential is not yet fully exploited. IFOAM EU therefore recommends a focused improvement of the existing framework.

IFOAM EU advocated and continues to advocate for legislation that helps drive the sector forward while taking the reality of production into account.

What did we do?

- Organised a hearing for stakeholders, together with the representation office of Baden-Württemberg to the EU in Brussels on 29 April 2014
- Organised a debate on the Commission proposal for a new organic regulation co-organised by Green MEP Martin Haüsling and IFOAM EU on 22 September at the representation of the German state Hessen to the EU in Brussels
- Discussed the organic regulation review with sector representatives, key policy-makers and civil society at various events we organised, e.g. the 8th European Organic Conference and the 3rd Organic Processing Conference and other events, e.g. a special seminar at BioFach dedicated to the organic regulation

What did we achieve?

- IFOAM EU contributed greatly to the Commission’s review with detailed advice based on our members’ broad expertise and input gathered from all parts of the organic sector. As a result, the Commission has included some of IFOAM EU’s suggestions in the legislative proposal for a new EU Organic Regulation, making the flawed proposal somewhat more in line with the organic movement’s position
- In the progress report of the Italian Presidency, which oriented the following Council discussions by giving eleven political guidelines, ten of the eleven guidelines matched IFOAM EU’s demands for improvement by bringing back the initial proposal towards the well-established status-quo rules, e.g. re-inserting a certain flexibility of production requirements
- Members of the Visegrád group issued a statement raising concerns about the Commission proposal for a new organic regulation, largely matching IFOAM EU’s concerns. This document was discussed at the AGRIFISH meeting on 10 November. The declaration proves that IFOAM EU’s intensive lobby work is having clear results as seen in many of the opinions expressed by Member States



IFOAM EU President Christopher Stopes opened the 3rd Organic Processing Conference © Erkki Poytaniemi



Organic regulation review discussed at a parallel thematic session of the 8th European Organic Congress

RESEARCH & INNOVATION: SETTING THE EU RESEARCH AGENDA TO ENSURE ORGANIC AGRICULTURE'S INTERESTS ARE TAKEN UP

Since 2008 IFOAM EU hosts the secretariat of the European Technology Platform – TP Organics. TP Organics is a broad and strong coalition of civil society and environmental organisations, researchers, farmers and companies. Since 2013 it has been recognised by the European Commission as one of 40 European Technology Platforms (ETPs) and has been officially providing advice on the implementation of Horizon 2020 regarding organic, agroecology and low input food systems, as well as promoting these towards policy-makers. TP Organics has greatly contributed to enhancing Horizon 2020 in terms of environmental and climate challenges so it can better contribute to reaching the objectives of 7th Environmental Action Programme as well as the EU adaptation strategy. This was achieved through dialogue with policy-makers, while widely involving members and other relevant stakeholders. These activities took place during 2014 and are ongoing.

Through IFOAM EU, TP Organics advocated for more organic in and an agroecological approach to the European Innovation Partnerships on Agricultural Productivity and Sustainability (EIP-AGRI). EIP-AGRI is the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth of the European Commission. Its main objective is to bridge the gap between agricultural research and practice in order to foster innovation.

What did TP Organics do?

HORIZON 2020

- Once Horizon 2020 was approved, TP Organics provided a [practical introduction to Horizon 2020](#) and advice on how to apply for project funding in a new document, attended a workshop on the first Work Programme of Horizon 2020, organised on 14 January by the Commission and the European Innovation Partnership for Agriculture and responded to a stakeholder consultation on Horizon 2020, aimed at analysing the trends and challenges of Europe's food and farming sector eventually serving as a basis for the Horizon 2020 work programme
- Identified the research and innovation priorities of the organic movement and consequently advocated for their inclusion in the implementation of Horizon 2020 and transnational research calls, including the publication of an updated Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda was published in cooperation with scientists and experts, based on a participatory approach through an online consultation, workshop the 18th IFOAM Organic World Congress and consultation with other ETPs
- Worked on the inclusion of relevant environmental topics in the research calls of the European Union following governmental networks
- TP Organics set up and implement a strategy on how to impact on international research and innovation projects financed by the EU and advocate for having a higher share of projects favouring organic and low-input farming, e.g. through involvement in the "Feeding Knowledge" EXPO 2015 project

EIP

- In order to identify possible topics to be tackled by the EIP-AGRI, IFOAM EU, in the frame of TP Organics, coordinated the network of agro-ecological innovation and sent six proposals for Focus Groups in 2015 to DG AGRI
- Prepared the High-Level Steering Board (one of the governing board of EIP-AGRI). As a result of the meeting, the group sent a letter ahead of the High-Level Steering Board asking DG AGRI to reinstate its commitment to the Strategic Implementation Plan of the EIP-AGRI, which called for a diversity of approaches to make the agricultural sector more resource efficient. The letter was signed by likeminded organisations
- Produced an Action Plan for Innovation and Learning tackling the question on how to develop an agro-ecological vision on innovation, knowledge exchange and learning in collaboration with IFOAM EU and ARC 2020



What did we achieve?

Thanks to the lobbying work done by TP Organics, Horizon 2020 now recognises organic farming as one of the approaches to achieve a sustainable, resilient, resource efficient and competitive agri-food sector that can cope with climate changes and provide safe and healthy food. Moreover, organic farming is now prioritised in the EIP-AGRI and the EU Commission took up the call from the organic sector at the 7th European Organic Congress to draft a new European Organic Action Plan.

GOVERNANCE

IFOAM EU Board

The Board is the executive body that is elected by the General Assembly according to sector-related and regional criteria. It consists of:

Christopher Stopes

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Thomas Fertl

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Jan Plagge

Board Member
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Dominique Marion

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Albena Simeonova

Board Member
Bulgarian Organic Products Association
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Lea Bauer

Board Member
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IFOAM EU Council

The Council consists of nationally elected representatives and substitutes from 31 countries make up the IFOAM EU Council, which brings together national interests and specificities at the European level.

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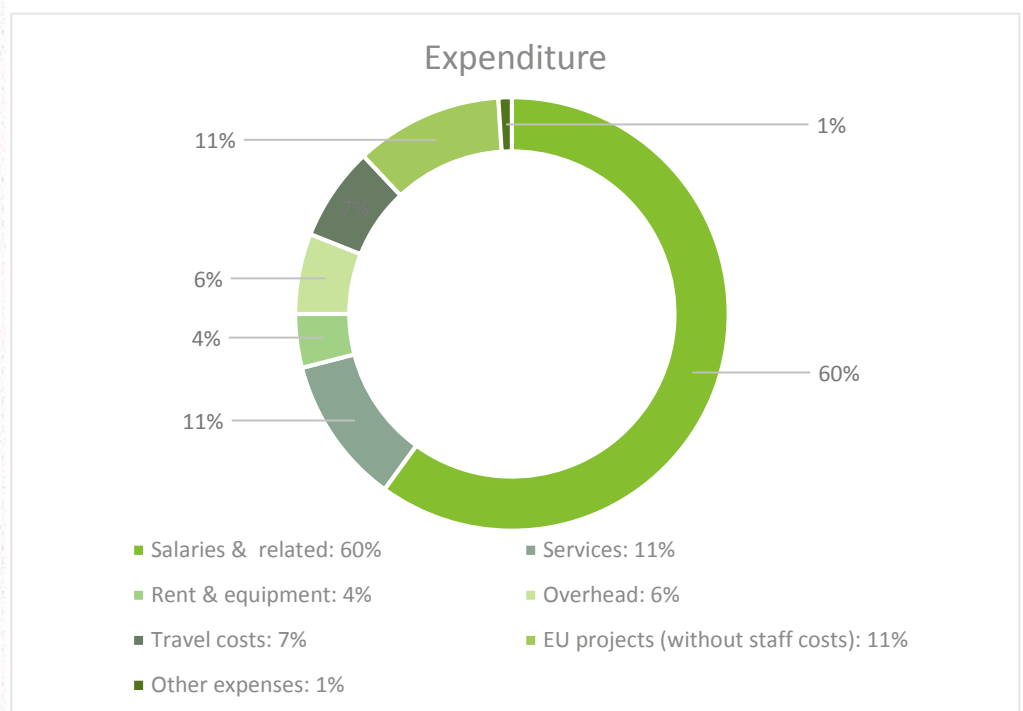
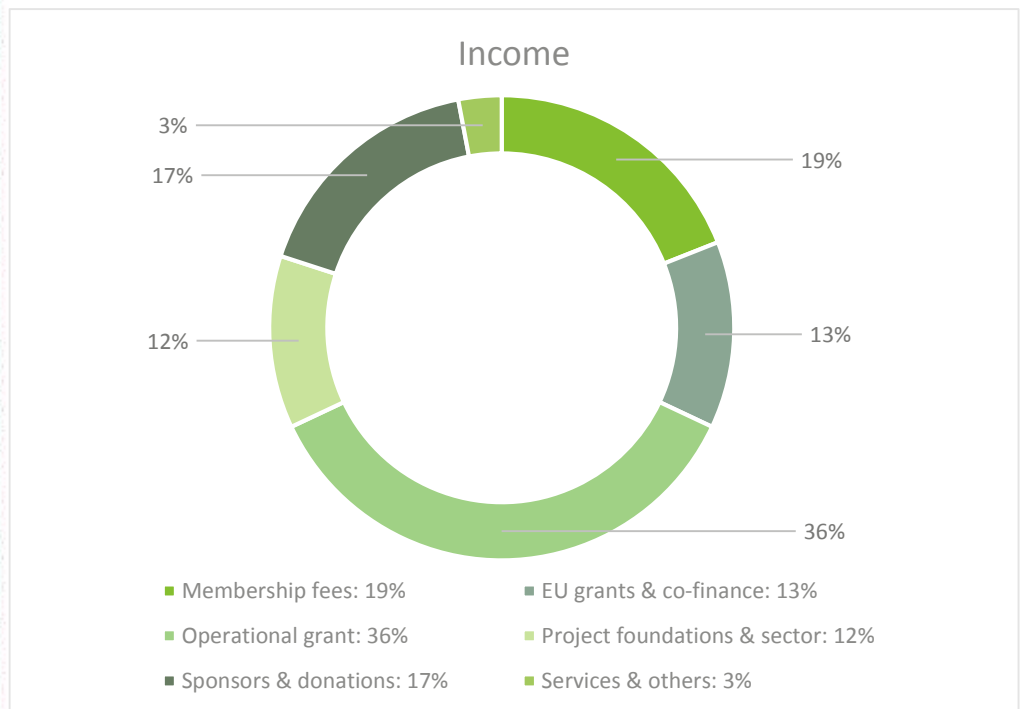
2014 INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

Total income: €1,290,605.00

Total costs: €1,210,505.00

Result: €80,100.00

Increase in the reserve: €176,765.26



OUR SUPPORTERS



THE “MAKING EUROPE MORE ORGANIC” CAMPAIGN IS MADE POSSIBLE BY



**SUPPORT US
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