

International Federation
of Organic Agriculture Movements
EU Regional Group

PRESS RELEASE

CAP Communication: EU agriculture needs clearer direction for long-term sustainability

BRUSSELS, 29 NOVEMBER 2017 – The European Commission has adopted a Communication on the Future of Food and Farming. The Communication, presented to the EU Institutions, sets out the EU's direction for the future Common Agricultural Policy.

The next CAP reform is a huge opportunity to promote a full transition towards more sustainable farming in Europe. Today's Communication offers some possibilities for improvement, however, it lacks a clear and common EU approach to realise the Commission's wider intentions to shift towards more sustainable growth models under the next EU Budget (1). It also fails to prioritise the expansion of sustainable farming systems, such as organic farming, which can help to lead the way towards an ambitious implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals in the European agriculture sector by the both EU and Member States.

Christopher Stopes, IFOAM EU President: "With CAP representing almost 40% of the EU expenditure and the Commission proposing a more results-orientated budget post-2020, spending money largely on income support with a limited impact can no longer be justified. To have the full confidence of EU citizens we need to maintain a common EU-wide approach. EU leaders must ensure in the upcoming EU budget discussions that future CAP payments are grounded on farmers delivering a wide range of public goods based on a whole farm system approach."

In the current CAP, income support under Pillar 1 is conditional on the principle of meeting basic sustainability requirements (100% financed by the EU), and farmers who want to go one step further have only the option to undertake more ambitious Pillar 2 voluntary schemes (co-financed by the EU and Member States). If the current structure is upheld, the next reform risks maintaining the status quo and not giving the necessary impulse to prioritise sustainability.

Jan Plagge, IFOAM EU, Vice-President: "Today most farmers are at the mercy of large industry players in an increasingly globalised marketplace, and lack incentives to shift their businesses in a more sustainable direction. EU policymakers must use the next CAP reform to send a clear signal that sustainability must be at the heart the European agri-food sector. To this end, forthcoming legislative proposals need to make concrete efforts to fully align farm income support with the delivery of a wide range of public goods, based on reward and incentive, 100% financed by the EU budget." (2)

Ends.

(1) [European Commission \(2017\): Reflection Paper on the future of EU finances](#)

(2) [IFOAM EU \(2017\): A CAP for healthy farms, healthy people, healthy planet](#)