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WELCOME NOTE

Feeding Europe without pesticides is a realistic objective, and a full transition of our agriculture towards agroecology could reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the sector by 40% to 47% while at the same time preserving our biodiversity. These are the conclusions of the new report from the French think tank IDDRI (*Institut du Développement Durable et des Relations Internationales*), to which IFOAM EU contributed.

The TYFA (Ten Years for Agroecology) scenario is based on the generalisation of organic farming (abandoning synthetic pesticides and fertilizers), the extension of agroecological infrastructures such as hedges and the adoption of healthy diets, to feed 530 million Europeans by 2050 (despite a 35% drop in production). It leads to a 40% reduction in GHG emissions (35% for direct non-CO2 emissions), offers a potential for soil carbon sequestration of 159 MtCO₂eql/year until 2035, and a reduction of bioenergy production to zero. The scenario is not easily compatible with the objective of carbon neutrality, but offers many co-benefits: biodiversity, natural resources, adaptation, health.

[A variant of this scenario (TYFA-GHG), which includes an amount of bioenergy production of 189 TWh/year, and a greater reduction in bovine livestock (-34% compared to 2010, compared to -15% for TYFA) and the controlled development of anaerobic digestion using grassland grasses and animal manure as feedstock, could lead to -47% of emission reductions.]

These conclusions are significant for policy-makers because it is the first time that a scenario examines in details, on a solid agronomic basis, the implications of a generalisation of a type of agriculture inspired by the principles of organic farming, and establishes strategies based on land sharing and agroecology as credible ones. In contrast to most analytical models on which the European Commission relies to reflect on decarbonisation pathways of the agricultural sector, often based on unrealistic assumptions of future yield increases through further intensification of European agriculture, the TYFA scenario fully integrates biodiversity and soil health issues (beyond a single carbon metric), and takes into account the need to reduce our imports of proteins for feed so as to avoid imported deforestation. *[This is why it foresees a significant reduction on pork and poultry production (-70%) but maintains a role for extensive livestock production on grasslands. Despite a drop in production of around 35%, the scenario also maintains an export capacity of milk products and cereals.]*

Producing healthy food for all Europeans and preventing dangerous climate change should go hand in hand with the preservation of our biodiversity, soils, water and air, which is the root of organic farming. The Common Agriculture Policy (CAP) provides Europeans with the financial resources and policy tools to accompany our farmers in this transition to more sustainable farming systems. But the CAP would need to be significantly reformed to better reward farming systems that have a positive impact on the environment. This is not the direction taken by the European Parliament Agriculture Committee, which voted on 2 April to defend the status quo. With European elections on 25 May, let's hope that voters will send to the next Parliament candidates who, whatever their political affiliation, understand the need to engage a full transition of production systems towards ecology, and that this will also be at the benefit of our economy.

The success of organic farming is the proof that change is already happening. On climate change, on the CAP like on many other issues, IFOAM EU will in any case continue to ensure that the voice of the

organic movement is heard by policy-makers in Brussels, and convince them that we need a European Union which makes the ecological transition a priority.

Best regards,
Michel Reynaud

POLITICAL HOTSPOT

On 17 April 2019, the plenary of the European Parliament adopted the provisional agreement on Horizon Europe, the EU's research & innovation programme for the period 2021-2027.

The controversial "Innovation" Principle remains

Horizon Europe will only benefit citizens and the environment if it can ensure new innovations to be safe and sustainable. The Precautionary Principle should be the guide for innovation Together with 74 civil society organisations, TP Organics signed a joint [statement](#) that called for the removal of the Innovation Principle from the legislative text. This A tool that was invented by fossil fuel energy, tobacco and agrochemical lobbyists has no place in EU legislative texts. Moreover, it opposes the Precautionary Principle. In a last attempt to remove the Innovation Principle from Horizon Europe, the Greens tabled two amendments, both replacing the Innovation Principle by the Precautionary Principle. In the run-up to the plenary vote, TP Organics contacted all Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) asking them to support these amendments.

Vote on Horizon Europe in the European Parliament plenary

Unfortunately, the plenary rejected both the Greens' amendments, as the adoption of amendments at this stage would have put into question the agreement reached with the Council. This is the first time that the Innovation Principle will appear in EU legislation, setting a dangerous precedent for regulation and policy-making in the EU. Even though the principle was accepted, civil society raised awareness and shed light on this corporate deregulation effort, bringing it out in to the open and creating the possibility for public accountability. TP Organics will continue to defend the Precautionary Principle that is enshrined in the EU Treaties.

Support for organic farming

While civil society and TP Organics were not successful in removing the Innovation Principle, we succeeded to add "support to organic farming" and "use and delivery of ecosystem services in primary production, e.g. through agroecology" in Horizon Europe. This is a big achievement, because it legally binds the European Commission to fund research for organic farming and agroecology. The Specific Programme that mentions these phrases still needs to be approved by the Council.

1 NEWS FROM IFOAM EU WORKING FIELDS

1.1 Policy

Organic regulation

Small steps towards more transparency pesticides approvals EU Parliament votes on the General Food Law

On 17 April 2019, a majority of the European Parliament voted with in favour of the [final text of the revision of the General Food Law](#) (Regulation EC 178/2002). The agreement is the outcome of an unprecedented decade long campaign of the citizen initiative #StopGlyphosate. Although the Commission and Member States eventually decided to re-approve glyphosate for five more years, the work of this broad civil society coalition led to some progress towards more transparency in the risk assessment procedure as there will be a publicly accessible database managed by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). This database should include all regulatory studies that have to be submitted by companies as part of the application process for the approval of pesticides and it will at last give the public access to most of the confidential toxicity data provided to the EU authorities by food companies to obtain market authorisations for their products. This is a victory for civil society, but this reform will not change the fundamental problem of industry controlling the production of regulatory data.

The text adopted by the European Parliament is going to become the new EU General Food Law Regulation, with eight sectoral food regulations amended accordingly in the process (GMOs (cultivation and for Food/Feed uses), feed additives, smoke flavourings, food contact materials, food additives, food enzymes and flavourings, plant protection products, and novel foods. Regarding GMOs, the adoption of the text is a step back, as companies will now be able to keep 'DNA sequence information' and 'breeding patterns and strategies' confidential to protect their interests. Yet, this information is crucial for farmers and breeders to avoid the presence of GMOs.

Learn more about the changes to the General Food Law with Corporate Europe Observatory detailed analysis, [Transparency for public trust?](#)

New EGTOP reports published

The Expert Group for Technical Advice on Organic Production (EGTOP) recently published two new reports, one on [Plant Protection Products](#) and one on [Food & Feed](#).

The EGTOP delivers non-binding recommendations to the EU Commission whether substances, products, practices or techniques are in line with the objectives and principles of organic production. Based on its recommendations, the EU Commission may propose changes to the current Regulation (EC) No 889/2008.

Report on EU organic imports available

The EU Commission published a [first analysis](#) of organic imports in the EU. The report shows the amount, the category and the origin of organic products imported into the EU, and estimates their values.

The production of this report was possible thanks to the new electronic Certificate of Inspection. As of October 2017 this certificate accompanies all organic products entering the EU.

CAP

The CAP's green architecture on the table of EU Agricultural Ministers

On 15 April the Council for Agriculture and Fisheries' discussed the Green Architecture of the CAP. This was the first time that Agriculture Ministers had a public debate focussing on the environmental provisions of the future CAP.

The Romanian Presidency had prepared guiding questions on enhanced conditionality setting the minimum environmental requirements for basic CAP payments, on the conditions for the newly proposed Eco-schemes, and on the design of agri-environmental measures under the second pillar and their relation to areas of natural constraint.

Member States have generally welcomed the Commission's proposal, although there were several calls for more budget to match the proposal's ambition. Some warned not to take important decisions on the CAP before agreeing on the Multiannual Financial Framework (that sets the EU's budget). On Eco-schemes the positions varied. Some Member States asked to make them voluntary, although others urged for them to remain mandatory, be excluded from capping and even have a minimum budget. Several Ministers also asked to keep areas of natural constraint under the Agri-environment budget, like it is the case now.

Ahead of this meeting, [IFOAM EU sent an open letter](#) to national ministries and experts. In the letter we put forward answers to the three Green Architecture questions that the Romanian Presidency prepared. The organic moment will continue to engage the Council of ministers on the revision of the CAP.

After two CAP votes in the European Parliament's Environment and Agriculture Committees, work will continue after the May elections

In early 2019 the European Parliament had votes on the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) revision in seven of its Committees. The votes in the two lead Committees (Agriculture and Environment) were of particular importance.

On 14 February, the Environment Committee voted to increase the ambition of the CAP proposal. IFOAM EU supports this, in particular the introduction of a minimum budget for eco-schemes of 30% in the 1st pillar. and a new article that would require Member States to take stock of their organic sectors before designing their CAP Strategic Plans, as well as the provision not to backslide when it comes to support for organic farming.

The Agriculture Committee was significantly less ambitious in its vote on 2 April. IFOAM EU welcomed the strengthening of advisory services and the inclusion of animal welfare in eco-schemes, but regretted that AGRI MEPs did not make full use of this opportunity to modernise the CAP. [Read more about this in the IFOAM EU press release.](#)

IFOAM EU hopes that the next European Parliament will build upon the Environment Committee's report on the CAP Strategic Plans, and realise the importance of rewarding farmers for the public goods they provide to all Europeans.

1.2 Food, farming and environment

New Fertiliser Regulation adopted in the European Parliament's Plenary

The new Fertiliser Regulation is part of the Circular Economy Package of the European Commission. This package aims to create a level playing field for all fertilising products, to facilitate nutrient recovery and reduce dependency from critical raw materials. Although this new regulation brings positive elements, IFOAM EU believes that it should not try to rectify existing significant environmental and market failures by simply exporting surpluses of nutrients to other geographical areas. Part of the problem is that there is a very uneven agricultural production in Europe and that some areas have massive problems with nitrate pollution due to highly intensive agriculture (e.g. North-West Germany or part of the Netherlands). A change towards more environmentally sound, mixed farming systems is needed rather than simply exporting the excess nutrients. Find further information about the scope of the new regulation in [a previous newsletter article](#).

After this agreement on the basic text, the Commission and Member States are already working on developing the Implementing Acts. An expert working group meeting, which will be held next month by DG GROW, will discuss guidance documents for the use of by-products as well as questions about labelling.

In the coming months the Commission will come up with many different Guidance documents. IFOAM EU is actively involved in the working group and if you have interested people in your organisation who could provide input and feedback, please contact: [isabella.lang \[at\] ifoam-eu.org](mailto:isabella.lang@ifoam-eu.org).

Sustainability in global agriculture driven by organic farming

Organic agriculture plays a key role in making our food systems more sustainable. It will also help us to achieve the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. These are some of the [findings of a new report published in the renowned scientific journal Nature Sustainability](#).

The report lends a helping hand to key actors in the food system by proposing a set of policy interventions to accelerate the shift towards sustainable agriculture.

According to the authors, governments should:

- Offer economic incentives and technical advice to farmers to ensure a smooth conversion to alternative farming systems;
- Encourage the demand of sustainable food products by running awareness-raising campaigns linking health, agriculture, environment and social wellbeing;
- Encourage retailers to offer sustainable products;

- Incentivize practices that contribute to the SDGs;
- Tax damaging practices like harmful pesticides and nitrogen inputs from external sources. This would substitute unsustainable practices;

Raise legal requirements and industry norms to rule out unsustainable practices.

Launch of study “taxation as a tool towards true cost accounting”

IFOAM EU officially launched the study [“Taxation as a tool towards true cost accounting”](#), commissioned to [Soil & More impacts, at the first edition of the Best Economy Forum](#).

The study analyses the six potential mechanisms of indirect taxation as a tool to show the true cost of food. The study shows that a tax on non-organic plant protection products (PPPs) and/or fertilizers is the most realistic way to account for the true cost of food. Such a tax may also discourage the use of environmentally unfriendly plant protection products.

The study also puts together factsheets about the impacts on the environment that stem from cultivating a hectare of organic potatoes or wheat in comparison to cultivating a hectare of conventional potatoes or wheat (page 19). The most striking result is that conventional potato cultivation in Germany costs €1298/hectare in ground water pollution alone. For organic potato production the cost on ground water pollution decreases to €0.4/hectare. While these numbers are the result of mathematical models, they reveal an interesting trend.

IFOAM EU launched the study at the first edition of the [Best Economy Forum](#). This event is an international discussion platform for companies that successfully implement sustainability strategies. [Read more about the study in the IFOAM EU press release of 10 April](#).

Calling on the next European Parliament to make Europe sustainable and fair by 2024

The European elections will take place 23-26 May 2019. This the chance for EU citizens to shape EU politics, as they can vote and call on the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) up for election to commit to actions that contribute to sustainable consumption and production once elected.

Together with Fair Trade, lead of the campaign, and other associations, IFOAM EU is part of ‘the fair times’ campaign. We launched the campaign on 15 April and we are calling on the next MEPs to make Europe sustainable and fair by 2024.

There are many elements to this campaign, one of which is [this special 2024 edition](#) of the Fair Times newspaper which gives (fictitious) examples of sustainable and fair EU policies implemented by 2024. It looks back at the major achievements of the European Union in the fields of sustainable consumption and production during the 2019-2024 term. Articles highlight how fair supply chains are contributing to development within planetary boundaries, how paying the true cost of food has become the norm, and how the CAP truly rewards farmers for the public goods they provide.

Another element of this campaign is to approach potential future MEPs asking them to commit to actions that they would carry out once elected that contribute to sustainable consumption and production. In this context, IFOAM EU would like to thank its members who are contributing to this campaign at the national level by approaching MEPs from their countries.

For more information about the campaign, please [visit the fair times campaign's website](#) and [read the joint press release](#) issued on the day of the campaign launch available.

Approval on Unfair Trading Practices directive in General Assembly Council

On 9 April, the Council, composed of European Affairs Ministers, approved the Directive on Unfair Trading Practices (UTPs). The European Parliament and the Council agreed on the directive during a last-minute meeting on 19 December 2018.

In short, this directive covers the following points:

- A ban of 16 unfair trading practices including late payments, payments that were not explicit in the beginning and refusing to sign a written contract if requested;
- The directive applies to suppliers up to a maximum annual turnover of 350 million EUR. Suppliers will only be protected from unfair trading practices that originate from buyers that are larger than them;
- Member States now have 24 months after the entry into force of the Directive to transpose it into national law, and 6 more months after that to apply it.

For more detailed information about the directive, [read Traidcraft's article](#), an association that IFOAM EU worked with during the negotiations of the UTP directive. You can also [read the joint press release published on 12 March](#) when the European Parliament approved the directive is available.

Farmer Field Schools, peer-to-peer learning to reduce the use of antibiotics – Read the RELACS project's first Practice Abstract

In March 2019, the Research Institute of Organic Agriculture (FiBL), IFOAM EU and the French Research Institute for Organic Farming (ITAB) published the first [RELACS Practice Abstract](#). A Practice Abstract contains practical guidelines for different actors of the food and farming system to solve a given problem, in this case farmers and farm advisors.

In the abstract, readers can learn how peer-to-peer learning reduces antibiotic inputs and improves animal health and welfare in organic farming. Sometimes advisory services do not lead to an improvement in animal health. This can be due to a lack of ownership of arguments and recommendations. In Farmer Field Schools farmers advise each other. This results in recommendations that are implementable and convincing. This in turn leads to a reduced use of antibiotics and incidences of mastitis and allows farmers to move from static to more dynamic health plans.

Read the full [Practice Abstract](#) and follow the RELACS project's development on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). [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.



'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. The information contained in this communication only reflects the author's view.

1.3 EU Research & Innovation Policy / TP Organics

Shape the research and innovation agenda for organics and agroecology

The priorities of TP Organics' new Strategic Research and Innovation Agenda (SRIA) for organic food and farming in Europe is [under consultation](#) until May 8. The SRIA is a key document that sets the research and innovation needs of the organic sector until 2027. It will serve as a tool for advising the European Commission on the implementation of Horizon Europe, the EU's next EU research and innovation framework programme.

Have your say [through this link](#) before the 8th of May. Your input will help shape the new SRIA. General highlights of the feedback received will be public on the website tporganics.eu in June.

LIVESEED workshops are boosting cooperation in the organic seed sector

In 2019, three regional workshops have already taken place within the framework of the LIVESEED project. During these workshops in the Baltic states (Latvia), Hungary and Spain, participants discussed commitments to foster the availability and use of organic seed in their countries in the coming year. The results of these discussion are a signed "Declaration of Organic Seed."

The Baltic states already report great progress following the first LIVESEED workshop in January. In Latvia, the organic seed database will improve this year as a result of the workshops. Improvements include adding extended information on organic seed to be produced (species and cultivar), the dates when the seed will be available, and the territories in which seed can be delivered. Lithuania will include organic seed production into the official training offered to organic farmers by the Agency of Rural Business and Market Development.

In Hungary, the workshop brought all stakeholders in the organic sector together for the first time. They committed to strengthen their cooperation, help data sharing, and organise joint initiatives in training.

In Spain, a major result of the workshop is the start of a working group on organic seed at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food. This working group will involve the competent authorities, the control bodies, organic producers and seed producers, and other actors in the agri-food chain and representatives of civil society.



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 727230 front page reports: This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 727230 and by the Swiss State Secretariat for Education, Research and Innovation under contract number 17.00090. The information contained in this communication only reflects the author's view.

2 IFOAM EU DEVELOPMENTS

Help us to show that organic is and continues to be a front-runner to transform food & farming

To make our [shared vision for organic in 2030](#) a reality, IFOAM EU created [a roadmap to sustainable food and farming systems in Europe](#).

There are three cornerstones of the vision:

- [Organic on every table](#) – strategies to make organic widely available and recognised;



- [Improve – Inspire – Deliver](#) - strategies to develop organic further and inspire others; and
- [Fair play – Fair pay](#) – strategies to achieve more transparency and fairness to value chains.

Varied stakeholders within the food and farming system – from farmers to processors, from traders to policy makers, and of course, citizens – are contributing to making our shared organic vision a reality by submitting their successful initiatives on euorganic2030.bio.

Discover what these actors are already doing to transform food and farming in Europe by reading their practical examples. Visit euorganic2030.bio/initiatives/leading-by-example to get inspired & submit your own!

We are looking for a Policy Officer on agriculture and CAP!

We are looking for a motivated and experienced person to complete our team as a policy officer on agriculture and the Common Agricultural Policy. Do you have a good understanding of EU agricultural policies and EU institutions? [Read the full vacancy](#) and apply by 2 June.

3 EVENTS

3.1 Preview of events

Learn about farm demonstrations and strengthen links with EU initiatives

21 May, Brussels, Belgium

Farmers, advisors, researchers, and policy-makers are invited to participate to the FarmDemo Conference. The FarmDemo Hub offers the opportunity to join the [FarmDemo](#) community, share tools to enhance on-farm demonstration, improve peer-to-peer learning, and boost innovation uptake. There are 200 seats available – [book your spot now!](#)

The FarmDemoHub is the best place to gain new knowledge, share your experience with others and learn how to implement innovations is on the farm. [Read the draft programme](#) of the event and [register online](#).

The FarmDemo Conference, organised by the Horizon 2020 projects PLAID, AgriDemo F2F and NEFERTITI, will take place on 21 May in Brussels, Herman Teirlinck building, Havenlaan 22.

Organic Food Iberia

6-7 June, Madrid

Join Iberia's first dedicated, fully professional organic trade show, taking place on 6 and 7 June 2019 in Madrid!

[Organic Food Iberia](#) is the biggest event showcasing certified organic food and drink products on the Iberian Peninsula, dedicated to promoting the organic food and wine industry to key organic buyers. The products range from fresh fruit and vegetables, dairy, meat, delicatessen & specialty products, vegan-friendly and free-from products, hot and cold drinks, and the very best of organic wines, beers, and spirits.

Organic Food Iberia is an event with sound organic principles, advertised in close cooperation with the organic industry to establish itself as the definitive networking, educational and business event of



the year.

As one of the most important developments for the organic sector in Spain, it will attract a variety of different stakeholders. Spanish, Portuguese and international supermarkets, independent retailers, hotels, restaurants, wholesalers, and distributors will join the event to source the very best produce the organic world has to offer.

With [IFOAM EU](#) as an official supporter and [ECOVALIA](#) on the advisory panel, Organic Food Iberia joins forces with two organisations well-known in the organic sector. IFOAM EU Director Eduardo Cuoco will participate in the opening session together with the Portuguese Minister. Moreover, IFOAM EU will present its vision and strategy until 2030 and organise a joint session on the latest statistics and data on the European organic sector with [FiBL](#).

[Book your trade ticket today](#) to find out more about the latest innovations from well-known brands to enter the market and exciting new start-up companies to freshen up your product line, which will keep you ahead of consumer demand.

Register now for the next IFOAM EU Farmers Interest Group meeting in Czechia

12-13 June 2019, Kutna Hora, Czechia

Registration is now open for our next farmers interest group meeting in Kutna Hora, Czechia taking place the 12-13 June 2019. [Please register under this link](#) until 13 May!

The draft programme contains following elements:

DAY 1, 12 June: Excursion

- Common breakfast from 8:15
- Excursion 1, start 9:00: Biodynamic vineyard
- Excursion 2, afternoon: Organic mixed farm (250 ha cereals, 250 ha meadow for pig and beef cattle), on farm slaughter and processing, biogas station, pig breeding.
- Evening: Dinner & wine-tasting

DAY 2, 13 June: Meeting

- Start 9:00: Update CAP + new project introduction (discussion eco-schemes)
- New Organic Regulation update (seeds, heterogenous material)
- New draft position paper on digitalisation and organic farming
- Ends (18:00)

Register now for the European Organic Congress and enjoy an early bird discount

20-21 June, Bucharest

Time is running out. As you already know the European Organic Congress 2019 will take place in Bucharest, Romania on 20-21 June. Hosted by IFOAM EU together with the Romanian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and Bio Romania its focus will be on "Innovation and technology: how organic improves, inspires & delivers".



[Register now](#) to take advantage of the early bird fee: discounted prices will be available only until the end of April!

Here are the main topics we will talk about:

- The reform of the Common Agricultural Policy and its impact on the health of farms, the food sector and society
- Emerging technologies (Internet of Things and Big Data, among others)
- Innovative solutions on efficiency and evolution of the organic sector

All these issues will be discussed with the help of concrete examples and fuelled by the expertise of representatives from the agri-food sector.

Have we piqued your curiosity? Visit the website of the European Organic Congress 2019 for the [complete programme](#), to find your favourite sessions and learn about the speakers.

Stay tuned for updates on organic-congress-ifoameu.org and @IFOAMEU on Twitter and Facebook. We post updates about the congress with #EUorganic2030.



This event is co-financed by the European Union, under the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (EASME). The sole responsibility for this communication lies with IFOAM EU. The EASME is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information provided.

3.2 Review of events

FarmDemo: Recommendation Workshop

2 April 2019, Den Bosch, Netherlands

On 2 April 2019 IFOAM EU participated in the FarmDemo 'Recommendation workshop' in the Netherlands. The goal of the day was to elaborate policy recommendations for managing authorities in Member States and the EU Commission. Such recommendations should support farmers, researchers and advisers to improve on-farm demonstration activities.

[FarmDemo](#) is a collaboration of three Horizon 2020 projects aiming to enhance peer-to-peer learning among farmers. FarmDemo focuses on farm demonstration as a tool to boost innovation uptake.

ANTARES Workshop

4 April 2019, Novi Sad, Serbia

On 4 April 2019 IFOAM EU Director Eduardo Cuoco participated in the session on organic farming at the ANTARES annual workshop hosted by BioSense Institute in Novi Sad, Serbia. He held a speech on Organic Vision 2030 and participated in a panel discussion, together with the representatives of the association Serbia Organica and Serbian Chamber of Commerce on challenges and opportunities for development of organic farming in Europe.

BioSense, which focuses on multidisciplinary research in ICT and agriculture, presented on digital solutions for applications in organic food and farming that can improve organic farmers' decision making, competitiveness, farm sustainability and traceability along the value chain.

Digital Day 2019: a declaration on 'A smart and sustainable digital future for European agriculture and rural areas'

9 April 2019, Brussels, Belgium

On April 9 IFOAM EU took part in the high-level event [Digital Day 2019](#) together with Member States, EU institutions and key stakeholders from civil society, industry and academia. At the event 24 countries signed [a declaration of cooperation on 'A smart and sustainable digital future for European agriculture and rural areas'](#). The document highlights the potential of technologies such as robotics, artificial intelligence, 5G, and internet of things to address the multiple challenges facing the EU's agri-food chain as well as rural areas.

In her opening remarks Mariya Gabriel, Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society, stressed that the new digital technologies could be especially beneficial for organic farmers and beekeepers. Agriculture Commissioner Phil Hogan emphasized that the technologies should cater for the needs of small-scale family farms as well as for the large ones and the companies. It is also important to overcome a digital divide between urban and rural areas, stressed Hogan. [Watch the keynote speeches and the press conference of Digital Day 2019.](#)

Best Economy Forum: Moving to a different economic model

9-11 April 2019, Bolzano, Italy

The first edition of the Best Economy Forum brought together like-minded people from various sectors. They talked about coming to a different kind of economic model that benefits many and not few, while respecting and taking care of our home, planet Earth. IFOAM EU's President Jan Plagge and Director Eduardo Cuoco took part and represented the European organic movement.

The first day started in the late afternoon, with opening speeches from the organizers and a brilliant keynote by Dr. Auma Obama who talked about the responsibility of acting sustainably. A round table on the vision and motivation for a new economy closed the day.

Day 2 was the most intense one, featuring an incredibly inspiring keynote by Christian Felber on the economy for the common good and two different and fruitful working sessions. The participants took part in world-cafe workshops about "ethical economy", "imagining the circular economy", "justice for the global south", "real prices for fair markets", "new forms of organisation for new forms of economy", "money with meaning" and "more than hotel". [The Manifesto of the Best Economy Forum](#) summarises the output of these workshops.

The last day begun with a start-up rally, during which 10 sustainability-focused projects had the chance to present themselves and win a price to continue their work. This was then followed by a panel reflecting on how the best economy can drive the transformation of the current economy. Dr. Vandana Shiva closed the panel with a touching and empowering keynote speech by on the vital connections between "best economy" and "best ecology".

The Forum closed with the official presentation of [the Manifesto of the Best Economy Forum](#). It contains commitments from the participants and demands to policy makers and everyone who was present signed it.

Save the date for 20-22 April 2021 because this great experience will continue, as there is the need and the willingness to change economy for the better. The second edition of the Best Economy Forum will also take place in Bolzano, at the EURAC Centre.

IFOAM EU supported the process that led to the creation and organisation of the first edition of the Forum. The first edition of the Best Economy Forum took place at the EURAC "Center of Advanced Studies" in Bolzano, Italy. This three-day event brought together like-minded people from various sectors to talk about a different kind of economic model.

4 MAKING EUROPE MORE ORGANIC – SUPPORT IFOAM EU

IFOAM EU KEY SUPPORTERS 2019

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



5 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

6-7 June 2019

[Organic Food Iberia](#)

Madrid, Spain

20-21 June 2019

[European Organic Congress 2019](#)

Bucharest, Romania





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