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## WELCOME NOTE

Dear readers,

I am glad to tell you that IFOAM Organics Europe organised another successful digital edition of our [European Organic Congress](#). The 15<sup>th</sup> edition gathered the European organic movement online and in Lisbon, Portugal.

Considering the current political developments, the Congress came just at the right time. It provided policymakers, expert speakers and (organic) stakeholders from all over Europe the opportunity to discuss organic's contribution to reaching the EU Green Deal objectives. This year's Congress took place from 16-18 June and was organised in collaboration with Agrobio, the Portuguese organic farming association.

Together with Maria do Céu Antune, Portuguese Minister of Agriculture, I had the honour to welcome participants and speakers. During six sessions, high-level policymakers and expert panellists discussed aligning the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) with the EU Green Deal, the new EU Organic Regulation, organic's contribution to climate change mitigation, sustainable food systems, rural development, and the organic farming sector in Portugal. High-level speakers from the European Commission, Parliament and Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union agreed that organic farming is a part of the solution to reach the EU Green Deal's objectives and EU Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies' targets. Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner for Agriculture, also stressed this in his live address closing the European Organic Congress. [Read our full Congress report or watch the recordings to get informed.](#)

Our congress' CAP session will provide you with a good background for the jumbo trilogue CAP negotiations taking place 24-25 June. As organic movement, we believe it is crucial to increase ambitions on eco-schemes, ringfencing and organic farming. To deliver a greener CAP, co-legislators must ensure the CAP Strategic Plans regulation mentions the need to develop and adequately support organic. We are developing country cards demonstrating how CAP expenditure will have to increase to reach the 25% organic land target by 2030, and will release these during our [General Assembly](#) on 29 June. Interested readers find more information on the CAP negotiations in our [political hotspot](#).

Other political processes crucial to the organic movement taking place in the coming months are two Commission public consultations – one on new genomic techniques and another one on the seed legislation. We expect these to be released over the summer and it is crucial that the organic movement is ready to provide input to these. We will soon update our members about these on [our member extranet](#).

Finally, I would like to highlight some events in the months to come. From 6-10 September 2021, the [Organic World Congress](#) will take place online and in Rennes, France. As IFOAM Organics Europe, [we will contribute to the Congress](#). Soon after the Congress, we will have our bi-annual [Organic Food Conference](#) on 30 September-1 October, TP Organics will have its [Organic Innovation Days](#) on 30 October-1 November and we will organise [IFOAM Organics Europe Meets Business](#) on 9-10 December. We look forward to (digitally) seeing you there.

It will still be a few busy weeks for us at IFOAM Organics Europe, but I already wish everyone a healthy and happy summer and am looking forward to welcoming you back in September.

Organic regards,  
Jan Plagge  
IFOAM Organics Europe President



## POLITICAL HOTSPOT

On 25-26 May the “jumbo” trilogues took place during which negotiators from the European Parliament and the Council were expected to seal the deal on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) reform. However, after four days of unproductive discussions, negotiations broke down on 28 May.

### **What went down?**

On day 1 of the trilogues, the European Commission presented a list of seven outstanding issues (including ‘green architecture’ and the ring-fencing for the eco-schemes in the first pillar (direct payments), social conditionality, or coupled payments) in an attempt to break the deadlock and close the deal on the future CAP. Following two days of intense talks, the Portuguese Presidency of the Council came back with a proposal going back on their previous demands and opening up previously closed issues.

### **What went wrong?**

One of the breaking points of the negotiations was ring-fencing support for eco-schemes. Though the Council seemingly agreed to up its mandate voted in October (20% of first pillar funds ring-fenced for eco-schemes) to meet the Parliament’s own mandate (30%, which was also the Commission’s proposal) halfway at 25% for the whole duration of the CAP, the Portuguese minister Maria do Céu Antunes actually offered a ‘floor’ of only 18% annual spend across the whole programming period (instead of the two-year learning period agreed during the last trilogues), with full flexibility to transfer unused funds above the floor to other payments. This would even further downgrade the – already weak – Council mandate. On day 4, the Parliament sent back a counter-proposal, raising the ‘floor’ for ring-fencing eco-schemes to 22% in 2023 and 23% in 2024, but Agriculture Ministers rejected any further negotiations and let their “take it or leave it” ultimatum hanging in the air.

### **What is at stake for organic farmers?**

With this ultimatum, the Council ignores citizens’ call to increase sustainability or add basic safeguards and prevents any meaningful change for climate and biodiversity, leaving alignment of the CAP to the European Green Deal still open. The European Parliament had added to the list of logjam issues the need for Member States to align mid-way their strategic plans’ trajectories with the Green Deal’s various targets, including organic. However, this was rejected by the Council.

Because of the current status quo on the CAP strategic plans, organic farming is under pressure in many Member States where organic farmers face income loss compared to conventional farmers. In France, for instance, FNAB, the French organic farming organisation, points out that organic farmers could lose up to 66% of financial support for environmental services, as the government is considering replacing organic farming maintenance with an eco-scheme with much lower payments rates, and to which farmers engaged in the much weaker ‘high value environmental’ standard would also qualify. In the next CAP, current payments for “greening” and dedicated support for organic farming maintenance, respectively €80 and €122 per hectare per year, would be replaced by a single payment through an eco-scheme of €70 per hectare per year. A loss 13 times heavier than for conventional farmers, who would see their aid reduced by only €10, from €80 to €70 per hectare per year. Read [FNAB’s article](#) for more insights.

The political process to deliver on the ambitious targets of the Green Deal is difficult at the EU level, but there are clear opportunities at the Member State level to act. To reach 25% organic land by 2030, Member States must put organic targets into planning, measures, and figures on the ground.

## **IFOAM Organics Europe's position**

“The Parliament is right to refuse a bad deal with the Council. European citizens expect the CAP to deliver more for the environment and we clearly need more ambition on eco-schemes, ringfencing and organic farming” says our President Jan Plagge. The failure of the CAP negotiations shows Agriculture Ministers’ lack of ambition in delivering a greener and fairer CAP. To be able to tackle the climate and biodiversity emergencies, we need a CAP that is in line with the objectives of the EU Green Deal, thus fit for future. Co-legislators must ensure CAP strategic plans regulation will mention the need for Member States to develop and adequately support organic farming.

Further negotiations will resume on 24-25 June, shortly before the end of the Portuguese Presidency. The link between the CAP and the Green Deal (and the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity targets) will once again be the toughest point of discussions. We will update our members about these important CAP negotiations.

## **1 NEWS**

### **1.1 Policy**

#### **Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)**

##### **Support for French mobilisation for organic farming in CAP strategic plan**

Future national CAP strategic plans are now being discussed at national level. In France, FNAB, the French organic farming organisation and IFOAM Organics Europe member, left the Superior Orientation Council (CSO) chaired by the Minister of Agriculture on 21 May 2021. They did this in protest against the first official arbitrations of the future CAP implementation.

The French Minister of Agriculture announced a significant drop in aid for organic farmers – 66% less, or an average loss of €132 per hectare and per year – by confirming that he would align organic support with weaker schemes like High Environmental Value (HVE) and not going back on the €70 per hectare arbitration made by his cabinet.

That is why FNAB mobilised organic farmers on 2 June to ask for reopening of arbitrations on organic agriculture.

As IFOAM Organics Europe, we fully supported FNAB’s call to prevent a decrease of support for organic by the French government in its future national CAP Strategic Plan.

Reducing support for organic would be in complete contradiction with the European ambition to reach 25% of organic land by 2030, as defined in the EU Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies. All Member States should ensure their CAP strategic plans reward farming systems providing more environmental benefits, in line with the EU 25% target and with the principle of public money for public goods.

Read [FNAB’s article](#) for more insights.

[Sign FNAB’s petition for a greener, healthier and more organic food and farming policy.](#)



## Organic Regulations

### New Organic Regulations published

Two new Delegated Regulations of the New EU Organic Regulation (EU) 2018/848 were published in the EU Official Journal.

Considering these two new regulations, the number of secondary acts published so far rises to 10 – out of 23 expected by the end of the year.

- New [Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2021/771](#) is about traceability and mass balance checks to be done during the physical on-the-spot inspection and about controls on group of operators;
- New [Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2021/1006](#) is on the model of the certificate attesting compliance with organic rules.

Additionally, a new [Corrigendum](#) to the Basic Regulation (EU) 2018/848 has been published, adapting the titles of Articles 41 and 42.

You find all current and future organic regulations on the [organic regulation webpage](#) of IFOAM Organics Europe website, under “List of organic regulations”.

IFOAM Organics Europe’s members can contact [emanuele.busacca@organicseurope.bio](mailto:emanuele.busacca@organicseurope.bio) for questions on the EU Organic Regulation. Please note that we will not answer to non-members’ requests.

For information about what you can gain from being a member, read our [membership page](#) and contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio).

# THANK YOU

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## GMOs

### European retailers take a strong stand against deregulating new GMOs

On 26 May 2021, European retailers took a strong stand against deregulating new GMOs in [a joint resolution](#). One of the demands in the resolution is to uphold the 2018 European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruling stating that all products stemming from the new genetic engineering methods, such as CRISPR/Cas, TALENs and others, must be classified as GMOs, in the same manner as previous GMOs.

This resolution was published following the publication of the [European Commission study on new genomic techniques](#) published end of April 2021, that Commissioner for Health Stella Kyriakides worryingly welcomed with the following words “New genomic techniques can promote the sustainability of agricultural production, in line with the objectives of our farm to fork strategy”.

Among the signatories are ALDI, LIDL, as well as IFOAM Organics Europe members Dennree, Synadis bio, Alnatura, and Naturata.

Organisers of this resolution are the European non-GMO industry association (ENGA), the Verband Lebensmittel Ohne Gentechnik (VLOG), and ARGE Gentechnik-Frei.

### New GMOs in Europe? Slow Food Europe podcast with our Policy Coordinator

[Slow Food Europe](#) just launched a [podcast series dedicated to European food and farming policies](#), gathering experts to discuss hot topics in Brussels and give insights on the European negotiations.

For the first instalment of the series, Slow Food Europe follows up on the European Commission’s long-awaited [in-house study](#) on the ‘status of new genomic techniques under Union law and in light of the Court of Justice ruling in Case C-528/16’.

IFOAM Organics Europe’s Policy Coordinator on GMOs, Patent and Seeds, Martin Sommer, sheds light on the European organic movement’s vision on this complex topic and explains what new GMOs are, how they differ from old GMOs and the EU latest developments on the matter.

[Tune in to the first episode](#) to discover why the Commission’s report is not adequately addressing citizens and consumers’ perspective on this hot topic and why taking new GMOs out of the existing regulation threatens the development of organic and GMO-free agriculture.

For more information on the organic food and farming movement’s position on the study, [read our press release](#).

Other speakers include Elisa d’Aloisio, peasant farmer at the European Coordination Via Campesina who holds a PhD in genetics and practical expertise in GMOs, and Madeleine Coste, Policy Office at Slow Food Europe.

New episodes of the podcast series will be released every two-months on [Apple Podcasts](#) and [Spotify](#).

For more information on GMOs and IFOAM Organics Europe’s work on this issue, please contact [martin.sommer@organicseurope.bio](mailto:martin.sommer@organicseurope.bio). Please do note that we prioritise our members’ requests.



IFOAM Organics Europe members can find more information on the member extranet. For information about what you can gain from being a member, read [our membership page](#) and contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio).

## Seeds

### Commission opens public consultation on the review of the seed legislation

The Commission's Directorate General for Health and Food Safety (DG SANTE) is reviewing the Union's options to update the existing seed legislation. Their objective is making the Seed Directives more comprehensive and align them with goals of the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies.

Their **roadmap for the Impact Assessment has been published**. You can find it and download it here: [Revision of the plant and forest reproductive material legislation \(europa.eu\)](#).

IFOAM Organics Europe, with the active contribution of its Seed Expert Group, is preparing replies to the consultation. It will include the need to facilitate the registration of seed varieties for low-input systems like organic farming. As mentioned in the Commission study, coherence with the New EU Organic Regulation is key and options to modify the seed legislation must not conflict with the new possibilities regarding plant reproductive material that are defined in Regulation (EU) 2018/848.

For more information on the seed legislation and IFOAM Organics Europe's work on this issue, please contact [martin.sommer@organicseurope.bio](mailto:martin.sommer@organicseurope.bio).

Please do note that we prioritise our members' requests. For information about what you can gain from being a member, read [our membership page](#) and contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio).

## Climate Change

### IPBES and IPCC call to prioritize solutions benefiting both biodiversity and climate

On 10 June 2021, scientist and leading experts from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services ([IPBES](#)) and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change ([IPCC](#)) launched a joint report calling to tackle the biodiversity and climate crises, and their combined social impacts together.

Biodiversity loss and climate change are the result of human activities and mutually reinforce each other. They threaten nature, human lives, livelihoods and well-being around the world. To successfully resolve these two crises, future policies must therefore address their synergies instead of tackling them independently.

IPBES and IPCC identify key options for nature-based solutions:

- Stopping the loss and degradation of carbon – and species – rich ecosystems on land and in the ocean;
- Restoring carbon – and species – rich ecosystems;
- Increasing agroecology and forestry practices;
- Enhancing and better-targeting conservation actions, coordinated with and supported by strong climate adaptation and innovation;



- Eliminating subsidies that support local and national activities harmful to biodiversity.

The report also highlights the fact that treating climate, biodiversity and human society as couple systems will require transformative change in governance of socio-ecological systems as well to help create climate and biodiversity resilient development pathways.

[Read the full report.](#)

## Plant health care

### Beekeepers and civil society concerned about pesticide risk assessment methodology

At the Agriculture and Fisheries (AGRIFISH) Council on 28-29 June, Member State representatives will vote on a crucial step for the future risk assessment of pesticides and their impact on pollinators, namely setting a so-called Specific Protection Goal (SPG) for honeybees.

The SPG for honeybees will set the threshold for acceptable reduction in honeybee colony size due to pesticide exposure. Below this threshold, pesticides will be considered safe enough to be on the market and released onto fields.

Pollinators and bees are essential for healthy agroecosystems, the bedrock of the organic approach to plant health. By prohibiting the use of synthetic pesticides and fertilisers, organic agriculture avoids their unwanted negative effects on bees and biodiversity more widely.

IFOAM Organics Europe therefore joins civil society organisations in calling on the Council of the European Union to secure a sufficient level of protection for bees and other pollinators from pesticides. [Read the full letter on our website.](#)

Please contact [mathilde.calmels@organicseurope.bio](mailto:mathilde.calmels@organicseurope.bio) for questions on pesticides and natural inputs. Do note that we prioritise our members' requests. For information about what you can gain from being a member, read our [membership page](#) and contact [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio).

## Biodiversity, soil and water





## Comics showing why industrial agriculture is broken

In May 2020, the EU released its Biodiversity and Farm to Fork strategies as part of the European Green Deal. These two documents can play a significant role transforming our food systems as they contain good steps to a fairer and greener future for food and farming in the EU. For example, they are setting a target of 25% organic land in Europe by 2030, and targets to reduce pesticides and antibiotics by 2030.

Citizens' awareness is important to receive support when pressuring EU legislators to act upon issues. However, many citizens are not aware of these strategies' existence. That is why, in May 2021, the coalition Good Food Good Farming (GFGF) initiated an [awareness raising campaign on social media](#), informing citizens about problems in agriculture and food production and measures defined in the EU Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies in relation to these.

In three short comics, following the protagonist "Fork", GFGF explains problems and possible solutions for issues around biodiversity, pesticides, antibiotics, and climate change.

As IFOAM Organics Europe, we took part raising awareness and published the first comic on [20 May, World Bee Day](#). The first comic focused on halting biodiversity loss and called both on farming and nature restoration to go hand in hand and on people to sign the European Citizens Initiative [Save Bees and Farmers](#).

We posted comic n° 2 on [5 June, World Environment Day](#), informing viewers about antibiotic resistance in animal farms. The third and last comic focused on climate change and food security and was published on [21 June, Climate Change Day](#).

If you are interested in the initiatives of Good Food Good Farming, follow us or them on Twitter respectively at @OrganicsEurope and @GFGFActionDays and check out the hashtag #GoodFoodGoodFarming.

## Organic is Part of the Solution in Ensuring Biodiversity

*This article was first published by IFOAM Organics International on their blog '[Organic without boundaries](#)'.*

Each and every animal, microorganism and plant species has a vital role to play in preserving the general health of our planet and the ecosystem that keeps it alive. From the earth worm to the rain forests, such biodiversity, is important in ensuring food variety, strengthening resilience and maintaining ecosystem balance.

Since the health and life of our planet depends on biodiversity, the U.N designated 22 May as the [International Day for Biological Diversity](#) so as to promote dialogue and awareness on the topic. This year's theme is "We're part of the solution" and we collected a few stories to highlight how organic agriculture is part of the solution!

### Growing food, community and biodiversity

"Supporting and promoting organic methods of agriculture contributes to healthy and vibrant ecosystems that in turn, nurture us all."



As we celebrate the International Day for Biological Diversity, this should remind us that no matter what technological advances we have, we are completely dependent on nature, healthy and vibrant ecosystems and our diverse fauna and flora for our water, food, medicines, clothes, fuel, shelter, and energy.

### **How Organic Agriculture Supports Biodiversity**

“In contrast to conventional agriculture, organic agriculture sustains the health of soils, ecosystems, and people. Because organic food is grown in harmony with nature, organic farmers are custodians of biodiversity at all levels – from seeds and worms to birds and bees.”

The current rate of global diversity loss is estimated to be 1000 times higher than the extinction that would occur naturally. For instance, [a recent study](#) shows that many bird species in France have seen their numbers decline by two-thirds. If we continue to lose this amount of plants and animals it will have a severe impact on our ability to grow food, find fresh drinking water and adapt to a changing climate.

### **The Disappearance of Biodiversity Crucial for Food & Agriculture**

“Once lost, FAO warns that all species that support our food systems and sustain the people who grow and/or provide our food cannot be recovered. On a positive note, biodiversity-friendly farming practices such as organic are helping to counter this scenario.”

FAO recently launched the first-ever global report on [“The State of the World’s Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture”](#) presenting mounting and worrying evidence that the biodiversity sustaining our food systems is disappearing. This puts the future of our food, livelihoods, health, and environment under severe threat.

[Download the full report](#)

### **Our Biodiversity, Our Food, Our Health**

“Globally, local varieties and breeds of domesticated plants and animals are disappearing. This loss of diversity, including genetic diversity, poses a serious risk to global food security by undermining the resilience of many agricultural systems to threats such as pests, pathogens, and climate change.”

Transformative change also takes a fundamental system-wide reorganization across political, technological and economic factors including the elimination of perverse incentives, that don’t just harm biodiversity but don’t deliver any public goods, either. Policies across all sectors need to be reformed in order to be able to support this new model of food systems based on the principles of agroecology.

As part of the ecosystem, we all have a role to play in promoting biodiversity.

[Find out more on IFOAM Organics International work on biodiversity.](#) To learn more about IFOAM Organics Europe’s work on the topic, [check out our ‘Biodiversity, soil and water’ page.](#)

## **Fairness and transparency**

**Sustainable food systems innovators, read FAO’s handbook!**



The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations ([FAO](#)) and the National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and the Environment ([INRAE](#)) released a [handbook for sustainable food systems innovators](#), available in English, French and Spanish.

Sustainable food systems are fundamental to ensuring future generations are food secure and eat healthy diets. To transition towards sustainability, many food system activities must be reconstructed, and myriad actors around the world are starting to act locally. While some changes are easier than others, knowing how to navigate through them to promote sustainable consumption and production practices requires complex skill sets.

Through different categories of innovations – engaging consumers, producing sustainably, getting products to market and getting organized – readers can ‘choose their own adventure’ to develop personalized learning and action journeys according to their priorities.

This handbook collects experiences and initiatives by innovators from all over the world, fighting to change the organizational structures of local food systems and make them more sustainable. It also includes several entries about organic. On the issue of how to communicate with consumers for instance, the handbook pins the Finnish REKO model as an example on how social media can be a tool for internal communication. [Learn more about this initiative on www.euorganic2030.bio and find out how it contributes to making Europe more organic.](#)

[Read the handbook.](#)



[www.euorganic2030.bio](#) website is co-financed by the LIFE programme of the European Union, under the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME). The sole responsibility for this communication lies with IFOAM Organics Europe. EASME is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.

## Food, farm and environment

### Public consultation on the EU strategy for sustainable textiles

The European Commission is seeking stakeholders’ views on the EU strategy for sustainable textiles. Feedback regarding this topic can be provided [on the EU Commission's 'Have your say' website](#) by 4 August 2021.

In the context of sustainable textiles, IFOAM Organics Europe published its Position paper on organic textile – [protecting the credibility of the organic label](#) in December 2017. The main recommendations of this position paper recognise that “in the European Union (EU), the use of the term ‘organic’ in relation to textiles is not protected in the same way as it is for the food chain”. As such, “there is a need to improve credibility, and thus ensure that when the term organic is used in this sector, it relates to the whole production and processing chain, just as is the case for certified organic food and drink products. As a first step, IFOAM Organics Europe recommends that for fibre to be called ‘organic’, it should be produced according to globally recognised organic regulations”.



## 1.2 Research and innovation

### Research and innovation advocacy / TP Organics

#### SCAR-AKIS meeting: Digitalisation in CAP strategic plans, European Partnerships development 1-2 June, Online

TP Organics is part of the strategic working group of the Standing Committee on Agricultural Research on Agricultural Knowledge and Innovation Systems (SCAR-AKIS). It participated in the two-day online meeting of the 6<sup>th</sup> SCAR-AKIS meeting of the 5<sup>th</sup> mandate on digitalisation in the CAP strategic plans and the development process of the candidate partnerships on agroecology and food systems.

#### Day 1: CAP strategic plans & digitalisation

On the first day, Member States were informed about drafting the CAP strategic plans, including interventions, result indicators, the role of digitalisation (a cross-cutting objective) and digitalisation strategies of different Member States were presented, as was the Horizon Europe candidate Partnership 'Agriculture of data'. The latter, to be launched in 2022/23, will use the possibilities data technologies offer in the field of environmental observation to provide support to improve the sustainability performance of agriculture, and to improve the capacities for policy monitoring and evaluation.

Doris Marquardt, Programme officer at DG AGRI, European Commission, pointed out that digitalisation can contribute to all CAP strategic objectives and all types of farming, including organic and agroecology. The digitalisation strategy needs to specify under which conditions digital technologies contribute, to which extent and to which objectives. The Farm to Fork strategy should be the reference. Digital technologies cannot replace actors to increase structural diversity but can help organic farming achieve a better cost balance. Tailored solutions for agroecology and small(er) farms are needed for digitalisation as an enabler to achieve environmental and socio-economic sustainability, enabling the community itself to create the most suitable solution. Data sharing, capacity building, enabling exchange of information and experience, facilitating investments, and promoting targeted research and innovation are key to enable uptake. Technical innovation has to go hand in hand with new business models and social innovation. Digital skills and avoiding lock-in effects (like dependency of farmers on the use of certain products) were addressed in the proposal on data governance (European Commission, 2020).

#### A central knowledge reservoir for agricultural innovation

[EURAKNOS](#) and [EUREKA](#), EU research projects in which IFOAM Organics Europe is a partner, were mentioned in the context of digital tools to exchange practical knowledge. These two projects will provide standards for national databases that want to connect with the EU database. The easily accessible, EU-wide, centralised knowledge reservoir platform they are building for agricultural innovation and results from EU multi-actor projects will use advanced search tools, will be multilingual and will offer more possibilities and interactivity than the EIP-AGRI website.

#### Day 2: SCAR strategic working groups on agroecology & food systems

Day 2 was dedicated to the presentation of the SCAR strategic working groups on agroecology (SCAR-AE) and on food systems (SCAR Food Systems). In the framework of agroecology, the thematic network [AFINET](#) on agroforestry was presented. TP Organics and IFOAM Organics Europe are both observers of



SCAR-AE, and TP Organics is part of the Task Forces 1, 2 and 6 of SCAR-AE to develop a common understanding of agroecology and living labs, identify research needs and ensure collaboration with relevant actors.

In terms of the Food Systems Partnership, TP Organics is part of the core group writing the partnership proposal (template or action plan) for the European Commission. The partnership will address challenges and thematic focus areas with a food systems approach, accelerating the transition toward safe and healthy diets that are sustainably produced in resilient EU and global food systems. Partners presented the progress and recent activities of the two SCAR groups and explored potential for collaboration with SCAR-AKIS in view of developing the two partnerships. In the afternoon, six food system projects that are working on short food supply chains and leveraging public procurement for sustainable food systems were presented: AgroBridges, COACH, Cocoreado, CO-Fresh, FAIRCHAIN, and Ploutos.



[TP Organics](#), the European Technology Platform for organic food and farming and agroecology, is officially recognised by the European Commission for giving input in research and innovation policy and programmes. IFOAM Organics Europe hosts its secretariat.



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### **TP Organics' Organic Innovation Days 2021: Better inputs for organic farming 30 November-1 December 2021, online**

This year's [Organic Innovation Days](#), TP Organics' annual event, will take place online on 30 November-1 December. Titled 'Better inputs for organic farming', the Organic Innovation Days are a unique opportunity to meet members of TP Organics, network with EU stakeholders and decision-makers, as well as discuss and exchange with the partners of the European research projects [RELACS](#) and [Organic-PLUS](#). These two Horizon 2020-funded projects aim at reducing the use of contentious inputs in organic farming systems.



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What can I expect at this year's Organic Innovation Days?

### **Day 1: Alternatives to contentious inputs in organic farming**

On the first day, participants will be taking a closer look at plant protection products such as copper and mineral oil as well as soil and nutrients, peat and plastic, antibiotics, vitamins, and novel bedding materials in livestock husbandry. The projects' experts will present each topic and a discussion will follow.

### **Day 2: Socio-economic aspects & the way forward to phase-out contentious inputs**

On the second day, Organic-PLUS and RELACS experts will present the socio-economic results of the projects in three sessions:

- Consumer perspectives and citizen juries;
- Socio-economic and environmental impacts of alternative tools and technologies;
- Acceptance level of different alternative inputs, towards a European roadmap for replacing contentious inputs.

These exchanges will be followed by a high-level policy debate on how to tackle contentious inputs in organic farming. The European Commission's Directorate General on Agriculture and Rural Development (DG AGRI) will introduce the topic by discussing the contribution of the Organic Action Plan to this goal. The RELACS and Organic-PLUS project coordinators will conclude the event and point out next steps.

### **Background information**

**TP Organics** is the European Technology Platform for organic food and farming and agroecology officially recognised by the European Commission for giving input in research and innovation policy and programmes. IFOAM Organics Europe hosts its secretariat.

Coordinated by Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) Switzerland, **RELACS** has 29 partners from 13 European countries. IFOAM Organics Europe is responsible for communication, dissemination, and facilitation of the science-practice-policy dialogue. RELACS will foster the development and facilitate the adoption of cost-efficient and environmentally safe tools and technologies, to phase out the dependency on and use of inputs considered contentious in organic farming systems.

'Replacement of Contentious Inputs in Organic Farming Systems' (RELACS) has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 773431.

Coordinated by Coventry University's Centre for Agroecology, Water and Resilience, 'sister' project **Organic-PLUS (O+)** involves 10 universities and 15 multi-actors (other research institutions and NGOs) in 8 EU and 4 non-EU countries. The overall aim is to provide high-quality, trans-disciplinary, scientifically informed decision support to help all actors in the organic sector, including national and regional policy makers, to reach the next level of the organic success story in Europe. Both projects started in May 2018 and officially run until end of April 2022 (not considering possible Covid-19 extensions).

Pathways to phase-out contentious inputs from organic agriculture in Europe (Organic-PLUS) has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 774340.





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*These sessions are financed by the projects RELACS and Organic-PLUS, which have received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreements No 773431 and No 774340, respectively.*

## Knowledge for organic

### End of OK-Net EcoFeed project

Over the past three years, 19 organisations from 12 European countries have taken part in the Horizon 2020 [OK-Net EcoFeed](#) project to help farmers achieve 100% use of organic and regional feed for pigs and poultry.

#### Why a project on organic feed for pigs & poultry?

Use of regional feed is one of the requirements of the European organic regulation. For pigs and poultry, the revised European legislation requires that “by 2022 at least 30% of the feed shall come from the farm itself or, if this is not feasible or such feed is not available, shall be produced in cooperation with other organic or in-conversion production units and feed operators using feed and feed material from the same region” (Regulation EU, 2018/848).

Achieving 100% organic diets for monogastrics is challenging. The revised EU regulation acknowledges this difficulty by allowing the use of 5% non-organic protein feed for young animals. Furthermore, importing animal feed has economical disadvantages for farmers and can compromise the sustainability and decrease consumers' confidence.

#### What did OK-Net EcoFeed do?

The OK-Net Ecofeed project supported on-farm feed autonomy and helped producers achieve 100% organic rations for monogastric animals. All the project's work aimed at tackling the organic feed objectives for the coming years, including reducing the cost of feed production, improving sustainability and animal welfare, and satisfying consumer expectation for traceability of production. To name few, the [Soil Association](#) in the UK proposes the use of sprouted seeds as a valuable green fodder to ensure good animal welfare, particularly when access to pasture for laying hens and broilers is restricted. In Italy, [AIAB](#) evaluated the possibility of growing camelina, which fits well into the crop rotation and it may so sustain the farm's self-production. Camelina cake is also a protein-rich feed, and an efficient alternative to the protein of soya. In Spain, [Ecovalia](#) tested brewer's yeast, an industry by-product rich in protein and vitamin B to be used as an alternative source of protein for pigs.

#### What did OK-Net EcoFeed deliver?

OK-Net EcoFeed's trials were run by farmers for farmers and designed according to the regional potential and opportunities. More than 100 existing and new tools including reports, technical articles, leaflets, videos, booklets, [scientific articles](#), results of trials and practice abstracts were collected.



Besides the variety of solutions and practices identified, OK-Net EcoFeed has created a free [ration-planning software](#), allowing farmers and advisors to compose rations for organic pig and poultry that fit best to their conditions.

All tools are available for direct, free download from the [Organic Farm Knowledge platform](#). During the OK-Net EcoFeed project, a significant effort was made to expand the Organic Farm Knowledge platform to include all major themes related to organic farming, from [horticulture](#), [environmental protection](#) to [marketing and agricultural trade](#). Users can now browse through the platform's [themes](#) or [search the toolbox](#) directly according to tool type, language, keywords and more.

All project outcomes were compiled and analysed to identify research needs and barriers to innovation and propose recommendations for a better-targeted research and innovation agenda. The [full report is available on the project website](#).

#### **Where do I find more information?**

Visit the [OK-Net Ecofeed website or Organic Farm Knowledge](#) and have a look at [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) using @ecofeed and #OKNetEcofeed.

OK-Net EcoFeed helped organic pig and poultry farmers to achieve the goal of 100% use of organic and regional feed. The three-year project extended the Organic Farm Knowledge platform. IFOAM Organics Europe coordinated the project consisting of 11 partners and 8 third linked parties from 12 countries. OK-Net Ecofeed is an Horizon 2020-funded project.



*OK-Net EcoFeed has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 773911. This communication only reflects the author's view. The Research Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.*

#### **Vitamin B2 supplementation and copper reduction in organic farming - New RELACS practice abstracts**

The RELACS project recently published three new practice abstracts (practical guidelines) on:

- [Vitamin B2 supplementation for laying and parent hens in organic poultry systems](#)
- [Recommendations for vitamin B2 supplements in organic slow-growing broilers](#)
- [Copper reduction strategies in viticulture](#)

These practical guidelines targeted to farmers and farm advisors were developed by RELACS project coordinator, the [Research Institute of Organic Agriculture \(FiBL\)](#), and project partner [ÖMKi, the Hungarian Research Institute of Organic Agriculture](#).





[Read the full practice abstracts to learn more about recommendations and on-farm applications on RELACS's website.](#)

Practice abstracts contain practical guidelines for different actors on the food and farming systems to solve a given problem. Publishing partners are the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) and IFOAM Organics Europe.

Visit the [RELACS website](#) to learn more and follow the latest project's developments on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) using @RELACSeu and #RELACSeu.

RELACS seeks to promote the development and adoption of environmentally safe and economically viable tools and technologies to reduce the use of external inputs in organic farming systems. [IFOAM Organics Europe](#) is responsible for the communication and dissemination of project results as well as the coordination of the science-practice-policy dialogue.



*RELACS has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 773431. This communication only reflects the author's view. The Research Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.*

### **Curious about alternatives to contentious fertilisers? Read RELACS' new practice abstracts**

The RELACS project just released two new practice abstracts on promising alternatives to fertilisers suitable for organic farming.

#### **Struvite as alternative to phosphorus**

All crops need phosphorus (P) to grow, but only a few P sources are permitted in organic farming. Rock phosphate is one of them, but because it comes from non-renewable sources and often contains high concentrations of heavy metals such as Cadmium, the organic sector is proactively looking for alternatives. [In a new practice abstract, RELACS looks at struvite's potential as alternative source of phosphorus for organic agriculture to satisfy plants' phosphorus needs.](#)

#### **Recycled human waste**

Recycling nutrients from human waste, such as urban food and organic waste, is a promising strategy to overcome the negative nutrient balances in organic farming, provided it is treated to become hygienic, biologically stable and easy to handle. Processing of these wastes by anaerobic digestion in a closed system produces fertiliser (digestates) and energy while avoiding nutrient losses and greenhouse gas emission. [In a new practice abstract, RELACS explains the benefits of anaerobic digestates and gives practical recommendations for its use.](#)

[Read the full practice abstracts to learn more about recommendations and on-farm applications on RELACS's website.](#)



Practice abstracts contain practical guidelines for different actors on the food and farming systems to solve a given problem. Publishing partners are the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL) and IFOAM Organics Europe.

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### **Replacing antibiotics in organic - Handbook on Animal Health and Welfare Protocol (AHWP)**

Do you know mastitis (inflammation of the udder) is one of the main reasons for antibiotic treatments on European organic farms? But frequent antibiotic use causes resistant micro-organisms.

Using antibiotics is strictly restricted in organic farming and organic farmers instead implement a systemic approach to control and prevent disease. They seek to strengthen the animals' immune system through careful hygiene, combined with a husbandry and feeding regime adapted to the animals' needs to avoid overuse of medication. However, in exceptional cases, organic farmers are allowed to use antibiotics to ensure a sick animal's welfare is not in danger.

To phase out this exceptional use of antibiotics, one of RELACS project's work packages looks into providing solutions to support livestock health and welfare, by searching for alternatives.

Two of RELACS' project partners, [the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture \(FiBL\)](#) and [ITAB](#), recently published a [Handbook on Animal Health and Welfare Protocol. This publication is based](#) on the knowledge and experience of former projects, in particular the [Core Organic ANIPLAN-Project](#), and the principles of health planning processes. It has been developed by a team of farming advisors, veterinary practitioners and on-farm researchers in preventive veterinary medicine. The protocol will be useful for less experienced advisors in the organic dairy sector.

[Read the improved RELACS-Animal Health and Welfare Protocol \(AHWP\).](#)

Visit the [RELACS website](#) to learn more and follow the latest project's developments on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) using @RELACSeu and #RELACSeu.



RELACS seeks to promote the development and adoption of environmentally safe and economically viable tools and technologies to reduce the use of external inputs in organic farming systems. [IFOAM Organics Europe](#) is responsible for the communication and dissemination of project results as well as the coordination of the science-practice-policy dialogue.



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### SmartAgriHubs' Open call (RESTART & EXPAND)

In July 2020, SmartAgriHubs opened the RESTART and EXPAND open calls, assigning up to €5,000,000 funding for Digital Innovation Hubs that are supporting diverse stakeholders in the agri-food economy.

#### Why should the organic sector take part?

Digital innovations implemented throughout the organic value chain have a huge potential to contribute to the current and future societal challenges.

SmartAgriHubs' open call is also a unique chance to connect with a wider community and exchange on latest knowledge and expertise.

#### How to participate?

- **RESTART**

This open call will focus on **hackathon type of activities** that will RESTART the economy around the agri-food related sectors and affected food systems. Its objective is to generate ideas for potential Innovation Experiments that can be realised by related teams and that go beyond initial conceptual implementations.

Proposals could realise hackathons, challenges and datathons that have a direct as well as an indirect impact to mitigate effects of the corona/Covid-19 or similar (future) pandemics. [Check the RESTART open call fiche for more information.](#)

- **EXPAND**

The major amount of funding will be assigned to the implementation of programmes by DIHs to **support the realisation of Innovation Experiments**. This shall specifically contribute to the expansion of the network of DIHs and Competence Centres (CCs) as well as making new knowledge and results from digital innovation activities available.

The EXPAND open call is specifically targeting at DIHs as the main proposers facilitating the realisation of innovation experiments. [Check the EXPAND open call fiche for more information.](#)

#### Timeline and submission

- Register to the [SmartAgriHubs' Innovation Portal](#). It will give you access to all information needed and direct communication to the community if any questions on the application arise;
- After that, [start applying](#);
- RESTART Open Call deadline: 29<sup>th</sup> September 2021



- EXPAND Open Call's next evaluation batch: 29<sup>th</sup> September 2021. EXPAND will close in June 2022.

#### Any questions about the Open Calls?

- Read the call documents on the [dedicated page of the SmartAgriHubs website](#);
- Read the [RESTART & EXPAND FAQ](#);
- Watch the dedicated Q&A webinars on [SmartAgriHubs' YouTube channel](#).

#### Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Digital Innovation Hubs as defined on the Smart Agri Hubs website are public-private partnerships for innovation, providing a mix of different services to their clients. These include technology services such as R&D, provision of lab facilities, testing and validation are mainly the domain of the competence centres. Innovation ecosystem support services include community building lobbying, brokerage, knowledge sharing and advocacy.



*SmartAgriHubs is a €20 million EUR project under the Horizon 2020 instrument and brings together a consortium of over 164 partners in the European agri-food sector. The project aims to realise the digitisation of European agriculture by fostering an agricultural innovation ecosystem dedicated to excellence, sustainability, and success.*

IFOAM Organics Europe's role is to connect the dots between SmartAgriHubs and the organic sector, disseminate project outputs and communicate key messages during the project run.



*SmartAgriHubs has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 818182. This communication only reflects the author's view. The Research Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.*

#### Are you involved in agriculture or forestry multi-actor projects? Take part in EUREKA's impact assessment survey!

The [EUREKA](#) project launched a survey to collect information on how multi-actor projects (MAPs) perform impact assessments and evaluation.

The aim of EUREKA is to help ensure the longer-term and wider use of the practical knowledge and innovative solutions generated by farmers, foresters and other rural businesses in Horizon 2020 multi-actor projects.

Lots of valuable and useful information was produced across the EU thanks to many exciting agricultural and forestry projects. How well this information is being shared and used will be evaluated [with a survey on EUREKA's website](#).

The survey is available in different languages. If you are involved in agriculture or forestry, we invite you to share your experiences by joining it!

Go to the survey directly:

- French <https://forms.gle/Xv555PDaEvegYBhL6>
- Greek <https://forms.gle/AEVMvp63KR381C8r7>



- Polish <https://forms.gle/amEL2Dpgbx9NWEe28>
- Lithuanian <https://forms.gle/Hvwsh7XRJfA1WPbd7>
- Bulgarian <https://forms.gle/EGDYg5EggDjgzC9d9>
- Romanian <https://forms.gle/SZjiY6mpZFTzXHnL6>
- Spanish <https://forms.gle/cJMtMfbD3PyQAvxC7>
- Dutch <https://forms.gle/GtBEynCR7kNXhsSc7>
- Italian <https://forms.gle/ZFxHFur6v6yQMNhu6>
- English <https://forms.gle/USsqNjgnDzoxCaSP6>

Read more on [EUREKA's project website](#), [Twitter](#) & [Facebook](#) accounts.

[EUREKA](#) will build a European knowledge repository for best agricultural practices, as well as boost knowledge interaction and connectivity between different knowledge reservoirs and existing initiatives. IFOAM Organics Europe's role is to contribute to the project with its expertise on organic farming and experience with multi-actor projects in the organic sector. EUREKA is an EU Horizon 2020-funded project.



**EUREKA**



*EUREKA has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 862790*

## 2 IFOAM ORGANICS EUROPE DEVELOPMENT

### **IFOAM Organics Europe's General Assembly 2021**

The IFOAM Organics Europe General Assembly 2021 will take place online on Tuesday, 29 June 2021, 10:00-13:00.

The General Assembly of IFOAM Organics Europe gathers members from all over Europe in the democratic pursuit of a common voice for organic. This year they will discuss:

- Approval of financial report 2020,
- Approval of budget 2021/2022,
- Vote on IFOAM Organics Europe new statutes,
- Presentation of World Board candidates endorsed by IFOAM Organics Europe.

Participation in the General Assembly is vital to discuss and democratically act on important aspects for our organization and the organic movement, to guarantee a successful structure, able to face and respond to future challenges of the organic sector in Europe and steer the direction of the organic movement.



Are you an IFOAM Organics Europe member and forgot to register? Send us an email at [membership@organicseurope.bio](mailto:membership@organicseurope.bio).

### **Sarah Compson, Marco Schlüter and Paul Holmbeck candidates for IFOAM World Board election**

On 13-14 September, [IFOAM – Organics International’s General Assembly](#) will take place, during which it will choose a new World Board. IFOAM Organics Europe has been an active member of the Nomination Committee of IFOAM Organics International and helped to find candidates for the World Board election in 2020, as stated in [“Making IFOAM EU Fit for the Future”](#), the report on organizational development 2018/2020 presented by the board at IFOAM Organics Europe’s 2020 General Assembly .

In this context, IFOAM Organics Europe’s Board identified and supported two candidates with excellent knowledge of the European organic sector and expertise valuable for the World Board: Sarah Compson and Marco Schlüter. Due to postponing IFOAM – Organics International’s General Assembly from 2020 to 2021, IFOAM Organics Europe’s Board had the possibility to examine the candidature of Paul Holmbeck and decided to support it too. Although there are several good candidates from or living in European countries, the EU Board recommends voting for Sarah Compson, Marco Schlüter and Paul Holmbeck as World Board members during the next IFOAM Organics International General Assembly.

#### **Sarah Compson**

Chairing of IFOAM Organics Europe’s Interest Group of Organic Processors and Traders, Sarah is currently the International Development Manager at Soil Association (UK), as well as a member of the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS) standards committee and the Organic Cotton Ambassador at Textile Exchange.



Sarah is a passionate advocate for organic, with a strong track record of convening and collaborating with a wide range of stakeholders across the globe to support and develop the organic movement. Her experience helped her gain philosophical and technical knowledge of matters affecting the organic sector, covering a wide range of organic topics both in relation to principle and practice, including GM, social justice and regulation.

“I believe that the organic movement can play a critical role in informing and improving the environmental and social impacts of agriculture worldwide. I would relish the opportunity to represent the movement and would bring my energy, enthusiasm, passion and commitment to advocate for the solutions that organic can deliver”, says Sarah.

#### **Marco Schlüter**



A trained biodynamic farmer, Marco Schlüter is a strong advocate for organic food and farming. Following a master’s in agriculture science, he became assistant to a Green member of the Bundestag before being appointed as IFOAM Organics Europe’s Director in 2003. In his time as Director, Marco helped build the advocacy organisation and give a voice to the organic movement in the EU. After 13 years, he stepped down and took on new challenges as Head of the Organic Fruit Advisory Service. He is now Head of Strategy & International Affairs and a Member of the Management Board at Naturland.



Marco Schlüter believes that “in times of fundamental global crisis, the world depends urgently on an effective and good governed organic movement where the regional and global level go together hand in hand.”

### Paul Holmbeck



Paul Holmbeck is an emblematic figure of the European food and farming movement, who spent more than 20 years as Director of Organic Denmark. As such, he contributed to forge strong organic policies and broad political and civil society alliances in favour of organic, thus building one of the world's leading NGO in the organic food sector. In 2020, he launched Holmbeck EcoConsult to focus on advising leaders in government, business and NGOs on the global challenges we face (climate, biodiversity, hunger, social justice).

If elected to the World Board, Paul will be dedicated to strengthening IFOAM Organics International's members capacity to drive change through organic policy, market development and work with organic farmers and allies. He also believes in the need to position organic farming and food in the sustainability agenda and will have a specific focus on organizational development and fundraising activities.

As IFOAM Organics Europe, we are convinced by all three candidates' skills and experience and fully supports them for IFOAM Organics International's World Board election. We are sure they will help develop IFOAM Organics International and its Regional Bodies.

**Lead by example! Check out inspiring initiatives from the organic sector and submit your own**

**ORGANIC ON EVERY TABLE**

**IMPROVE INSPIRE DELIVER**

**FAIR PLAY FAIR PAY**

**HAVE AN INITIATIVE THAT TRANSFORMS FOOD AND FARMING? VISIT EUORGANIC2030.BIO TO SEE INSPIRING EXAMPLES AND SUBMIT YOUR OWN!**

**IFOAM ORGANICS EUROPE**

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Are you contributing to the transformation of European food and farming systems? Showcase your initiative at [EUorganic2030.bio](https://euorganic2030.bio)!

To achieve the European organic movement's ambitious and [shared Vision for organic in 2030](#), IFOAM Organics Europe is gathering existing initiatives and projects that are [transforming food and farming](#).

The organic movement has always been a frontrunner and source of innovation. Together we can make organic and truly sustainable farming widely available and recognised.

Do you have an initiative:

- That can be an inspiration to other food and farming actors and policy-makers;



Rue du Commerce 124 – 1000 Brussels – Belgium – Phone: +32 2 280 12 23 – Email: [info@organicseurope.bio](mailto:info@organicseurope.bio)

- Is not older than 5 years;
- Is helping bring organic on every table, improve organics further, and make the value chains more transparent and fair?

[Submit it now](#) on [EUorganic2030.bio](#)!

If your initiative meets our vision, it will be profiled on [EUorganic2030.bio](#) and we will promote it on our social media using #EUorganic2030.

Need inspiration? Have an initiative? [Visit EUorganic2030.bio](#)



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### **They make it happen! Preserving land for local and agroecological farming**

By 2030, we want organic on every table. We want organic and agroecological practices employed on more than half of EU farmlands. To achieve this goal, a part of our [Vision 2030](#), organic farmers must have access to land.

In the light of competing land uses, increasing concentration in land ownership, rising land prices and land abandonment, the [European Network for Access to Land](#) unites farmers and community led initiatives from many European countries to:

Strengthen practical knowledge on access to land;

Work towards acquiring land through crowdfunding, land trust schemes and other financial tools; and

Advocate for an evolution of national and EU policies and regulations on land use and management.

Read more about this initiative on [euorganic2030.bio](#), and share it on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#). Find out what other initiatives are transforming food and farming in Europe on social media using #EUorganic2030.

Interested by access to land? Read Nyéléni Europe Food Sovereignty Movement's [Roots of Resilience: Land Policy for an Agroecological Transition in Europe](#) and learn how agroecology and democratic land control can take root in Europe. The report is also available in [English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#) and [Romanian](#).



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Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

A collective of organisations, coming together under the banner of the Nyéléni Europe published this report. This report was co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.





## Saying goodbye to colleagues

### Léna Brisset



After two years at IFOAM Organics Europe, we are saying goodbye to Policy Officer for Agriculture and the CAP, Léna Brisset. Léna was responsible for IFOAM Organics Europe's positions on the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP), as well as for the coordination of IFOAM Organics Europe's Interest Group of Organic Farmers (IGOF). Léna will now work for a French region on topics such as agriculture, transport and fisheries. We wish her all the best for this new adventure and thank her for her commitment to IFOAM Organic Europe's work!

## 3 EVENTS

### 3.1 Preview of events

#### **Organic World Congress 2021: Register now to the leading event for the global organic sector 6-10 September, online and in Rennes, France**

Interested in addressing questions around resilience, societal transformation, health and food sovereignty with more than 2,500 organic stakeholders, farmers, researchers and policymakers from around the world? Register now to the [Organic World Congress 2021](#), the world's largest organic gathering from 6-10 September 2021 online and in Rennes, France.

With more than 450 contributions, 80 conferences and 50 countries represented, the 2021 edition of the Organic World Congress will offer a global, diverse space inspiring positive change through knowledge exchange, learning, and the formulation of organic, sustainable solutions. For more information, [have a look at the Congress website](#) and [check out the preliminary programme](#).

As IFOAM Organics Europe, we will contribute to the Congress with a session on new genetic engineering techniques, a topic high on the European and global political agenda. We will also organise a session on natural inputs in organic farming systems as part of the [RELACS project](#). In this session, we will discuss the future of plant protection products, fertilisers and inputs on organic livestock production.

Make sure to follow @OrganicsEurope on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#), and [have a look at our website](#) to stay tuned.

The Organic World Congress 2021 is organised by [IFOAM – Organics International](#), the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements and takes place in conjunction with the movement's [General Assembly](#).



### 3.2 Review of events

#### **For a just transition to align the EU food system with the Green Deal 26 May 2021, online**

French and European food systems need to be transformed to address health, environmental and social challenges. However, the current policy measures fostering this transition are not ambitious enough, as their socio-economic costs are generally deemed to be too high.

In this context, [IDDRI](#), a think tank aiming at facilitating the transition towards sustainable development, developed a new methodological framework combining environmental and socio-economic modelling to identify policy drivers for a just transition of food systems by 2030. They present this framework in the study '[Towards a just transition of food systems – Challenges and policy levers for France](#)'.

Based on the indicative decarbonisation pathway for the agricultural sector from the French National Low-Carbon Strategy, IDDRI develops two different scenarios for the evolution of the French food system to assess their impacts by 2030 on two key sectors: dairy cattle and arable crops. Together these account for 70% of the utilised agricultural area (UAA), 52% of value creation in agriculture and 40% of value creation in the food industry.

On 27 May, IDDRI held a webinar to present the key messages. Key stakeholders of the European food systems discussed the policy implications of the study. The study's authors, Pierre-Marie Aubert, IDDRI, Baptiste Gardin, IDDRI, and Christophe Alliot, BASIC, were joined by IFOAM Organics Europe's President, Jan Plagge. They made up the panel, along with Emmanuel Faber, O2PB Chairman and Danone former Chairperson & CEO; Christiane Lambert, President of COPA-COGECA; and Tassos Haniotis, Director of Strategy, Simplification and Policy Analysis, DG AGRI.

If you missed the event, [watch the replay on IDDRI's website](#) or have a look at [the Twitter thread](#) they created. The study is available in [English](#) and [French](#).



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## **Animal husbandry & grazing management in organic farming – Effects of the new EU Organic Regulation**

**10 June, online**

On 10 June, the symposium on animal husbandry and grazing management in organic farming took place, organized by the Austrian Rural Network in cooperation with the Austrian Chamber of Agriculture, our member Bio Austria, the umbrella organisation of control bodies and the agricultural research centre Raumberg-Gumpenstein.

More than 500 participants from a total of 13 EU member states attended the online event. In addition to numerous farmers, representatives from associations, politics, control, advice and research also took part. Our President Jan Plagge was there too, presenting the perspective of the organic sector.

The aim of the event was to present the opportunities and challenges linked to the implementation of the new EU organic regulation in Europe from the point of view of practice, advice and control, to shed light on areas of interpretation of the new legal provisions and to show possible solutions and perspectives for practice.

Attendees listened to specialist lectures on further development of organic agriculture on the European market in accordance with the EU Green Deal and Organic Action Plan. They also attended a panel discussing practical solutions in line with the EU law and considering regional conditions.

The online symposium made brought together the right people to talk about possible implementation strategies for the future of organic farming and, in particular, point out viable options on grazing management. Speakers clearly emphasised the need for a regionally adapted implementation of European legal requirements with company-specific flexibility. The well-being of humans and animals and creating fair competitive market opportunities are essential factors for successful development of organic agriculture in Europe.

Presentations and video recordings from the event are available on the [organisers' website](#). For a few insights in the discussion, check our [Twitter thread](#) and follow us at @OrganicsEurope.

### **Background**

In its EU Green Deal, the European Commission committed to the making the EU's agriculture more environmentally friendly. A crucial objective is increasing the EU's share of organic land to 25% by 2030. At the same time, the new Organic Regulation (EU) 2018/848 and its implementing provisions will come into force on January 1, 2022. In EU Member States, adjustments to the legal provisions for organic production are required at the national level, the implementation of which is associated with opportunities and challenges, especially with regard to organic animal husbandry.

### **Getting food on the climate agenda - FoodSHIFT2030 webinar**

**15 June 2021, online**

Climate change policy debates fail to consider the interconnected nature of food systems and involve a wide range of actors. This is why the FoodSHIFT2030 project held a public webinar on the impact city-wide approaches could have on putting food on the climate agenda.

Agriculture should be considered in the climate change policy debate. On the one hand, agriculture and sectors related to it, like food and feed transport, feed import, fertilizer production, etc., are



responsible for up to 30% of the EU and global greenhouse gases emissions. On the other hand, agriculture can have a positive impact on climate as soil is a crucial carbon sink if managed under sustainable farming practises.

FoodSHIFT's webinar started with a presentation by [Nourish Scotland](#), presenting their Glasgow Food and Climate Declaration, which they elaborated on with like-minded organisations (IPES-Food, FAO, WWF, URBANACT, ICLEI, etc.). They issued their Declaration to help commit subnational governments to tackle the climate emergency through integrated food policies and call on national governments to act ahead of the COP26 (1-12 November in Glasgow). Cities and subnational governments [can sign the Declaration on www.glasgowdeclaration.org](#).

The webinar continued with [Glasgow Good Food Partnerships](#), which launched a 10-year work plan to promote circular economy to reduce food waste in businesses and promote affordable, fresh, and healthy food systems in one of the UK's most unequal cities.

The webinar then visited Barcelona to discuss [the Barcelona Sustainable Food Capital 2021](#) project aimed at increasing integrative policies at the city level. The project is inspired from the [Milano Urban Food Policy Pact](#).

Finally, [the FoodSHIFT's Barcelona Tech Food 3.0. Lab](#) highlighted its work promoting both innovation in food and farming systems and citizen and bottom-up driven approaches. The Lab is currently implementing three projects:

- ROMI, using robotics in micro farms;
- Grow Observatory, collecting data on soil pollution and contamination; and
- Siscod, defining how local restaurants and inhabitants can reduce food waste through circular economy.

Want to learn more about these initiatives? Stay tuned for the recording of the webinar.

FoodSHIFT2030 is a Horizon 2020 project promoting food systems innovations in nine cities across Europe. More information about the 9nice FoodSHIFT Labs is available [on the FoodSHIFT2030 website](#). Follow the project on social media using [@FoodSHIFT2030](#) on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

IFOAM Organics Europe contributes to the conceptual framework for further development of governance strategies and food policy strategies. We will also disseminate project outputs within the organic network and at our main events.



*FoodSHIFT 2030 has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement number 862716. This communication only reflects the author's view. The Research Executive Agency is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.*



## **EUREKA summer consortium meeting 15&17 June 2021, online**

On 15-17 June, all EUREKA's partners virtually met at the project's annual meeting to update and exchange about the project's progress.

As IFOAM Organics Europe, we are a partner in the EU Horizon 2020 project which is developing a centralised, open-source e-platform ('EU FarmBook') for collecting and sharing the many different types of end-user material produced by Horizon 2020 multi-actor projects. As a project partner, we engages the organic sector in developing the FarmBook.

### **Meet Marta, the organic persona**

During the first day of the meeting, personas, fictional representations of typical users, and their user-journeys were introduced to the project partners. 16 personas representing farmers, agricultural advisors and foresters and forestry advisors were created based on user research, including both qualitative and quantitative data. Marta represents the organic farmer persona. [Visit the EUREKA website](#) to meet other personas and their user journeys.

### **Next step: User tests**

Each feature of the EU FarmBook platform will be connected to the persona's needs. A user manual was presented, which will be finalized after collecting feedback from the partners. How to upload a knowledge object to feed the platform was tested and discussed in an interactive session. As a next step, user tests will take place in July/August to ensure information on the platform can be found easily, so stay tuned!

[Visit the EUREKA website](#) and subscribe to the newsletter for project updates and related news and stories.

The EUREKA project is an EU-funded action that aims to help ensure the longer-term and wider use by farmers, foresters and other rural businesses of the practical knowledge and innovative solutions that are generated by Horizon 2020 multi-actor projects. IFOAM Organics Europe's role in the project is to make sure that the future FarmBook suits the needs of the organic actors, and to engage the organic sector in its development.



## **EUREKA**



*EUREKA has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 862790*

**More than 660 discussed transitioning to more sustainable food & farming systems at European Organic Congress  
16-18 June, online, live from Lisbon**

**IFOAM**  
**ORGANICS EUROPE**

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This year's edition of our [European Organic Congress](#) took place online and live from Lisbon on 16-18 June 2021. More than 660 participants tuned in to 'Organics' contribution to the European Green Deal', aimed to inspire participants on how the agri-food sector enhances the transition to a more sustainable food system.

### **Day 1: Opening, CAP & organic farming in Portugal**

#### Opening: End of the CAP negotiations?

Jan Plagge, President of IFOAM Organics Europe, and Maria do Céu Antunes, Portuguese Minister of Agriculture, welcomed participants on the first day of the three-day-event. Maria do Céu Antunes opened the Congress thanking farmers for their crucial role during the pandemic. Minister do Céu Antunes also reminded the audience and speakers of the priorities of the Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union for agriculture to promote a resilient Europe, especially as the Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) negotiations are coming to an end. She highlighted that organic is part of the solution to reach a more sustainable and balanced food and farming system, stating policymakers need to ensure its support by boosting both organic production and consumption.

#### Link CAP to EU Farm to Fork & Biodiversity strategies & involve movement nationally

IFOAM Organics Europe's Director Eduardo Cuoco kicked off the first panel assessing whether CAP and CAP strategic plans are in line with the EU Green Deal objectives, especially the 25% organic land proposed in the EU Farm to Fork Strategy. Bruno Dimas, Deputy Director-General for Planning and Policy at the Portuguese Ministry of Agriculture, stated the CAP reform could be sealed by the end of the month. Tassos Haniotis, Director for Strategy, Simplification and Policy Analysis at the Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Commission, assured the Commission was very involved in the negotiations and drafting the CAP proposal, acknowledging previous versions of the CAPs lacked environmental ambition.

Celia Nyssens, Policy Officer for Agriculture at the European Environmental Bureau, Aina Calafat Rogers, Deputy Council member of IFOAM Organics Europe and Jan Plagge emphasized the necessity to stop business as usual, quit the current status quo in strategic plans and finally give public money to public goods. They called for the CAP co-legislators to ensure the CAP Strategic Plans Regulation mentions the need for Member States to develop and adequately support organic farming – which the Commission identified as part of the solution to reach the Green Deal's ambitious environmental targets. A poll among the congress' attendees found that most audience members were unsatisfied with their own involvement in the national consultation process on the CAP strategic plans.



### On the ground: Organic farming in Portugal

The afternoon session was dedicated to organic farming in Portugal, addressing the main challenges organic conversion entails when it comes to achieving the 25% organic land target by 2030 as well as the relationship between organic farming and public health. Jaime Carvalho Ferreira, Chairman of the Board at AGROBIO, welcomed participants and moderated the panel discussion. Gonçalo de Freitas Leal, Director, Portuguese Directorate-General for Agriculture & Rural Development, gave an overview of the organic situation in Portugal and presented the Portuguese national strategy for organic production which entered into force in 2017.

Fátima Ferreira, Maternal Health & Midwifery Nurse with a master's degree in organic farming, elaborated on organic as a potential public health indicator, based on scientific evidence showing that pesticides are endocrine disruptors linked to several illnesses and diseases. The panel also touched on the challenges met when transitioning to organic and projects helping further develop organic and climate-friendly practices in agriculture.

### **Day 2: Climate mitigation & sequestration and sustainable food systems**

#### Tackling climate & biodiversity crisis requires a systemic approach

The second day started with a session on 'Climate mitigation and sequestration in agriculture: What is the right level of ambition?', moderated by Eric Gall, Deputy Director and Policy Manager at IFOAM Organics Europe. During his opening speech, Christian Holzleitner, Head of Unit for Land Use and Finance for Innovation at the Directorate-General for Climate Action at the European Commission, presented the Commission's 'Fit for 55' legislative package to overhaul the EU climate policy architecture as well as the carbon farming initiative.

Joined by Pierre-Marie Aubert, Senior Researcher and Coordinator of the European Agriculture Initiative at IDDRI, Thomas Legge, Land Use Director at the European Climate Foundation, Kurt Sannen, Chair of Interest Group of Organic Farmers (IGOF) at IFOAM Organics Europe and Shefali Sharma, Director at Institute for Agriculture and Trade policy's (IATP) European office, all panellists agreed on the [necessity to have a systemic approach to tackle the climate and biodiversity crises jointly](#).

However, Thomas Legge warned participants to remain cautious about the potential of carbon sequestration in agricultural soil as carbon sequestration in farming cannot be used as offsets in other sectors. Focusing on policy levers, Shefali Sharma and Kurt Sannen pleaded for political support for practices mitigating climate change, more specifically for CAP strategic plans to support organic conversion and nature-based solutions removing carbon from the atmosphere and helping the EU achieve climate neutrality.

#### Sustainable food systems require true cost of food

The second session of the day moderated by Silvia Schmidt, Food Policy Officer at IFOAM Organics Europe, focused on sustainable food systems. In a video message, Greens/EFA MEP Claude Gruffat said the holistic approach offered by the EU Farm to Fork strategy calls for practical change in both farming production methods and consumption. Though, to reach 25% of organic land by 2030, he believes we will need much greater budgetary resources as today organic covers 8.5% of EU land but only receives 1.8% of the CAP budget.

Nathalie Chaze, Director for Food sustainability and International Relations at the Directorate-General for Health and Food Safety at the European Commission, asserted sustainable public procurement will be a powerful tool to promote consumption of healthier and more sustainable food products, as part

of a legislative proposal expected in 2023. Both her and Dora Drexler, Board Vice-President of IFOAM Organics Europe agreed the Organic Action Plan was a milestone document.

For the European organic movement, [the 25% organic target is ambitious but achievable with right policies measures and other initiatives in place](#) and the new organic action plan indeed includes several actions that may greatly contribute to achieving this target, if the actions are adequately followed up on, at all relevant levels. During her intervention, Faustine Bas-Defossez, External Impact Director at the Institute for European Environmental Policy, highlighted for instance some needed CAP-related actions to rebalance support to food and help implement the EU Green Deal's objectives. Wrapping up, Tobias Bandel, Managing Director of Soil & More Impacts, reminded the audience that sustainability is about the ability to sustain, and companies can already play their part by internalizing as much as possible the externalities through true cost accounting tools.

### **Day 3: EU Organic Regulation, rural development & closing**

#### **EU Organic Regulation: Harmonization & local adaptation**

Of course, the European Organic Congress is not complete without a session on the new Organic Regulation. IFOAM Organics Europe's Regulation Manager, Emanuele Busacca, moderated the first session on the last day. Elena Panichi, Head of the Organics Unit at the European Commission, informed participants on the development of the secondary legislation, gave an overview of the published acts and next steps from now until January 2022 and beyond.

Marian Blom, Board Vice-President of IFOAM Organics Europe, and Michel Reynaud, Board member and sector representative for certification of IFOAM Organics Europe, explained the expected changes for producers, processors and traders and described the expected ones on controls, certification and international trade.

One of the take-aways from this session is that a balance between harmonization at EU level and local adaptation at regional level will be crucial for a successful implementation of the regulation. All panellists also agreed that a constructive dialogue and continuous communication between the Commission and the stakeholders will be key elements in the implementation of the New EU Organic Regulation. [Did you know IFOAM Organics Europe is drafting guidelines for the new Organic Regulation to guide our members and organic stakeholders?](#) Stay tuned for more information in the coming weeks.

#### **A long-term vision for rural development & biodistricts' potential**

This year's European Organic Congress ended with a session on rural development and a European long-term vision for rural areas led by Eva Berckmans, Communications Manager at IFOAM Organics Europe. They informed participants that, as European organic movement, we contributed to the Commission's stakeholder consultation, reiterating that organic businesses stimulate rural development by employing more people than conventional farms and providing ecosystem services like better health of soil, plants, animals and humans.

After a video presentation of [Froidefontaine Farm](#), a good example of rural development, by its founder, Alexis de Liedekerke, a high-level panel composed by Silvia Michellini, Director for Rural Development at the Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development at the European Commission, Doris Letina, Vice-President at European Council of Young Farmers, Luis Saldanha, Chairman of the Board at National Young Farmers Confederation (CNJ) and Salvatore Basile, President of the International Network of Eco Regions, further discussed the Commission's long-term vision for rural areas. They explored initiatives such as organic districts (or biodistricts), living labs and





lighthouses farms potential to contribute to the development and attractiveness of rural area, as well as the success of the Organic Action Plan and 25% organic land target by 2030.

### Organic farmers are leaders of sustainable agriculture of the future

We were delighted to have Janusz Wojciechowski, Commissioner for Agriculture and Rural Development at the European Commission, close this year's edition of our European Organic Congress together with our President Jan Plagge. The Commissioner said “organic farmers are the leaders of the sustainable agriculture of the future. We have to aim for an agriculture that combines best practices for biodiversity, climate mitigation and high animal welfare standards”. He also called on us to keep on sharing best practices, lead by example and motivate Member States to develop organic farming.

Relive the congress by [going through our Twitter Moment](#), [browsing #EOC2021](#), and watching [the congress recording](#).

We would like to thank our speakers, participants, technical consultants, co-organisers, sponsors, supporters, and media partners for making this congress possible.

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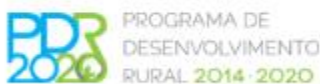
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**Ten take-aways of the European Organic Congress 2021**  
**16-18 June, online, live from Lisbon**



Following a successful edition of the hybrid European Organic Congress 2021, we are happy to share the ten key take-aways from the Congress. These include the sessions recordings, so those of you who could not make it can revisit the event and learn from our high-level policymakers and expert attendees.

1. Participants and high-level speakers from the European Commission, European Parliament and Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union agree that organic farming is part of the solution to reach the European Green Deal's objectives and EU Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies' targets.
2. To reach the EU's 25% organic land target laid out in the Farm to Fork and Biodiversity strategies, co-legislators of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) must ensure CAP strategic plans regulation mentions the need to develop and adequately support organic farming.
3. The new European Organic Action Plan is a great step to promote organic production and consumption across the EU. To ensure its success, each Member State needs to develop a national plan drawing on a comprehensive analysis of the organic sector, incentives, clear deadlines and a national organic land target.
4. [Biodistricts](#) can contribute to developing rural areas and reaching the 25% organic land target by 2030.
5. We need a systemic approach to tackle the climate and biodiversity crises. Organic farming is part of the solution to transition to a European food and farming system that is resilient and mitigate its effects on the environment.
6. The new EU Organic Regulation will apply from 1 January 2022 and bring major changes for organic operators. To ensure successful implementation, a balance between harmonization at EU level and adaptation at regional level is crucial, without derogating from the organic principles.
7. Many farmers, food processors and retailers are already making Europe more organic through inspiring initiatives that enhance organic production along the entire value chain – from farm to fork. Check them out on [www.euorganic2030.bio](http://www.euorganic2030.bio).
8. More than 660 participants from all over Europe and the world attended this hybrid Congress. The three most frequently mentioned keywords of our audience were cooperation, inspiration and ambition!
9. Did you miss the chance to take part or do you want to relive the Congress? Watch the [congress videos](#), go through our [Twitter Moments](#), and revisit [#EOC2021](#).

10. [A heart-felt 'Thank you' to our members, speakers, participants, technical consultants, co-organisers, sponsors, funders and media partners!](#) You made this Congress possible and exciting.

In case you attended our European Organic Congress 2021, we would like to ask you to help us improve by taking few minutes to fill in the [Congress evaluation form](#) and give us your feedback on the programme and format of the event.

Stay tuned about the date and location of the next edition of the European Organic Congress by visiting [europeanorganiccongress.bio](http://europeanorganiccongress.bio) and following [@OrganicsEurope](#) on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#). IFOAM Organics Europe will post updates about the Congress with #EUOrganic2030 and #EOC2021.

Feel free to contact [congress@organicseurope.bio](mailto:congress@organicseurope.bio) if you have any questions about the congress.



## 4 MAKING EUROPE MORE ORGANIC – SUPPORT IFOAM ORGANICS EUROPE

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The contributions of sponsors allow IFOAM Organics Europe to focus on its most important work – representing organic stakeholders. This funding is a means to co-finance IFOAM Organics Europe events, projects and publications and is a highly valued contribution to our work.



## 5 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

29 June 2021

[IFOAM Organics Europe's General Assembly](#)

Online

6-10 September 2021

[Organic World Congress 2021](#)

Online and in Rennes, France

30 September-1 October 2021

[Organic Food Conference](#)

To be determined

30 September-2 October 2021

[BIOEXPO Warsaw](#)

Pruszków, Poland

30 November-1 December 2021

[TP Organics' Organic Innovation Days](#)

Online

9-10 December 2021

[IFOAM Organics Europe Meets Business](#)

To be determined

15-18 February 2022

[BIOFACH 2022](#)

Nuremberg, Germany



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