

International Federation
of Organic Agriculture Movements
EU Regional Group

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DG Agriculture and Rural Development
European Commission
Brussels

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Using CAP rural development programmes to maximise the impact of the new EU Organic Action Plan

Dear Mr Onofre,

We wish to draw attention to the new Action Plan for the future of Organic Production and the important role the Commission plays in ensuring that all relevant actions and recommendations as well as the spirit of the plan are carefully considered during the approval of partnership agreements under the Common Strategic Framework and in the new rural development programmes.

In 2012 organic retail sales in the EU were valued at EUR 21.8 billion in 2012 with signals for 2013 showing continued growth in many Member States. These trends reflect EU citizens' demands for high quality organic food that deliver public goods in areas such as the environment and animal welfare as well as contributing to rural development and sustainable food consumption. While the total area of organically managed land has almost doubled in the EU over the last decade – reaching 5.6 % of all EU agricultural land in 2012 - production of organic food remains below market demand. Part of this production challenge stems from the major gaps still remaining in many policy areas which undermine a supportive climate for organic food and farming systems. While we regret that the Organic Action is not more ambitious, we believe a good implementation of the new plan could lay the foundations for promoting greater coordination of EU policies and instruments relevant to organic food and farming sector.

To this end we call on the Commission to encourage member states to make full use of all EU policies and instruments to implement the actions and the spirit of the new Action Plan by:

- Mainstreaming organic food and farming development in all Partnership agreements under the EU Common Strategic Framework to support of the sector to reach to EU's 2020 targets for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth particularly in the areas of innovation and resource efficiency.
- Ensuring that the organic is well supported in new rural development programmes under relevant measures such as organic farming and agri-environment-climate schemes, farm

advisory services and innovation as well as measures related to investment support and supply chain development (linked to Recommendations accompanying Actions 1 and 2).

We also wish to draw your attention to two new IFOAM EU publications enclosed: The first - [Organic in Europe](#) - provides an assessment of EU public policy and implementation as well as the latest trends on organics and the second on the [potential of organic farming under the new European Innovation Partnership for agriculture](#). We hope these publications will highlight to you some examples of best practice as well as the realities of implementation relevant to policies and instruments outlined above.

We trust you will carefully consider our recommendations by implementing all relevant actions and making full use of spirit new Action Plan to support organics as a leading model for the development of sustainable agriculture under the new Common Agricultural Policy and other policy frameworks.

Yours sincerely,

Marco Schlüter



Director IFOAM EU

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